

### Harpy Eagle "lands" In The US Embassy

A beautiful Harpy Eagle has landed in the USA Embassy. It is a painting by renowned American artist John Ruthven. Now on loan to the Embassy, this Harpy Eagle is a gesture saying, "thank you", to USA Ambassador Vinai Thummalapally for his support towards the Belize Harpy Eagle Restoration Program.



#### **US Ambassador with TBZ Director Sharon Matola**

Ambassador Thummalapally has noted that both he and the Harpy Eagle are "Ambassadors" when it comes to drawing attention towards the important issue of Climate Change. The connection is simple. Harpy Eagles need large areas of tropical forests in order to survive. These same forests are vital reservoirs for carbon. If carbon remains safe and sound in our forests and not released into the atmosphere, then this serves as a passive yet effective strategy, and decreases the negative impacts of Climate Change. The beautifully framed Harpy Eagle is the only print made from its John Ruthven "mother painting." Mr. Ruthven has three of his eagle masterpieces hanging in the White House, in Washington, D.C. In 2004, John Ruthven was awarded the Medal of Honour from the then USA President, George Bush, noting his extraordinary wildlife artistic talent.

The Belize Harpy Eagle Restoration Program will soon see its final Harpy Eagle, a female, released into the forests of the Rio Bravo Conservation Management Area. Sixteen eagles have been part of this important project. To assist in the continued successful profile of this very vital conservation program, additional dynamic environmental education will happen. These learning lessons will explain the conservation strategies behind the program, as well as the important role the Harpy Eagle plays in our Belizean environment. Hopefully, these beautiful raptors will thrive on in our remaining forests. And yes! We look forward to their eventual mating and having young. Providing a balance within our tropical ecosystems is now their important "raptor-role".

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