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**Mission:** to conserve Belize's critical wetland habitats and protect threatened crocodiles to maintain healthy ecosystems

**Vision:** continue to reduce croc-human conflicts so humans can safely coexist with these magnificent reptiles

**Ambergris Caye, Belize**  
**0.695 crocodiles per km**

**RED - Adult Crocs**  
**Green - Croc Nests**  
**White - Crocs < 6 ft**



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Data SIO, NOAA, U.S. Navy, NGA, GEBCO

Cangrejo Cay

Google earth

## ACES Founders

Cherie Chenot-Rose, *Research Biologist*  
Vincent Rose, *Crocodile Behaviorist*

Belize's freshwater crocodilian the  
Morelet's crocodile, *Crocodylus moreletii*



In Belize crocodiles are classified as threatened and protected under the Belize Wildlife Protection Act (Chapter 220). It is illegal to feed, touch, harass, molest, or possess parts of them (meat, teeth, hide, etc.), without permits. Fines are \$1000BZD to imprisonment. Feeding these intelligent apex predators causes them to seek out humans as a source of food.



## Croc-human conflicts resolved by ACES

ACES COUNTRY-WIDE IN BELIZE	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Crocodile calls received & responded to	26	61	48	173	110
Nuisance crocs relocated	9	27	8	29	25
Problematic crocs relocated	2	6	5	7	8
Crocodiles rescued, rehabilitated, and re-released	3	10	21	67	91
Problematic crocodiles placed in captivity	5	3	5	5	4
Illegal and/or inhumane captive crocs rescued	0	22	1	6	1
Documented croc deaths due illness/ natural cause	2	1	1	4	7
Documented crocodile deaths due to man	16	3	6	5	8
Crocodiles found with bullet wounds	11	4	2	10	0
Live crocs found with tails chopped off by a machete for illegal sale of the meat	0	4	1	6	2
Other wildlife calls received and responded to	0	0	3	20	3
Reported crocodile attacks fatal	UNK	UNK	0	0	1
Reported crocodile attacks non-fatal	UNK	UNK	2	0	2

## Killer croc captured

11 April 2014



The hunt for a crocodile that attacked and killed Benque Viejo resident Carl Diaz, 56, while he was fishing in a waterway in Lords Bank, Ladyville, at about 4:00 p.m. Monday afternoon, is over.

The male Morelet crocodile, which weighs about 550 pounds and has a length of about 11 feet, with part of its tail missing, is being held at ACES, the American Crocodile Education Sanctuary (ACES) in Ladyville, and it is expected to be humanely put to death by the authorities.

The hunt for the vicious crocodile began on Tuesday evening after it killed Diaz. Vince Rose, a crocodile expert, told Amandala in an interview this afternoon that after a hunt for the animal that continued throughout last night, it was spotted at about 10:00 this morning near a hole in the area.

The team had to dig out the crocodile, but it was not an easy task, because the beast had dug in tightly in the hole, and they also had to contend with its powerful jaws.

Police, who were a part of the hunt, fired three shots at its head from a police .38 Special revolver, but the crocodile did not appear to be hurt. Rose said that he managed to put a loop around its mouth and the team dragged it out of its hole. He then jumped on the croc and managed to tie its legs, immobilizing him.

Rose said that he was sure that this was the croc that had killed Diaz. It was the only croc around the area where Diaz was killed. The croc had been aggressive. It had charged at him when he went into the water, which made him very sure that he had the right croc.

Rose said that the crocodile cannot be relocated, because it has already killed a man. Moreover, he said, the Crocodile Sanctuary is filled, and putting this croc into a sanctuary would be risky, because if it escaped, there would be terrible consequences, so it is expected that it will be put to the death.

On Monday, at about 3:00 p.m., police, about 900 feet southwest of the Green Estate property in Lords Bank, found the body of a Hispanic man lying face-down in a water channel with the right foot almost severed, and a huge irregular wound on the right leg, and three bite marks were on the left foot.

The body was taken to the Karl Heusner Memorial Hospital, where Diaz was pronounced dead at 6:02 p.m.

Police said that a man of the Spanish Town area of Lords Bank was walking in the area to go fishing when he heard a

noise coming from the water channel and upon investigation, he saw a man being dragged down into the channel by a large crocodile.

The man began to make loud noises, and the crocodile released the man and swam away. Rose urges fishermen not to clean fish near the waterway, or leave fish guts in the area, or throw food into the water or practice any similar habits that could attract the predatory reptile.

Rose said that crocodiles are wild, and they will keep away if they are not fed in any way.

Rose said that ACES is assisting in educating the public, and urges fishermen and people cleaning fish to sell the fish parts and guts to ACES, rather than throwing it away into the waterway; doing so will earn those who sell the parts, extra money, and at the same time could help ACES to avoid spending additional funds on chickens to feed the crocodiles.

By Albert J. Ciego, Amandala

*“That's why it is so imperative that people follow the law by not feeding any wildlife.”*

*~Vince Rose*



Jaws, now over 8 feet in length, was illegally being fed when ACES was called because "he was being too aggressive."



## La Fondation Brigitte Bardot (FBB) funds ACES for third year

ACES gratefully thanks FBB for a third annual donation which has covered costs for habitat repairs, maintenance, and the care of ACES's rescued captive crocodiles. This year's donation will also be utilized for the new construction of a 20' x 40' natural secure habitat for the permanent containment of a severely injured crocodile called "Jaws" who was rescued in 2011, and who is quickly outgrowing his current home. Unable to successfully survive in the wild due to his human-inflicted injury, Jaws's lower jaw was broken and chopped by a machete when he was a sub-adult. Already healed when rescued by ACES, fixing the jaw would entail risky surgery and it would most likely not mend due to his strong bite force. Jaws remains in captivity to ensure his survival. This year's funding will also enable ACES to complete a hatchling holding area within ACES's new freshwater Morelet's habitat. Both habitats are expected to be completed by mid-2015. Thank you Madame Bardot for continuing to protect Belize's Crocodilians!



Honorable Lisel Alamilla, Cherie, BFD Chief Sabido, and Vince.

## BFD signs first one year MOU with ACES on March 3rd

Celebrating World Wildlife Day, the Ministry of Forestry, Fisheries and Sustainable Development promoted conservation of the world's wildlife. At the festivities, the Belize Forest Department (BFD) signed Memorandum of Understandings (MOUs) with ACES, the Belize Bird Rescue, Wild Tracks and the Belize Wildlife Referral Clinic. "The MOU outlines the efforts and collaborations that the groups will partake in conserving and fostering Belize's wildlife. ACES is one of the leading pioneers in the protection and conservation of wildlife in Belize, especially the American Crocodile. ACES has long collaborated with BFD to stop illegal animal trafficking. Just in the past few weeks they have confiscated several crocodile teeth necklaces in Ambergris Caye and have fined a water taxi agent \$300 for illegally feeding crocodiles. Throughout the event ACES emphasized the importance that crocodiles play in Belize's fragile marine ecosystem," stated by San Pedro Sun.



Libor Kopecny, David Oudjani, Barbora, Joseph, and Vince.

## International herpetologists assist ACES with relocation

Crocodile Specialist Group members David Oudjani, France, and Libor Kopecny, Czech Republic, along with friends Barbora and Joseph (both also from the Czech Republic), assisted ACES with the relocation of a problematic crocodile from Ambergris Lake where it was being illegally fed. David and Libor have been supporters of ACES since 2009 when they published a French article titled "A la decouverte des crocodiliens du Costa Rica" in *Situla: Revue de l'Association Francaise de Terrariophilie* (Semestriel N°20. Pp.18-24.) quoting myself, Cherie Chenot-Rose, about the dangers of feeding wild crocodiles. It was a great pleasure and honor to finally meet and work with them!



Co-authors Vincent Rose, Dr. T. Rainwater, Dr. F. Mazzotti, and Derek Newberger. Missing are Dr. Cobb & Abhilasha Acharya.

## ACES receives ACS award and gives presentation at CSG

In March, the American Chemical Society (ACS), Division of Environmental Chemistry, awarded Vince & Cherie of ACES a certificate of merit for the co-authorship of the poster paper "Mercury and transition metal accumulation in caudal scutes of American crocodiles (*Crocodylus acutus*) from Belize," which was judged outstanding for material content and for manner of presentation given before the Division at the 24th National meeting by Derek Newberger. The poster was recognized again in May at the 23rd Working Meeting of IUCN-SSC Crocodile Specialist Group (CSG) "Crocodile conservation: a lesson in history" at which Vince Rose presented current data on the population distribution of American crocodiles in Ambergris Caye. ACES ongoing mark-recapture and eyeshine surveys yielded 0.695 crocodiles encountered per km.



**Photo of "George"  
by Intern Miriam Bouchner**

# Financial statements

YEAR END DECEMBER 2014

REVENUE & SUPPORT (BZD)	2013	2014
Donations	12,628	476
Grants	16,275	16,900
In-Kind Revenue	4,734	125
Fundraisers	0	0
CSI Revenue	19,824	23,032
Intern Students	4,800	8,800
Interest	79	134
<b>TOTAL Support and Revenue</b>	<b>58,340</b>	<b>49,467</b>

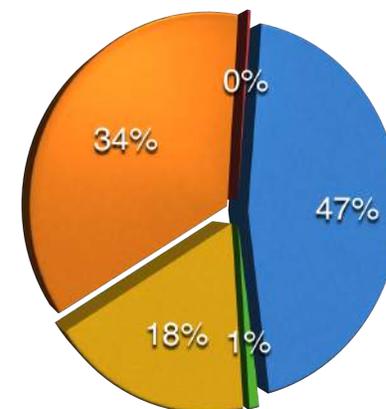
EXPENSES (BZD)	2013	2014
Equipment - tape, ropes, etc.	4,770	3,625
Captive Crocs Food & Care	3,690	2,977
Fuel & Oil	7,984	7,614
Equipment & Croc Habitat Maintenance	16,633	18,978
Administrative - incl. Bank Transfer Fees	1,164	23
New Construction Materials	4,002	0
Labor - New Construction & Maintenance	3,300	1,400
Project FBB - incl. Captive Croc Care & Food	3,147	11,770
Croc Education - donated time - no materials	-	716
Wildlife Transport Fees	82	54
Travel Expenses for croc rescues & rehabilitation	317	1,610
<b>TOTAL Expenses</b>	<b>45,089</b>	<b>48,767</b>

	2013	2014
*LT ASSETS (BZD)	15,539	27,539
Change in Net Assets	13,251	700
Net Assets Start of Year	20,305	33,556
Net Assets End of Year (incl. LT assets)	49,095	61,795

\*ACES longterm (LT) fixed assets include scientific equipment, boats, vehicles, habitat materials, etc.

- CSI    ● Donations    ● Interns
- Grants    ● In-kind

2014 Operating revenue

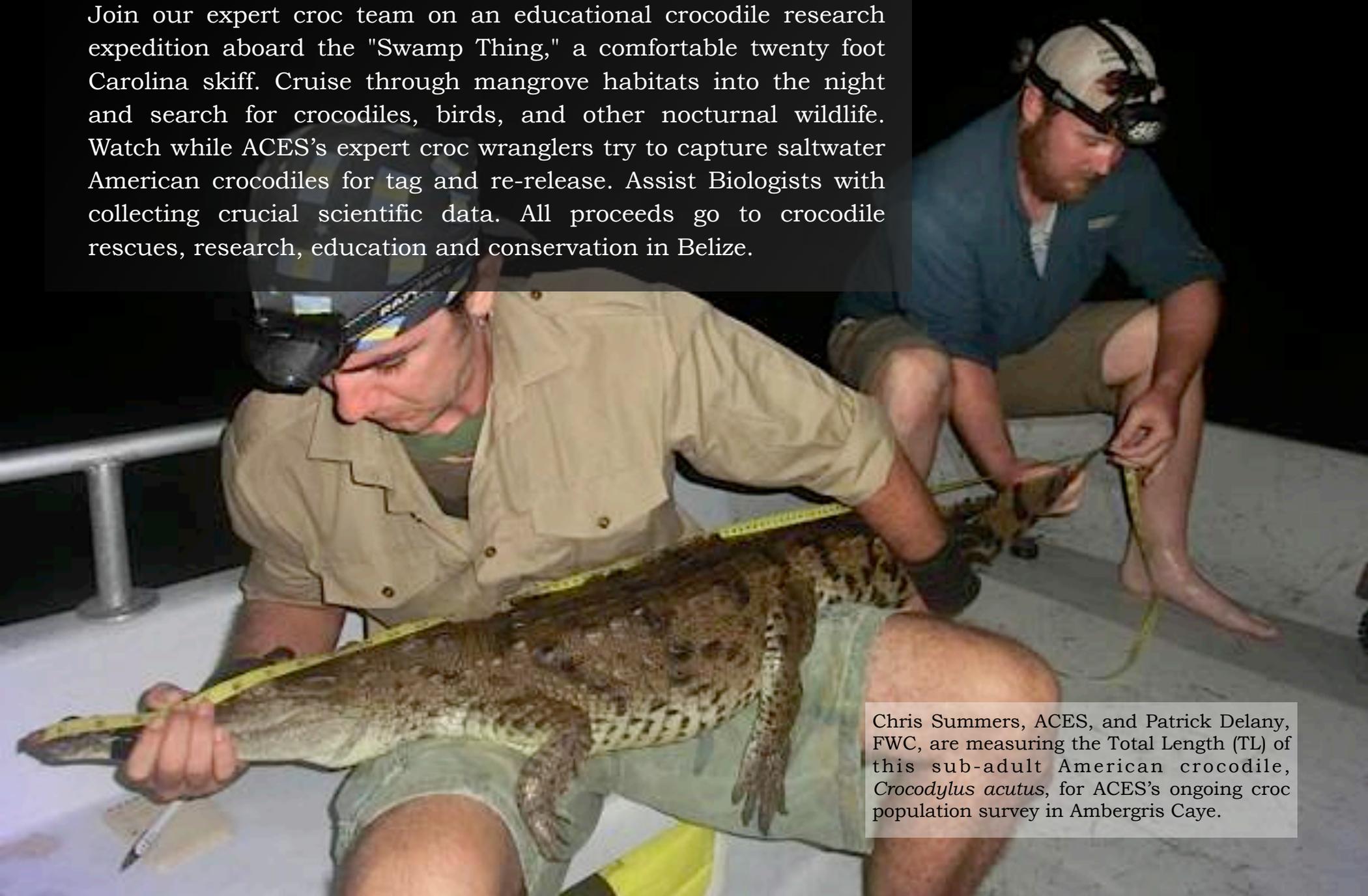


## ACES's Self-Sustainability Increases!

65% of ACES's revenue is generated by our "CSI: Crocodile Scientific Investigators" educational croc excursions and Internships.

## CSI: BELIZE crocodile scientific investigators

Join our expert croc team on an educational crocodile research expedition aboard the "Swamp Thing," a comfortable twenty foot Carolina skiff. Cruise through mangrove habitats into the night and search for crocodiles, birds, and other nocturnal wildlife. Watch while ACES's expert croc wranglers try to capture saltwater American crocodiles for tag and re-release. Assist Biologists with collecting crucial scientific data. All proceeds go to crocodile rescues, research, education and conservation in Belize.



Chris Summers, ACES, and Patrick Delany, FWC, are measuring the Total Length (TL) of this sub-adult American crocodile, *Crocodylus acutus*, for ACES's ongoing croc population survey in Ambergris Caye.

## Internships

ACES Research Internship provides students with the unique opportunity to experience life in Belize while studying crocodilians and their wetland habitats. ACES is one of the few organizations in the World that focuses on hands-on training of safe crocodilian handling techniques; thus preparing young people to work at zoos, sanctuaries, and to collect scientific data in the field. All proceeds go to crocodile rescues, relocations, care, and educational community outreach in Belize.

Vince Rose, ACES's expert Croc Behaviorist, trains intern Peter Lecuyer one-on-one. ACES has over 500 wild American crocodiles tagged. Of these, only approximately 23% are large enough to reproduce. Less than 1% of hatchlings live to reach sexual maturity in the wild. In Belize humans further decrease crocodile survival rates through deliberate and non-sequential killings.

## ACES soars with LIGHTHAWK



LightHawk pilot "The Remarkable Bill Rush" and Cherie Chenot-Rose, ACES.

February 2014, LightHawk volunteer pilot, Bill Rush, ACES, and an ACES's fiscal donor explored the Belize Northern Coastal Complex in order to gain insight for ACES's part as a key stakeholder and area representative in a series of workshops aimed at developing an effective conservation strategy for the northern protected areas in Belize. Aimed at spearheading the Conservation Action Planning (CAP) process for the said region of Belize, the workshops were initiated by the Sarteneja Alliance for Conservation and Development (SACD) in partnership with the Fisheries Department and the Forest Department, and with the support of the Protected Areas Conservation Trust. The workshops were held at the SunBreeze Hotel in Ambergris Caye.

Thanks to LightHawk, ACES was able to quickly obtain a general overview of potential Crocodilian Corridors in the Belize Northern Coastal Complex for possible nesting populations of both the saltwater American crocodiles and the freshwater Morelet's crocodiles. Of course, official on-ground crocodile population surveys will need to be completed for both species before a proper Crocodile Conservation Action Plan can be recommended for the Belize Northern Coastal Complex. This flight enabled ACES to determine survey routes for such population studies. Additionally, illegal gill nets spotted in protected areas during the flight were reported to the local authorities.

Aerial photograph made possible by LightHawk.



Photo by Intern Peter Lecuyer

## More memorable moments & ACES's future...

In 2014, ACES received and responded to 110 reported wildlife calls; and, 129 crocodiles were rescued, rehabilitated and/or relocated country-wide. The success story of the year was when a crocodile named "Hope" was recaptured on May 11th, 2014, during a mark-recapture survey. She found to be in perfect health and fully utilizing her healed leg that underwent two arduous hours of surgery in the field in 2013 by a team of volunteer vets. Hope's leg had been nearly been chopped off by a machete. She was released back into the wild on March 2, 2014, four months after the removal of her post operative cast.

## 2014 Research Publication

Steven G. Platt, Cherie Chenot-Rose, Vincent Rose, and Thomas R. Rainwater. (2014). Natural History Notes. *Crocodylus acutus* (American crocodile). Frugivory. Herpetological Review 45(1): 120-121.



## ACES expands in 2015

Due to the current need of additional croc habitats for rescued and problematic animals, ACES is expanding to a second location in Belize. The new facility will have larger, natural habitats with improved security for the ever increasing number of captive crocodiles. The first movement of animals to the new location will be mid-July, 2015. Approximately twenty captive freshwater Morelet's crocodile will be relocated from the Ladyville facility to the new "Rainforest River Camp" owned and operated by David Gegg and located just eight mile north of Ladyville.

*See You in 2015!*

ACES welcomes the newest member of the croc team, local Miguel Melendez. We're so proud of you and appreciate your hard work and dedication! Thank you Mike!



# Special thanks to ACES's 2014 financial & in-kind benefactors

## **Foundation & annual benefactors**

### France

La Fondation Brigitte Bardot

### United Kingdom

Rufford Small Grants Foundation

### United States

Brian Smarch  
Carol K. Hendry  
Christopher Love  
Jeff Turley, in memory of  
Joshua Turley

## **Conservation partner supporters**

### Belize

Belize Forest Department  
Belize Wildlife Conservation Network  
Belize Wildlife Referral Clinic  
Belize Zoo  
San Pedro Police Department  
Lamanai Field Research Center

### Ecuador

Tropical Herping

### France

Conserv-Action, Barbara  
Réthoré & Julien Chapuis

### United States

Belize Economic & Ecological Development Fund  
Crocodile Conservation Services, Bruce Schwedick  
Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries  
Lafeber Conservation and Wildlife LightHawk  
Optics for the Tropics  
Volunteer Latin America

## **Private contributors**

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Amanda Syme  
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Forum Ambergris Ambergris Caye South Watch  
Barbara Smalley  
Belize Water Services, Ltd.  
Billy Harmouch  
Caribbean Shrimp Farm, Ltd.  
Carts Belize  
Chris Summers  
Clifford Kirk  
Dove (in memory) & Lori Magy  
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Licks Cafe, Mario Cervoni  
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Tropic Island Air  
Yvonne Temsik

### Czech Republic

Libor Kopecny  
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### Germany

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## **Corporate donors**

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### United States

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Techsoup  
Pro-ID Microchip Systems  
YouTube

## **Crocodilian specialists supporters**

### Australia

Charlie Manolis, PhD

### Myanmar (Burma)

Steven Platt, PhD

### United States

Frank Mazzotti, PhD  
Thomas Rainwater, PhD

## **Crocodilian Parasitologist, IUCN/SSC-CSG, Latin America**

Marisa Tellez, PhD

## **Wildlife Photographer & Croc Attack Documentarist**

Brandon Sideleau

### International

CSI:Belize patrons

***Special thanks to all our contributors who continually support ACES's conservation efforts!  
There's so many of you; please forgive us for not having the room to thank you all individually.***

# Animal Planet & ACES



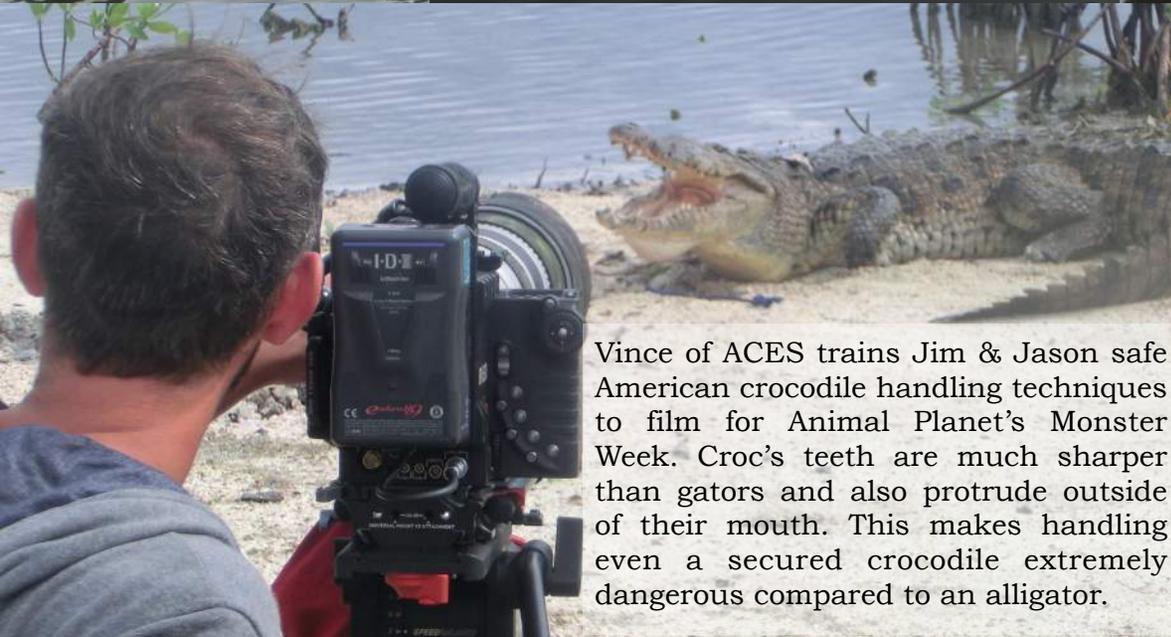
James Incledon and Jason Gibirti first came to Belize in February 2012 as the production team for Wild Productions, who produced the long-running UK Discovery Channel “Wildlife SOS” series. At that time Cherie and Vince Rose of the American Crocodile Education Sanctuary (ACES) were filmed for one of the “Wildlife SOS” episodes. When returning to Belize as film makers, Incledon and Gibirti reunited with the ACES team who were instrumental in the crocodile component of the “Monster Croc: Search for a Killer” production. ~The San Pedro Sun

**SATURDAY  
MAY 24TH  
7:00 EST**

**MONSTER CROC:  
SEARCH FOR A KILLER**



**Jim, Cherie, Jason, Victoria Chi (Belize Forest Officer), and Vince.**



Vince of ACES trains Jim & Jason safe American crocodile handling techniques to film for Animal Planet’s Monster Week. Croc’s teeth are much sharper than gators and also protrude outside of their mouth. This makes handling even a secured crocodile extremely dangerous compared to an alligator.





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**AmericanCrocodileSanctuary.org**