

Buckle up Gruff!

Croc Gruff, an adult male Morelet's (*Crocodylus moreletii*), almost 7 feet long was living in a man-made canal in Ladyville just outside of Belize City. He was rescued by ACES in 2009 after several citizens called Belize Forest Department worried about how closely the croc was approaching them, ACES was called in to assess the situation. A three hour drive later, our suspicions were confirmed that the croc was indeed being fed by humans. After several hours of net setting, while two crocs watched us eagerly smelling the chicken we had for bait, we left the site. Upon returning an hour later, we found a croc sitting at the mouth of the net. As of 9:00 am the next morning, still no croc in the net. We drove back to Punta Gorda (spotting Jabiru Storks along the way) to care for our pot-lickers.



At 7:00 am the very next morning, the call came that we had a croc in the net...of course we did...so back into the car for a 3 hr drive back up north. This trip we spotted two picary (wild pigs) on coastal highway, which, by the way, is no where near the coast but extremely bumpy and unpaved. Yes indeed the croc was still contained. So, we wrangled him out of the net growling and squirming and secured him for the long ride back to ACES. He was named Gruff due to the low growling noises he made continuously throughout his capture and the fact that he was and is very surly!

So we all buckled up and sped home for a safe release at ACES.

