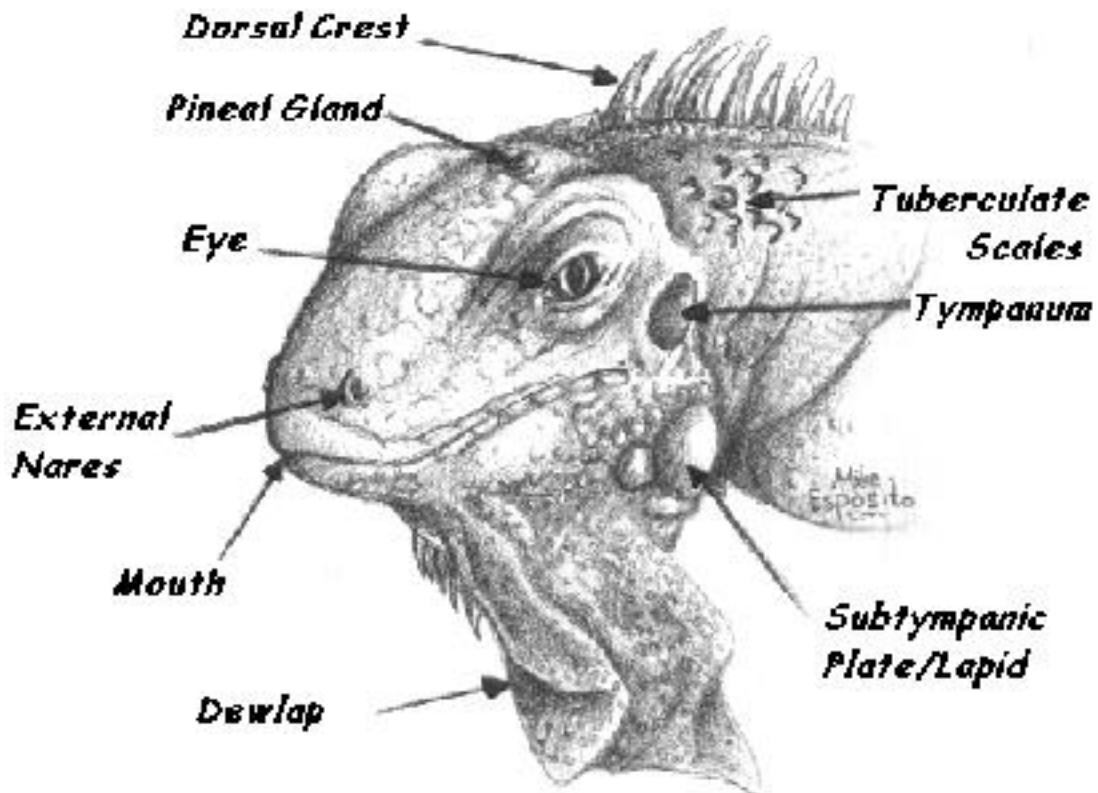
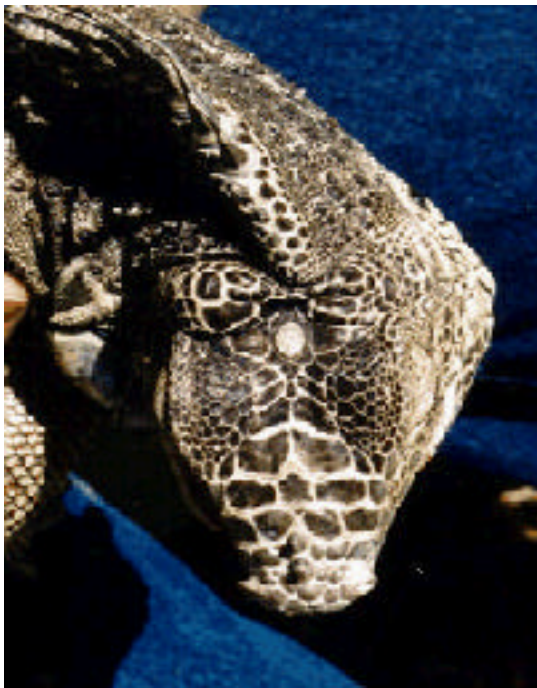


# OUTSTANDING CHARACTERISTICS OF THE GREEN IGUANA



picture courtesy of the Iguana Den



The parietal eye is the white spot on the top of this iguana's head.

## **Parietal "Eye"**

The parietal eye is a photosensory organ connected to the pineal body, active in triggering hormone production (including reproduction) and thermoregulation. It is sensitive to changes in light and dark, it does not form images, having only a rudimentary retina and lens. It is visible as an opalescent gray spot on the top of some lizard's heads; also referred to as "pineal eye" or "third eye."

It cannot see as their eyes see, but this organ is one very good reason why you cannot use white light at night for heat...and why igs duck when you drive under freeway overpasses or takes off like a berserker when a teeny tiny speck of a bird or plane almost too small to be seen with unaided human vision flies waaaaay overhead.

Many skinks and agamids, such as blue-tongue skinks and water dragons, have this "eye" as well.

Photo and text courtesy of Melissa Kaplan