

## Stunning New "Protect The Predators" Billboards

One of the results of our successful environmental education programs at the Zoo has been the erection of two large highway billboards, on the most traveled roads in Belize. The message thousands of people view when they drive, or cycle past, is that the protection of our top predators is vital.



### **"Protect the Predators" billboard outside TBZ on the busy Western Highway**

Designed and created by Zoo Education Director Mr. Celso Poot in 2004, the billboard feature images of a Harpy Eagle and a Jaguar. The theme displayed was simple and to the point "Protect the Predators, they balance nature." This was displayed both in English and Spanish. The billboards are situated just outside the Zoo, and also on the Northern Highway. The previous billboards became victims of the tropical climate; it was time to rejuvenate these important message boards. This billboard "face lift" came in early 2010, with a fantastic redesign by Zoo intern and Graphic Designer Extraordinaire, Lynn Simpson of the UK. The fantastic new billboards have finally been unveiled, and what a glorious sight they are: Images of the regal harpy eagle and the majestic jaguar greet all who pass by! And the same two animals now looming over the highway are very famous residents at the Zoo! "Panama" the Harpy Eagle, and "Junior Buddy" the Jaguar, are "animal ambassadors" for their respective species. Panama is often seen gliding over to the perch nearest to his cage, and giving a curious look and friendly screech to his visitors. Not to be outdone, Jaguar Junior prowls right up to "meet and greet" visitors. By wowing zoo guests, these guys instill an awe and appreciation for their species, and remind us all exactly why it is important to have them around. As top predators, they act as "referees," keeping prey species in check and balance; they keep our ecosystems healthy.

Panama and Junior are now a stunning roadside reminder that it is wise to "protect the predators!"

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