



Expedition Jaguar

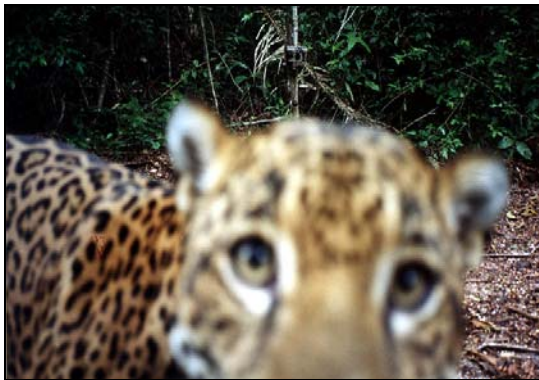
08 -15 May 2010 or 09-16 October 2010

An introduction to jaguar research and tropical ecology with Dr. Marcella Kelly of the Department of Fisheries & Wildlife at Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, VA.



Hosted by Blancaneaux Lodge

Blancaneaux Lodge 'In the Field' Expedition Series 2010



EXPEDITION JAGUAR!

An introduction to jaguar research and tropical ecology with Dr. Marcella Kelly of the Department of Fisheries & Wildlife at Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, VA. Dr. Kelly has over 19 years of experience working on wild cats resulting in many scientific publications and she has received numerous awards for excellence in teaching. This expedition provides a unique opportunity to spend a week with world renowned cat biologist, in an informal learning setting, in beautiful Belize - a jaguar stronghold. Blancaneaux Lodge is proud to support Dr. Kelly's, Ix (pronounced "eesh") jaguar research project. See Dr. Kelly's website for more information about her cat projects: www.mjkelly.info



A combination of entertaining classroom seminars/workshops and 'in the field' treks and expeditions. Learn about research projects and their importance to biodiversity and conservation. Meet field scientists, researchers, park rangers, and expert local guides. Ideal for those interested in tropical ecology, conservation and jaguars.

Expedition Dates: 08-15 May 2010 and 09-16 October 2010

Cost: \$1830 US + \$156 US tax + \$122 US service charge per person based on sharing a twin/double room.

Donation: A donation to Dr. Kelly's Jaguar Research is included in the trip cost.

Group Size: Minimum 10, Maximum 16

Expedition Jaguar

7 nights/8 days based at Blancaneaux Lodge

Saturday Day 1: Arrive into Belize International Airport. Clear customs and met by your driver/guide from Blancaneaux Lodge. Two and a half hour overland transfer to Blancaneaux Lodge. On arrival there is time to settle in and enjoy the wonderfully relaxing atmosphere. The group will gather for pre-dinner drinks at the Jaguar Bar and, after an early dinner. Dr. Kelly will lead a round-table introduction so that everyone can be introduced to their fellow participants. Dr. Kelly will brief participants on her background and give a general overview of workshop topics and timings.

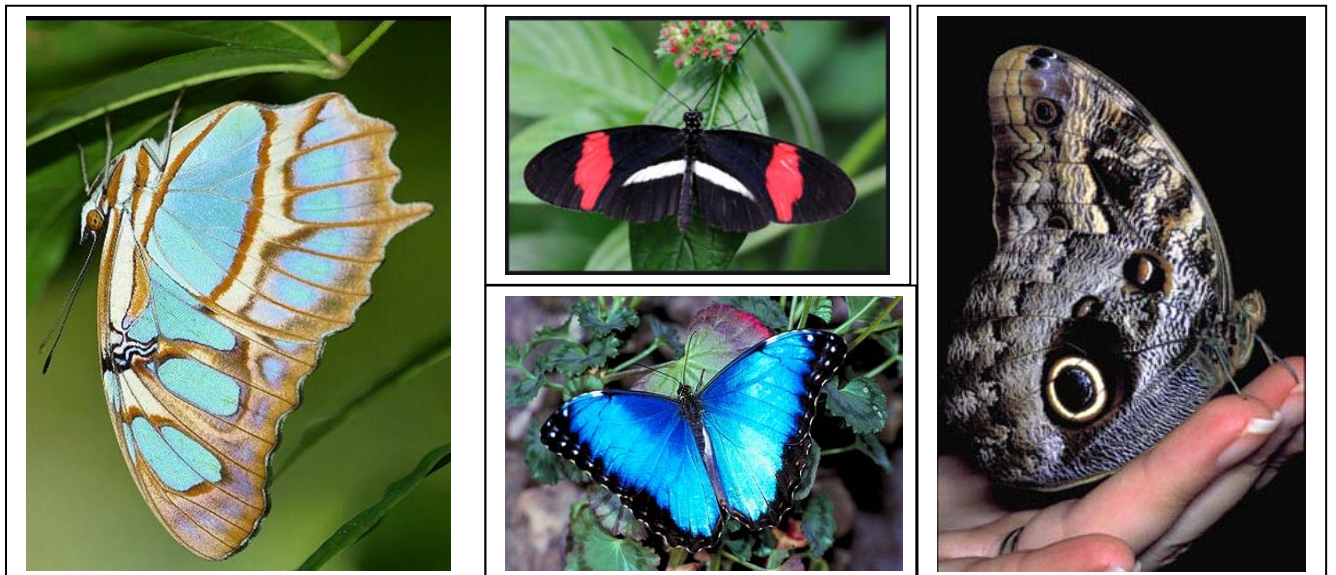
Sunday Day 2: We'll take a leisurely breakfast to recover from the previous days travel. For those who wish, there will be early morning bird watching before breakfast.

Morning Lecture: An introduction to the tropics and tropical ecology. Dr. Kelly will lead a trail walk around the property discussing tropical plants and insect-plant mutualisms i.e. ant-acacia; ant-cecropia; leaf cutters.

Break for lunch.

Afternoon Lecture: A short 15 min lecture on butterfly-passion flower mutualism. The lecture will be followed by a short vehicle excursion to the Green Hills Butterfly Farm where hosts the Meermans' will provide a guided tour and an in-depth discussion on butterfly and moth ecology.

Return to Blancaneaux Lodge for a late afternoon swim or take an optional massage before enjoying a group dinner.



Evening lecture: An introduction to the jaguar project conducted by Dr. Kelly and her team in the Mountain Pine Ridge Forest Reserve and the Chiquibul Forest Reserve and National Park.

Monday Day 3:

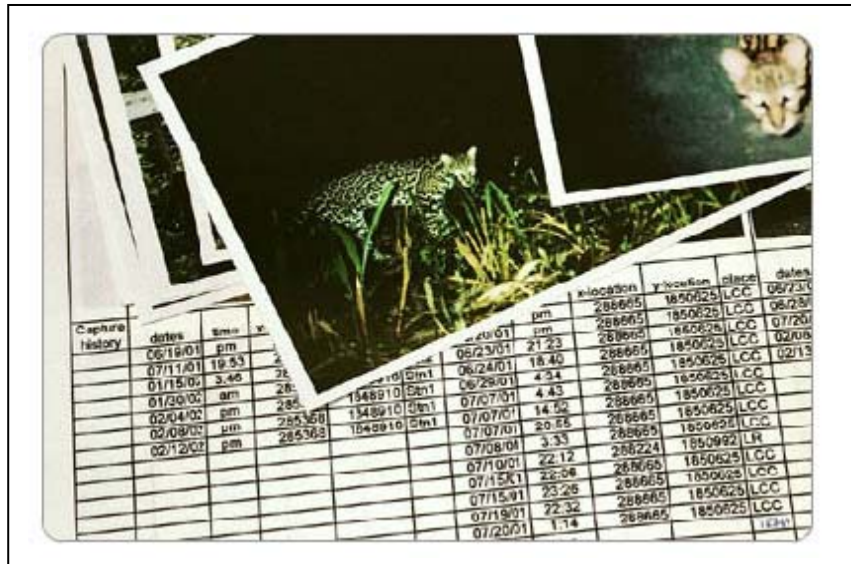
For early risers breakfast will be preceded by an optional early morning birding walk with our resident guides.

Morning Lecture: A short overview on study design for camera surveys and how Blancaneaux Lodge is contributing important resources and data to the Belize jaguar project.

Morning activity: Trek to the locations of motion sensitive cameras incorporated in the survey sample. Learn how to locate and set up the cameras and retrieve data from them. Short trek to nearby waterfalls for a swim and picnic lunch.

Afternoon activity: Check and download more cameras and conduct trail walking/driving to find jaguar tracks for making plaster casts that participants can take home with them. During the trail walk/drive, our team will also show guests how to identify medicinal plants, orchids, and a wide variety of neo-tropical birds as well as talk extensively about jaguar ecology while in the jaguar's territory.

Evening activity:
Examine jaguar and ocelot photographs from the digital cameras for new image "captures" and match cats by spot patterns to the reference set of known cats. Determine which cats are still alive since 2002!



Tuesday Day 4: Breakfast.

Mid-point through the expedition. You will have several choices this day such as: taking time off for yourself, enjoying optional activities (some at additional cost), continued camera trapping and searching for jaguars, to going with guides for more natural history activities.

Optional Morning Lecture: An over-view on neo-tropical birding by our resident guides. Topics will cover identification, behaviour, habitat preference, raptor research and migrations. This morning session will be held mainly 'in the field' around the property.

Optional morning activity: Continued camera trapping with Dr. Kelly and searching for jaguar sign.

Alternative optional activities at leisure: time off, spa treatments, relax by the pool, horseback riding to Big Rock Falls

Lunch

Optional afternoon activity: continued camera trapping with Dr. Kelly.

Alternative activities at leisure: time off, spa treatment, relax by the pool or take a horseback ride to Big Rock Falls.

Dinner

Evening lecture and activity: Short over-view on rainforest functions in preparation for heading to Caracol and the Chiquibul National Park on Wednesday. Examine more photos to assess status of jaguars.

Wednesday Day 5: Breakfast

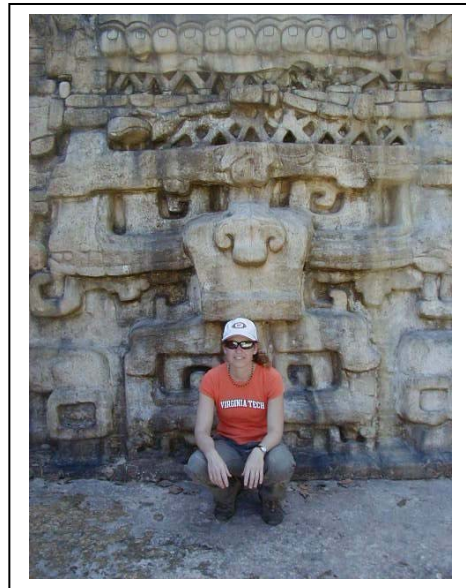
Morning lecture: The importance of the jaguar in Mayan symbology and spirituality.

Field Trip: A full day tour to the Mayan Archaeological site of Caracol in the Chiquibul National Park. This is the largest Mayan site in Belize and is comparable in size to Tikal. En route we will stop at one of Dr. Kelly's camera "pods" and on arrival at Caracol National Park rangers will describe the unique challenges they face in protecting and conserving the National Park and its jaguars. On our way back to Blancaneaux Lodge we'll stop at the Rio Frio Cave and the Rio On Pools.



There's time to freshen up before dinner.

Evening Activity: A 'black light' will be set up by the pool to attract a wide range of fascinating bugs.



Thursday Day 6: Breakfast

The morning is free to relax or take optional activities after the long day yesterday.

Lunch

Field Trip: Afternoon trail walk into the adjoining Noj Kaax Meen Elijio Panti National Park for an orchid safari. We could see up to 50 species and there is time to swim in waterfalls and enjoy the fantastic birding as we move between pine ridge, stands of palmetto, and moist tropical broadleaf habitats. We hope to see Howler monkeys along the way.

Dinner

Evening Lecture: A short lecture on predator (especially felid) ecology followed by (for those that are interested) a night walk around the property and adjacent forest to see nocturnal animals.

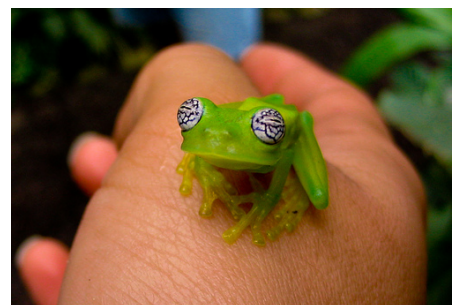
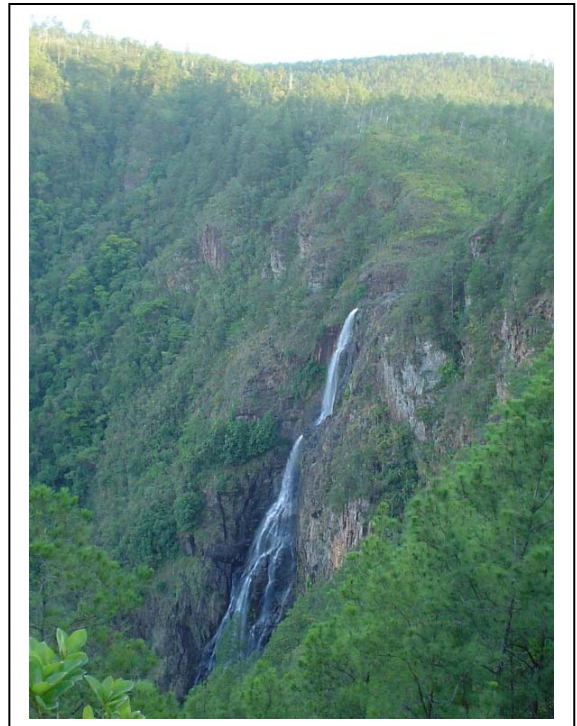


Friday Day 7: Early breakfast

Field Trip: Depart for 1000 Foot Falls in the hope of spotting Orange-breasted Falcons and King Vultures. Continue on to the nearby Bald Hills for spectacular views over the Mountain Pine Ridge and Chiquibul National Park from the Baldy Beacon lookout tower. The endangered Solitary Eagle and rare Black and White Hawk Eagle have also recently been spotted in this area. We'll stop by a mountain creek and falls to take a picnic lunch in the hope of spotting amphibians. In the afternoon on our way back to the lodge we'll take one

final stop at Bull Run Farm to talk to land owners about how they are contributing to jaguar conservation on their private lands.

Cocktails at the Jaguar Bar and farewell dinner at the Montagna Restaurant.



Saturday Day 8: Breakfast.

Mid-morning transfer to Belize International Airport and depart for your international flight. Alternatively take an optional extension to La Lancha Resort and explore Tikal or fly to Placencia and snorkel the barrier reef from Turtle Inn.

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What is included:

The Blancaneaux Lodge special 'conservation room and activity' rate.

All meals from dinner on Day 01 to breakfast on Day 8.

All lectures and activities as outlined in the itinerary below.

Round trip collective group transfers from Belize International Airport to Blancaneaux Lodge.

Accommodations on double share basis (we encourage single sign up's and will do our best to accommodate them for no additional charge)

Local taxes on meals and activities and lodge service charge.

Wifi internet access at the main lodge with own laptop

What is not included:

Spa treatments

Horseback riding

Tours and activities listed as optional in the itinerary.

Private transfers

Alcoholic or soft drinks

Laundry services

International departure tax

Enquiries and reservations: info@blancaneaux.com

1-800-746-3743, 501-824-4912. www.coppolaresorts.com