

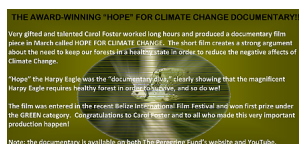
An Awesome Conservation Camp

The recent rainy weather did not dampen the spirit of the 17th Conservation Camp hosted at the zoo. Education officers, Celso Poot and Jamal Andrewin saw that the campers had a worthwhile and memorable experience.



The particular "Animal of the Hour" focused upon during the week was the Jaguar. A hiking trip through the beautiful Cockscomb Basin Wildlife Sanctuary gave all a fun look at the lands, which support a healthy number of jaguars in Belize. To reinforce what was learned from their Cockscomb visit, a follow up talk from jaguar field researchers, Bart Harmsen and Rebecca Foster, provided an even greater meaning to their jungle "walk about". And talk about fun! What better way to explore the Jaguar Corridor than to kayak down the Sibun River, which is an important water way within this landscape. While no jaguars were observed during the field trips, a close up and personal view of these mighty cats happened at the zoo. The mega-star, "Junior Buddy" showed all just how intelligent a jaguar really is – "Junior" is three years old and showed the campers that he can indeed count to three! Jaguar awareness didn't end with "Junior Buddy".

The campers also learned about the zoo's Jaguar Rehabilitation Program. Nothing like this project happens anywhere else in the world, and an overview of the program as well as meeting "Rehab graduate" "Field master" and giving this beautiful cat a "high five" brought lots of smiles to camper's faces. The Conservation Campers enjoyed a night tour of the zoo, and tried their hand at art projects, too! Camp Counselors also saw that they fit into their busy activity schedule, a project which had the campers doing scientific observations of the zoo animals. The 17th Conservation Camp was a successful week of fun and education for all.



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