

BELIZE BIRD RESCUE



ANNUAL REPORT 2022

BELIZEBIRDRESCUE.ORG

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A WORD FROM THE DIRECTOR



2022 saw 260 intakes, well over half of those as a result of vigilant members of public reporting birds in distress. Our rescue network is growing, with 35% of our transport needs met in some way by our network of volunteers, saving BBR many miles, not to mention hours.

Speaking of which, I can't let the year pass without paying homage to our fabulous vehicle. September was her first anniversary. We clocked up 21,000 stress-free miles, which in a country measuring 170 miles long by 68 miles wide with only 4 major highways, is a lot of travel. We are forever grateful to those who supported this game-changing purchase.

We made 176 releases, many of those parrots that had been through lengthy rehabilitation programmes. 18 endangered yellow-headed Amazons were once again flying wild and free, joining those from past years that are now breeding young ones of their own.

One of the highlights of 2022 was the installation of our new awareness billboard. The innovative design is eye-catching and has been the subject of many positive comments on social media, and not just a few selfies. We also discovered how much fun it was to decorate, so watch that space on high days and holidays.

We had a record year for toucans that had failed to fledge correctly. We are not sure of the causes, but it's no secret that they are one of our favourite rehabs, so it was an absolute joy to give them all a second chance of freedom. The timing was fortuitous as we had just completed construction of our dedicated songbird enclosure, which is also perfect for toucan rehab.

We continued our collaboration with Proyecto Santa María in the Yucatán, Mexico. They have been following our protocols for the rehab and release of former-captive parrots, and invited Oscar to visit their facility and check on their progress as they get closer to their first group of releases. We also opened dialogue with organisations in Trinidad & Tobago and Ecuador, as they consider similar programs.

After the isolation of covid, the early part of 2022 saw a flurry of old faces, as borders and flights reopened. The skills these amazing people bring to the rescue are invaluable, not to mention they are fun to have around. Thank you all of you – you know who you are!

Whilst 260 birds in a year is not as many as some of the busy rescue centres in North America, it's important to remind ourselves of what we have achieved here in Belize. Before BBR there was no future other than a lifetime of captivity for parrots removed from the wild: the provision of a rehab for release facility is a crucial element of enforcement and conservation success. Before BBR there was nowhere for sick, injured or orphaned birds to receive the necessary care to return to the wild. Before BBR there were parrots throughout the country living short lives in tiny cages. The organisation has evolved and grown and we've changed attitudes and legislation along the way. It has taken a small army of dedicated employees, volunteers, conservation partners, government officers and, of course, donors to make this all possible.

For your support and generosity, your kindness, your help and advice, thank you from the bottom of our heart.

Nikki Buxton
Executive Director



ABOUT BBR

Belize Bird Rescue is Belize's only multi-species avian rescue centre and accepts all indigenous and migratory species. Operating under a Memorandum of Understanding with the Belize Forest Department, the organizations' primary areas of focus are: rehabilitation for the release of wild-caught parrots liberated from the illegal pet trade; provision of a rehabilitation facility for birds confiscated under the Belize Forest Department's mandate; medical care and rehabilitation for orphaned, injured or otherwise imperiled birds; providing a wild-environment sanctuary for non-releasable parrots; education and awareness of Belize's wildlife laws; providing 24hr wildlife advice and rescue services; and supporting the Belize Forest Department with the Captive Wildlife Programme which will prevent any additional wild parrots entering the illegal pet trade in the future.

Saving Belize's Birds BBR in action!

Belize's only multi-species avian centre for the rescue, rehabilitation and release of native wild birds, with a focus on rehab for release of wild-caught parrots liberated from the illegal pet trade.

MISSION: To preserve and protect the wild birds of Belize, through rehabilitation, conservation and education





WHAT WE DO

RESCUE

As Belize develops and population growth inevitably impacts the natural environment, the impact of human-caused threats upon wild birds increases. We deal with window and vehicle strikes, chopped nesting trees, domestic animal predation, rodenticide poisoning, conflict in urban areas or farms, displacement through habitat destruction, plus deliberate harm such as poaching and shooting, in addition to naturally orphaned, sick or injured birds.

EDUCATION

Belize has a small population of around 400,000 people. With relatively few outlets for national media, and a strong reliance on social media, appropriate education and awareness programs can yield a high degree of success with a comparatively small outlay.

MEDICAL CARE

BBR's veterinary clinic facilitates health assessments and non-invasive medical care such as GI issues, minor wound dressing and fracture splinting. Surgeries and more complex needs are cared for at Animal Medical Centre in Belize City.

PARROTS

Our primary focus continues to be the protection of wild parrots. Belize has 9 resident species of parrots, and all are hunted as chicks for the illegal domestic and international pet trade. The provision of a facility to rehabilitate and release confiscated and surrendered birds is crucial for effective enforcement and awareness.

SANCTUARY

BBR is home to more than 50 non-releasable parrots. The majority have formed flocks and pair bonds in their natural environment enclosures. A few require individual care, whilst some of the special needs cases will periodically visit foster homes for extra love.



CAPTIVE WILDLIFE PROGRAM

Before BBR provided the necessary facility to house confiscations, the illegal practice of keeping parrots was largely ignored.

The Captive Wildlife Program was developed to phase in enforcement by first addressing the large number of parrots already in captivity. Owners could apply for a permit, and provided the bird was healthy and met minimum standards of care and conditions, the parrot would be fitted with a leg-band and permitted to remain with the owner.

Any unlicensed birds would then be confiscated and sent to BBR for rehabilitation. Despite a hiatus during covid, the programme is moving forward, and we anticipate that the permitting process will be closing in late 2024, thus preventing any new birds entering the illegal pet trade.



YELLOW-HEADED AMAZON

Belize is home to a unique sub-species of the yellow-headed Amazon, *Amazona oratrix belizensis*. 60-80% of the global population of *A. oratrix* are found in Belize, numbering fewer than 1600 birds.

BBR in collaboration with TIDE will identify and extract from the nests chicks at risk from threats such as poaching, predation, nest overcrowding or natural disasters, Since the project began in 2014, BBR has hand-raised 128 endangered yellow-heads and returned them to the wild where they are documented to be breeding successfully.



HOW YOU HELPED

New and Renewed enclosures, Releases, Billboard and much more!

Toucans. This was a bumper year for toucan rehab with 22 intakes of which 16 made it back into the wild. We completed construction of our new Songbird enclosure, just in time for this record year of toucan rehabilitation.



Raptor Rehab. Your generosity rescued 42 Raptors, 30 of which were able to be released.



Water-birds. 22 water-birds came through the doors. Often very down by the time they can be caught, the survival rate of this species group is usually quite low. 12 were released in 2022 and 3 went into long-term care

Songbirds. 2022 brought us 70 song/forest birds. This was the first year of our purpose-built songbird enclosure. Thanks to your generous help with the new facility, we released well over half of this notoriously delicate group of birds.



Parrots. We received 88 parrots, 79 of which entered the long-term rehabilitation programme. Throughout the year we released 77 rehabilitated parrots, 18 of which were endangered yellow-headed Amazon chicks. This brings our total of yellow-heads released to date to 158, which represents 10-13% of the wild population.

STATISTICS

Belize Bird Rescue annual statistics for bird intakes and releases in the year of 2022 by groups.

TYPE	INTAKE	RELEASES
Parrots	88	77
Raptors	42	30
Songbirds	70	38
Waterbirds	22	10
Toucans	22	16
Non-avian	16	5
TOTAL	260	176



EXPENDITURE \$USD

TYPE	AMOUNT
Bird food & colony costs	\$21,650
Meds and vet	\$2,800
Enclosures & equipment	\$8,600
Education & Outreach	\$8,067
Travel and vehicle	\$9,830
Rental of facility	\$6,000
Utilities & facility	\$17,809
Staff	\$52,100
Admin & fees	\$7,675
TOTAL	\$134,531



**JOIN.
STAY CONNECTED.
TAKE ACTION.**



CONTACT INFORMATION

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