

Mammals of Belize



Mammals are a group of animals with backbones, bodies covered by hair, nurse their young with milk, and have a unique jaw articulation. Mammals are also the group of animals to which humans belong.

Belize has approximately 145 Mammal Species living within its boundaries. Mammals exist within all the different habitats of Belize, from the manatee and dolphins of the coastal zone, to the 5 different species of wildcat which live deep within the rainforests of the Maya Mountains.

The Rainforest Mammals of Belize tend to be very secretive and mostly nocturnal. This makes them extremely difficult to see. They usually see, hear, smell, or feel you long before you see them. Rainforest mammals do not stand out in the open for easy viewing, but instead climb through the canopy or scurry over the forest floor well ahead of you. That is one reason the Belize Zoo is such a special place. Here you can see many of the rainforest species of Belize easily.

A visit to The Zoo is the best way to get an introduction to the animals of Belize, and to understand why it is important to protect the habitats that sustain them. We hope this website will be the next best thing to visiting us in person.

The Birds of Belize



Reptiles of Belize



Amphibians and reptiles are backboned animals. Amphibians lack any covering of their skin fur, feathers or scales. Amphibians include the salamanders and frogs. Reptiles are covered by scales. They lay shelled eggs similar to birds, or keep the eggs inside their

bodies till they hatch. Reptiles are grouped into turtles, crocodiles, and snakes and lizards.

The total number of reptiles and amphibians in Belize is unknown. New species for the country appear at regular intervals. To date, 139 species have been identified. The reason the total number of species is so tentative, is because of the habitats that reptiles and amphibians are found.

Amphibians have smooth, thin skin and require water to keep their bodies moist. They can be found under rocks, alongside streams, in swamps and marshes places which are not the most comfortable for humans. Reptiles, with their scaly skin, are not restricted to wet habitats. Snakes and lizards can be found in any habitat, from the soil and leaf litter of the forest floor, to the upper canopy of the rainforest, to the mangrove forests of the coastline and Cayes of Belize.

The Belize Zoo supports a small display of the more common snakes of Belize including the most dangerous of Belizean snakes, the Fer-de-lance. The Zoo also makes frequent use of the harmless Boa Constrictor in its many environmental education programs. Humans tend to have an irrational fear of snakes, while in reality, poisonous snakes are not frequently sighted. They tend to be secretive and nocturnal. The Belize Zoo education programs tend to focus on the positive aspects of snakes they help to keep the population of far more prolific creatures which are harmful to humans, the rats, mice and insects of the tropics.