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CTENOSAURA SIMILIS (Black Spiny-tailed Iguana) PREDATION

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CTENOSAURA SIMILIS (Black Spiny-tailed Iguana). **PREDATION.** *Ctenosaura similis* is exotic to Florida (Meshaka et al. 2004. The Exotic Amphibians and Reptiles of Florida. Krieger Publishing Co., Malabar, Florida. 155 pp.). In particular, they were released on Gasparilla Island (Charlotte and Lee Counties) 30–35 years ago, where they are now abundant (Krysko et al. 2003. Florida Sci. 66:141–146). This species may pose a threat to a number of endemic threatened and endangered species on Gasparilla Island such as eggs of nesting shore birds, beach mice, hatchling sea turtles and gopher tortoises (*Gopherus polyphemus*) (Krysko et al., *op. cit.*), but to date, local predators on *C. similis* are unreported (Meshaka et al., *op. cit.*). Indigenous predators might exert one controlling influence on exotic Florida herpetofauna (Butterfield et al. 1997. In Simberloff et al. [eds.], Strangers in Paradise, pp. 123–138. Island Press, Washington, DC). Hence, we report evidence of Bobcat (*Felis rufus*) predation on *C. similis* on Gasparilla Island.

On 17 April 2007, RME located 3 *F. rufus* scats on the sandy aprons of *C. similis* burrows in coastal strand habitat (FDEP 2002. Gasparilla Island Unit Management Plan. Florida Dept. Environ. Protection, Tallahassee. 68 pp.) within Gasparilla Island State Park (larger *C. similis* often use Gopher Tortoise burrows, but cohabitation has not been observed [McKercher 2001. *Ctenosaura pectinata* (Iguanidae) on Gasparilla Island, Florida: Colonization, habitat use and interactions with *Gopherus polyphemus*. MS Thesis, Univ. Florida, Gainesville. 117 pp.]). Examination of the *F. rufus* scats revealed fragments of *C. similis*. Notable among the fragments was a desiccated right front forefoot ca. 3.5 cm long, suggesting a mature lizard of reproductive size had been taken. Given the large *C. similis* population on Gasparilla Island as indicated by the high density of active burrows (ca. 42/ha) and large number of juveniles we located with minimal searching of the area in which we found the scats, bobcat predation alone is unlikely to suppress *C. similis* populations. Population reduction of this invasive species on Gasparilla Island will likely require a comprehensive integrated pest management plan that incorporates multiple control tools and strategies and involves the responsible government entities on Gasparilla Island (Charlotte County and Lee County governments and Florida Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission). In fact, the management plan for Gasparilla Island State Park recognizes the need for ctenosaur management to protect gopher tortoises, but also recognizes such management would only be effective if government entities coordinate efforts (FDEP, *op. cit.*).

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