

The Raptor Sanctuary at Belize Bird Rescue (TRS@BBR)

Development Proposal & Organizational Outline

Values

- Ethical Stewardship of Wildlife
- Inspiration through Observation
- Animal Agency and Dignity
- Collaboration and Accountability
- Wildlife Welfare is Interconnected with Human Welfare
- Accessibility to Knowledge
- Empowering Future Environmentalists & Conservationists

Strategic Objective/Present Needs

A. Physical sanctuary for Belizean native and migratory raptors (and some solitary-minded predatory-instinctive avian species) who are neither non-releasable, nor appropriate for zoo placement as a publically accessed display ambassador, but are otherwise adapted to captivity (due to legal rehabilitation efforts or illegal human interference), and deserving of a dignified life with high standards of comfortable permanent care and ethical stewardship. *While no breeding will be allowed as a part of sanctuary operations, con-specific raptor fostering is a valuable conservation option. **All permanent sanctuary residents (including potential non-raptors) are determined on a case-by-case basis:***

Species TRS@BBR would make space for WHEN non-releasable AND non-viable for appropriate placement at The Belize Zoo, BUT adaptable to long-term captive sanctuary life may include:

Eagles, Falcons and Caracara, Hawks, Kites, Osprey, Owls, Vultures, as well as Toucans, Cuckoos, and Potoos

B. Environmental outreach education that is made freely remotely available to all Belizean students, as well as made accessible to international avian enthusiasts, without objectifying or commodifying native Belizean wildlife in the form of public tours, paid encounters, or catered shows, by utilizing new technology to cultivate an evolutionary generation of local and global conservationists.

C. Develop attainable progressive research-backed policies and protocols that aim to codify wildlife sanctuary of all species as an ethical prerogative to those responsible for continued care with minimal human disturbance, respect for animal comfort and agency in naturally immersive enclosures which evoke instinctual behaviours, as an investment in the future of environmentalism efforts cognizant of the interconnectivity of wildlife and human welfare.

Mission

Providing sanctuary for non-releasable birds of prey through ethical stewardship and naturally immersive enclosures, while inspiring conservation through observation and wildlife advocacy.

Vision

Promote positive advancement for wildlife care as intrinsically linked to the future of conservationism, pairing progressive ethical standards with accessible remote outreach efforts to embody and exemplify demonstrated success of conscious sanctuary stewardship.

Mottos

"Let wild be wild!" "Sanctuary is Sacred" & "Inspiration through Observation"

Goals

1. TRS@BBR will diversify and better meet expanded ethical stewardship needs of Belize wildlife through sharing of skills and resources with Belize Bird Rescue, without impeding daily operations or annual financial obligations.
2. Establish a specified program within Belize Bird Rescue dedicated in organizational efforts to meet the need for a sanctuary-focused raptor facility in the country of Belize, creating new enclosures with updated standards of care befitting welfare requirements for long-term placement of birds of prey, as opposed to sub-par or short-term rehabilitative captivity.
3. Develop separate fundraising structures in order to access multiple donor markets and grant opportunities, and develop new projects in collaboration with Belize Bird Rescue's current efforts.
4. Promote public education about raptors and other avian species, the ecological impacts they have on Belize, as well as human/animal conflict, national rehabilitation and legislative efforts, and interconnected welfare realities. Utilizing modern technological resources to offer inspiration through observation with greater accessibility both locally and globally. Establish RaptorCams and create outreach packages through Zoom classes with PowerPoint presentations, interactive education kits, and print media, minimizing wildlife disturbance.
5. Expand informational resources offered by Belize Bird Rescue through additional webpages on belizebirdrescue.org and independent social media representation to publish positive stories of sanctuary care and foster public enthusiasm for engagement in native and migratory Belize wildlife rehabilitation and rescue efforts, as well as potentially influence local, and global wildlife treatment policies and protocols in sanctuary settings.
6. To strive to honor every individual case of an avian that may be assessed for appropriate placement in permanent sanctuary, and resolve to transparent and accountable partnership with Belize Bird Rescue, Belize Forest Department, and other partnered NGOs to guarantee the best quality of life possible. All wildlife will be afforded proper space and time to demonstrate whether it has a chance at eventual medical recovery or dehabituating of imprinting, given proper long-term care that is beyond immediate rehabilitation efforts. Assess holistic wellbeing (including physical, mental, and behavioral) to determine if wildlife is content in captive sanctuary state, and not in any physical or mental distress, with ethically conscious consideration where humanely administered euthanasia would be most compassionate.

Organizational Structure & Coordination with BBR

Belize Bird Rescue is the parent NGO of the dedicated program and special project that is The Raptor Sanctuary at Belize Bird Rescue. The Raptor Sanctuary is always named in conjunction with Belize Bird Rescue, and additional ways it can be referred to include: TRS@BBR, The Raptor Sanctuary at BBR, or The Belize Bird Rescue Raptor Sanctuary. Belize Bird Rescue will provide the use of land and

utilities, as well as continue current daily operational structures (namely: feedings, current enclosure management and animal husbandry) for the raptors that are to be inner-organizationally transferred to TRS@BBR. As TRS@BBR is not a short-term or crisis-care rehabilitation program, the clinic at Belize Bird Rescue is available for any clinic equipment needs and medical concerns that arise with long-term sanctuary care, or unforeseen changes in quality of life ethically necessitating humane euthanasia.

TRS@BBR will collaborate with Belize Bird Rescue to expand the RaptorCam concept, which TRS@BBR is responsible for design, fundraising, & implementation, and supporting the application of those designs as well to ParrotCams (which BBR is responsible for costs of cameras and install). TRS@BBR will not utilize Belize Bird Rescue staff resources, outside of current daily feeding and husbandry operations, unless negotiated in advance. TRS@BBR will abide by all Articles and Annexes outlined in the MOU between Belize Bird Rescue and Belize Forest Department, as well as act in alignment with all objectives of the associated 501(c)(3), Friends of Belize Bird Rescue, at all times. Ultimately, the responsibilities and commitments of TRS@BBR to the permanent sanctuary birds falls under the umbrella of Belize Bird Rescue operations, with delegation of duties and fundraising efforts intended to support increased organizational potential in serving a wider range of the wildlife of Belize.

Financial Budgeting Goals (conversion: \$1 USD = \$2 BZD)

1. Initial Fundraising Goal (GlobalGiving, Facebook, other outreach efforts): \$55,000 BZD
 - A. \$20k BZD - *Enclosures* (supplies, labor, maintenance)
 - B. \$15k BZD - *Technology* (cameras, installation, website design, broadcast systems)
 - C. \$2k BZD - *Medical & Consultation Funds* (vet services, expert assessments)
 - D. \$2k BZD - *Operational Expenses* (enrichment, netting/handling gear, storage, freezer)
 - E. \$10k BZD - *Program Expenses* (transportation, medications, textbooks, stipends)
 - F. \$6k BZD - *Outreach Materials* (class worksheets, awareness posters, media)
2. Annual Operational Fundraising Goal: \$70,000 BZD
 - G. Grants - \$15k BZD
 - H. RaptorCams - \$10k BZD
 - I. Donation Platforms (GlobalGiving, social media) - \$40k BZD
3. Donation Wishlists:
 - J. Veterinary dental Xray machine for on-site assessment needs (apx. \$13k BZD)
 - K. Two Rayban Meta frames for recording and outreach supplement (apx. \$1.5k BZD)
 - L. Cameras for RaptorCam expansion and outreach goals (apx. \$2-10k BZD)
 - M. Classroom VR Headsets (depending on exact quantity/system apx. \$1-15k BZD)

Development Plan

0-6 Months: initial fundraising efforts; building first new structure; apply to grants; establish positive relationships with other rehabilitation organizations and create protocols for appropriate transfers; establish positive rapport with The Belize Zoo with mutual goals in assessing appropriate placement of non-releasable raptors; design & implement installation of the RaptorCams and broadcasting systems; verify daily/weekly/monthly/annual routine needs and fundraising objectives; design and launch TRS@BBR webpages linked to the main belizebirdrescue.org website; build social media presence and positive public representation of TRS@BBR Mission, Vision, Mottos & Goals

6 Months to 1 Year: develop technology based resources for freely available online & off-site

outreach education through the use of PowerPoint, Zoom, audio-recordings, and camera broadcasts; get the word out nationally and internationally about what TRS@BBR is doing to positively reflect the values of wildlife sanctuary undisturbed by public access; collaborate with experts to firmly establish assessment protocols for all future permanent sanctuary wildlife considerations; invest in necessary equipment redundancies for TRS@BBR separate from Belize Bird Rescue core resources; create operations and management plans as proven effective; assess financial needs and staffing goals when sanctuary placement needs escalate; annual medical exams and behavioral assessments

1-2 Years: consistent management of the RaptorCam, social media and webpages and donation platforms; continuing to apply for grants and manage public fundraising; build additional structures as needed; ensure appropriate stipends for any proven staffing needs including organizational management, daily operations and consultations with other international raptor and wildlife welfare experts; make strides to bring IWRC to Belize to offer critical wildlife clinical education skills for rehabilitation professionals, affiliated volunteers, and staff of the Forest Department; have clearly deliverable outreach packages for Belizean education institutions on the ecological importance of Belizean raptors, as well as respect for the agency of all Belizean wildlife; achieve program security as financially self-sustaining and able to contribute back to Belize Bird Rescue in all areas possible

5 Years: ongoing positive relationship with Belize FD & its partner NGOs, and positive Belizean public association with the work of TRS@BBR; continued improvement and expansion of available enclosures and enrichment care of all permanent sanctuary residents; established protocols for assessing long-trajectory recovery potential or changes in quality of life; consistent record-keeping of all sanctuary birds for use in data-tracking, research and grant opportunities; transitioning the management of feeding colonies; investment in independent staffing needs including continuing educational improvement and relevant certifications; sustaining the RaptorCam project with the goal of contributing to environmental viewership internationally while representing sanctuary as ethical stewardship; collaborative partnership with Belize Bird Rescue as a self-sufficient program

10 Years: proactively pursue new research to improve the standards of care and enrichment available to all permanent sanctuary residents; confidence in collaboration with Belize Bird Rescue either permanently as an on-site project or potentially with relocation to separate land and facilities; continued financial solvency and ability to invest in new enclosures and enrichment; documentation of efforts and success as a sanctuary dedicated to minimal human disturbance while providing duress-free permanent captive care through ethical stewardship; ongoing outreach while coordinating with other environmental education efforts such but not limited to: The Belize Zoo, the Belize Bird Conservancy (including the annual HawkWatch and Raptor Certification programs), the Belize Audobon Society, the Belize Natural History Archives, and current and new country-wide young birder programs

Outreach Packages

Deliverable Remote-Access Outreach Packages to Belizean students would include:

Powerpoint Presentation, Link to Live RaptorCam (& ParrotCam) Broadcasts, Worksheets for in-class participation, Posters for take-home conservation education, Taxidermy Kits for tactile demonstrations (ALL pieces to be returned afterwards to TRS@BBR), Birding Pamphlets, and associated educational materials.

Eventual goal for (staffed only) outreach includes classroom VR Headsets with immersive video content.

Organizational Resources:

Captive Wildlife Welfare Rights: The Six Essentials (2025)
Behavioural Assessment Protocols and Rationale for Ongoing Care (pending 2025)
Positions on Education, Animal Ambassadors, and Inspiration through Observation (pending 2025)
"Standards for Wildlife Rehabilitation" 5th Ed. (2021) including NWRA/IWRC Code of Ethics
Belize Wildlife Protection Act, Revised Ed. (2020)
Belize Wildlife Conservation & Management Act (pending 2025)
MOU between Belize Bird Rescue & Belize Forest Department & associated Annexes (2023, pending 2025)

Core Reference Materials:

"Raptors in Captivity: Guidelines for Care & Management" 2nd Ed. (Arent 2023)
"AZA Owl (Strigiformes) Care Manual" (AZA Raptor Taxon Advisory Group 2022)
"Urban Raptor: Ecology and Conservation of Birds of Prey in Cities" (Boal 2018)
"Raptor Medicine, Surgery, & Rehabilitation" 3rd Ed. (Scott 2020)
"Environmental Enrichment for Captive Animals" 2nd Ed. (Young 2025)
"Interrupted Lives: Welfare Considerations in Wildlife Rehabilitation" (Willette 2023)
"Understanding Animal Welfare: The Science in its Cultural Context" 2nd Ed (Fraser 2023)
"Wildlife Ethics: The Ethics of Wildlife Management and Conservation" (Palmer 2023)
"Conservation Education and Outreach Techniques" 2nd Ed. (Jacobsen 2015)
"Wildlife In Education: A Guide for the Care and Use of Program Animals" 2nd Ed (Buhl 2018)
"A Guide to Managing Zoo Animal Welfare" (Waters 2025)
"Professor in the Zoo: Designing the Future for Wildlife in Human Care" (Maple 2016)
"Enhancing Animal Welfare: The Three C's - Comfort, Choice, and Control"
Marsh (Lessons in Welfare Series, Blog 1, November 2023)
<https://wildwelfare.org/comfort-choice-control/>
"The voice of choice: A scoping review of choice-based animal welfare studies"
Rust, Clegg, & Fernandez (Applied Animal Behaviour Science, Volume 275, June 2024)
<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0168159124001187>
"Choice, control, and animal welfare: definitions and essential inquiries to advance animal welfare science"
Englund & Cronin (Frontiers in Veterinary Science, Volume 10, August 2023)
<https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC10433213/>