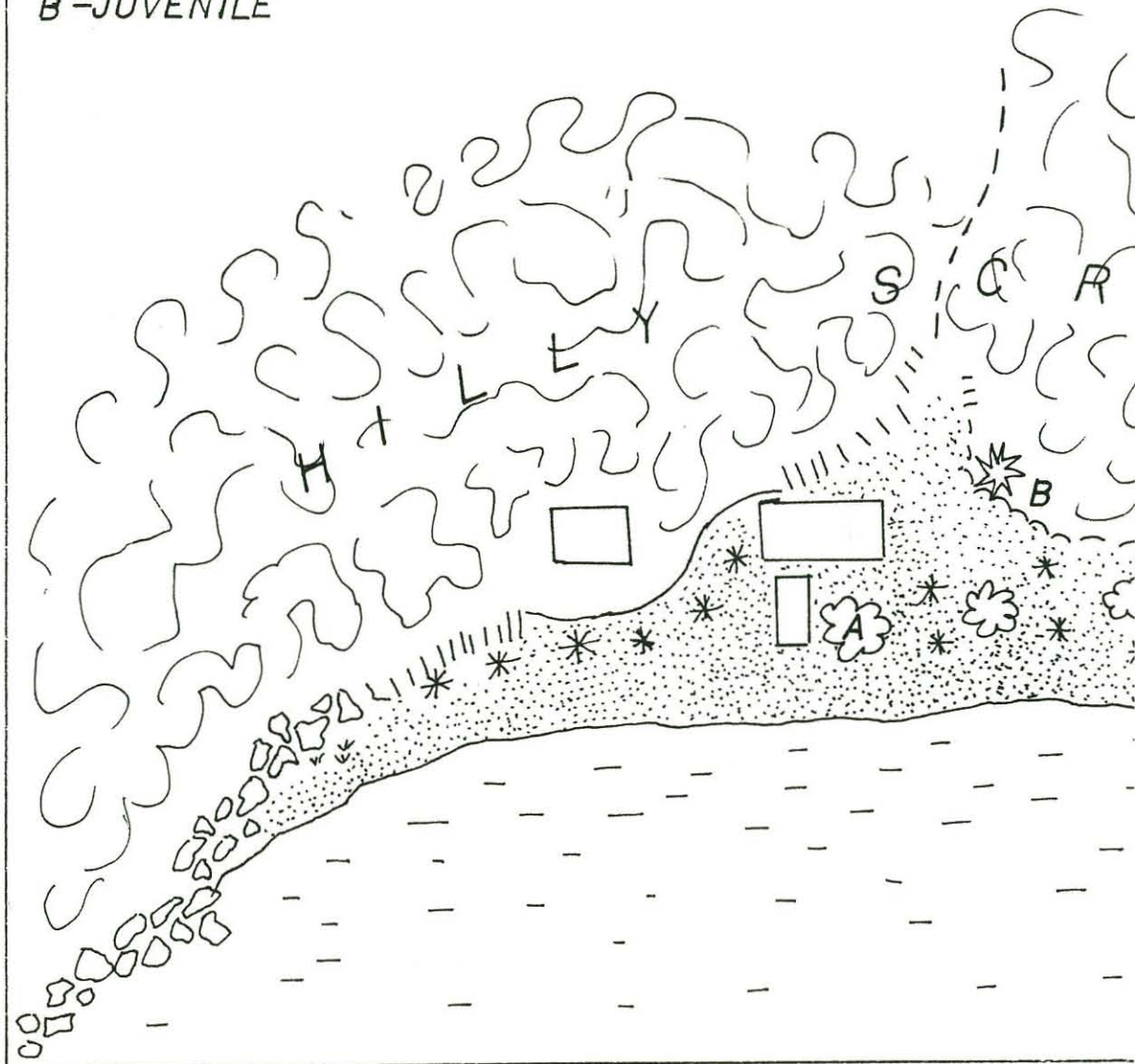


LEGEND

- * - COCONUT PALM
- ☼ - ALMOND TREE
- ⋯ - BEACH
- - BUILDING
- ☼ - RELEASE - 1ST SIGHTING
- B - JUVENILE



Study areas on Huevos Island.

SURVIVAL OF *Anolis extremus garman* ON HUEVOS ISLAND



By Hans Boos
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THE Trinidad Field Naturalists' Club made a visit to Huevos Island on the weekend of 5/7 June, 1965. During the preliminary survey for camp sites on this Island on May 29th of that same year, I released six pairs of the common lizard from the island of Barbados, *Anolis extremus* German (*Anolis roquet cinereus*).

The experiment to study survival and dispersal was written up in the Club's journal for 1967, Page 15. From observations made during the 1965 trip, it seemed that the survival of this small group was exceedingly doubtful. The unsuspected presence of a

snake, as well as another Iguanid in competition with the aliens, appeared to be responsible for the single sighting of a survivor on the weekend of 5/7 June, 1965.

A visit to Huevos was made by Julius Boos and Robert Holt of Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts in July 1975, and a cursory search was made for these lizards. Owing to rain, prolonged observation was impossible and no sightings were recorded.

On the weekend of 24/25 July 1976, eleven years after the original visit, the Trinidad & Tobago Field Naturalists' Club once more set up camp on Huevos Island. As soon as we landed and were established, I made for the almond tree on which I had released the twelve lizards. A quick scuttling sound announced that *Plica plica* were still in residence on the rough bark and hollows of the tree trunk. The presence of this lizard was one of the reasons it was feared that the introduced lizards would fail to establish themselves. They would be in unaccustomed competition for food with *Plica*, which would also probably prey on the juvenile *Anolis*. I took some photographs of this *Plica*.

A search was made of all the visible areas of the trunk and branches of this tree. All the other nearby trees, bushes and structures in the compound of the Main House were also searched. This proved to be fruitless. I enquired of the people who lived there as caretakers of the Island House, who remembered the release of 1965, if they had ever seen the lizards again. They assured me that they still often saw them, but I was not sure that they were not describing *Plica* which was obviously abundant.

At about 4:30 p.m. on Saturday afternoon, I was making yet another survey when my attention was fixed by a moss-green lizard about 4 metres up the trunk of the original release tree. It was a Barbados lizard. The darker head and robust build told me it was an adult male. I attempted several photographs despite the poor light. I brought this sighting to the attention of the other members of the party.

With this sighting I began a systematic search for the remainder of the afternoon in the places where the people had reported sightings, and where I knew it was likely to find *Anolis*. No more were seen. I went to sleep that night with two questions on my mind: Do *Anolis* lizards live for 11 years? If not, where was the viable colony of *Anolis extremus* of which this was a member?

The following day, every couple of hours, a search was made of the area and the same *Anolis* was seen four times, never far from his original perch. Then, in a tree high on the cut face of the cliff side, a juvenile lizard was sighted. My brother, Julius, climbed closer and confirmed this sighting as another *Anolis extremus*. This tree was on the perimeter of the cleared area around the houses and sheds. The dry bush and scrub forest start immediately behind the cliff face on which the tree stood.

With the sighting and identification of these two lizards, added to the reports of the residents who claim to see them often, (discounting sightings of *Plica*) it would seem that *Anolis extremus* has managed to survive and reproduce on Huevos Island over the past eleven years. Wherever possible a future watch will be kept on them.

The party sighted a specimen of *Mastigodryas boddaerti dunni* (formerly *Drymobius boddaerti*). Sightings were made of the following lizards as well:

Cnemidophorus 1. *lemniscatus*; *Gonatodes vittatus*; and *Plica plica*

The rains and increased growth of the scrub forest made it virtually impossible to penetrate and explore the interior of the island.