

**Population Estimates, Habitat Associations, and Management of *Ameiva polops* (Cope) at Green Cay, United States Virgin Islands**

**ABSTRACT:** The endemic St. Croix Ground Lizard (*Ameiva polops*), listed in 1977 by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service as an endangered species, has not been surveyed since the mid-1990s on Green Cay (5.7 ha), an islet just off the northeastern coast of St. Croix, US Virgin Islands. We conducted six surveys here within three divisions (north, south, beach) along 32 randomly selected fixed-width plots (25 × 4 m) from August to October 2002. The total weighted mean population estimate, using a conservative procedure, was 183 lizards. The number of lizards was positively associated with a greater number of shrub stems. Lizards were more abundant in forested areas in the southern half of the cay (81% of the weighted total), but scarcer than expected on beaches (< 0.05% of the total), especially treeless areas. Since our recent population estimate suggests a decline in the long-term (ca. 35 yr) population of *Ameiva polops* on Green Cay, mark-resight, recapture surveys, or distance sampling (adjusted for the proportion of animals that are unobserved) are required to obtain population estimates and to assess hurricane effects (since Hugo in 1989) on habitat structure and composition.

**Keywords.**—Endangered species, habitat associations, lizard, management, population estimates