

GUATEMALA EXPEDITION

Jaguar Habitat: The Laguna del Tigre National Park in Guatemala

In July 2006, carrying Wings WorldQuest Flag #10, Dalia Amor-Conde traveled by air, water, and land to assess the status of the habitat of the elusive jaguar of Central America. For seven years, Dalia and her colleagues have tracked, captured, documented, and released this large cat of the Americas. To understand the range of the jaguar's habitat and the status of the species, the data retrieved from jaguar radio-collar transmission is immensely helpful.

CRISIS IN THE JUNGLE

The danger encountered in trapping the top predator of the jungle pales in comparison to the dangers of working in a region with rampant and violent drug trafficking. Vast deforestation of the Central American jungle and the construction of roads into pristine wilderness are causing massive disruption to the environment, and the capture of endangered animals is widespread. Organizations such as ARCAS (Asociación de Rescate y Conservación de Vida Silvestre) rescue, rehabilitate, and reintroduce hundreds of wild animals confiscated from illegal traffickers. Fighting for the ecosystem and meticulously documenting the changes they see, Dalia and her team continue to push forward in spite of the devastation, violence, and disorder.



Aerial view of roads and cleared forest

MAYAN FOREST RECONNAISSANCE

Dalia traveled on new roads in the park, shot photos from an airplane, and traveled by boat down rivers near the park. On these journeys, she took many GPS (Global Positioning System) readings so that new landscapes could be correlated with earlier satellite photographs. Dalia met with the Guatemalan jaguar research team and the road analysis teams of international conservation organizations to discuss her eye-witness interpretation of data she will use to model the impact of roads on the Mayan forest.

EXPEDITION TEAM

Expedition Leader:

Dalia Amor-Conde

Lucrecia Masaya, Defensores de la Naturaleza

Gabriel Gamez, Biologist, Biological Station of the Guacamayas

Michael Tennessen, Reporter

Read about Dalia's expedition:

<http://www.nicholas.duke.edu/dukenvironment/f06/action-jaguar.html>

ABOUT DALIA AMOR-CONDE

Dalia Amor-Conde is a doctoral student in landscape ecology at the Nicholas School of the Environment and Earth Sciences at Duke University. Since 1999, Dalia has worked with Unidos para la Conservación (UPC) in Mexico to develop sustainable projects with forestry communities in the Mayan rainforest. In 2005, Dalia received the Wings WorldQuest Field Work Rolex Award for her use of GPS technology to analyze the effects of deforestation on jaguar populations and habitats.

EXPEDITION SPONSORS

Conservation Strategy Foundation
Unidos para la Conservación AC

LAGUNA DEL TIGRE - RIO ESCONDIDO PROTECTED BIOTOPE

Established: 1986

Status: Largest conservation area in Guatemala, and largest protected wetlands in Central America

Biodiversity: 40 mammal species, 180 resident and migratory birds, and 55 fish species



Dalia and a baby temazate, confiscated from an illegal trafficker, at the ARCAS rescue station



Wings WorldQuest Flag #10 is held by Dalia Amor-Conde and Fernando Martinez, the director of ARCAS and its world-renowned Petén Rescue Center.

WHO

Dalia Amor-Conde

WHAT

Collect data to monitor incursion of roads into and deforestation of the Mayan Forest

WHERE

Laguna del Tigre National Park, Petén, northern Guatemala

WHY

To ensure the conservation of travel corridors for jaguars from Panama to Mexico

