

Super Cool Vet School

Apart from providing a happy home for the wildlife that comes our way, other important facets of zoology are also addressed at The Belize Zoo. For a week, a hands-on training course was held at the Zoo in collaboration with the Ross Veterinary School.



Ross Vet School students examining 9 ft female croc, "Mrs. B."

Nine students, along with two faculty members joined local veterinarians and animal management staff to undertake important medical procedures.

The students were in high energy learning mode the entire week, and the zoo animals became patients for a bit, benefiting from this expert care and attention.

What went on? The harpy eagles had their beaks trimmed (this makes eating an easier task, they appreciate that!), a 9 foot crocodile was examined thoroughly and given vitamins, blood was taken from the jabiru storks and scarlet macaws so that post-tests will reveal what sex these birds are, and jaguar CT was put into dreams-ville with appropriate drugs, so that a thorough check up could now be in his medical history. Other dynamic activities occurred, too. Jaguar field researcher Omar Figueroa gave a presentation about his important studies taking place in the central Jaguar Corridor. Primate researchers Kaylee and Patrick, from University of Calgary, told all about their exciting research involving both Howler and Spider monkeys in Runaway Creek Nature Reserve.

Zoo Director Sharon Matola lectured on conservation and environmental awareness drawing attention to the good, the bad, and the ugly. Good: Harpy Eagle Restoration Program. Bad: Recent road kills of our endangered national animal, the Central American (Baird's) Tapir. And the ugly: Chalillo Dam and its negative impact on the environment and our socio-economic condition in Belize. Field trips also were part of the action-packed week program. Visits to the Community Baboon Sanctuary, Runaway Creek Nature Reserve, and the beautiful up-and-coming Belize Herpetarium brought smiles to all. An afternoon kayak trip revealed the beautiful natural assets of the area. Trees full with nesting wood storks and raptors soaring overhead were an additional added delight for everyone. The learning curve was very high and happy. An annual visit from Ross Vet School to Belize will now be part of our growing and successful profile.

[Click to download PDF file](#)