



Welcome to Wildtracks!

Wildtracks started its activities in 1991, and was registered as a Belize non-profit conservation organization in 1996, and works in four programme areas:

- **Wildtracks Conservation Programme**
- **Wildtracks Research Programme**
- **Wildtracks Sustainable Development Programme**
- **Wildtracks Outreach Programme**

Wildtracks funds the majority of its activities through its consultancy wing, focused on projects that fall within the overall mission and objectives of the organization. Where necessary, however, Wildtracks also seeks grants to fund specific projects. Wildtracks, and the two wildlife rehabilitation programmes it hosts, are located in the north east corner of Belize (Central America), approximately two miles south east of Sarteneja, an idyllic lobster fishing village, situated on the shore of Corozal Bay.

The **Manatee Rehabilitation Centre** falls under the Wildtracks Conservation Program, which has as its objective the long term protection of biodiversity of Belize. The Centre is managed in partnership with the Belize Marine Mammal Stranding Network, under the National Manatee Working Group, and the Forest Department of the Government of Belize. Since the establishment of the temporary facilities at Wildtracks in 1999, the majority of manatee calf rescues have resulted in successful rehabilitation back into the coastal waters of Belize after an average of 24 months care. Wildtracks Manatee Programme volunteers play an active part in the care of young calves and their subsequent preparation for release.

The **Primate Rehabilitation Programme** was transferred from the Wildlife Care Centre of Belize to Wildtracks in late 2010. Considered endangered on a global scale, the Yucatan Black Howler Monkey is only found in Belize, a small portion of northern Guatemala and southern Mexico. Despite their unsuitability as pets and the laws prohibiting their capture, there is an increasing trend of them being taken for the pet trade. Keeping primates as pets is illegal in Belize, and the Forest Department has an ongoing confiscation programme, with confiscated monkeys being sent to Wildtracks, providing an opportunity for monkeys to be rehabilitated and released back into the wild. Wildtracks Primate Programme volunteers play an active role as surrogate mothers for young primates, and provide care for the groups as they grow older, as well as being involved in pre-release and post-release monitoring.

The **Sustainable Development Programme** works most closely with the Sarteneja Alliance for Sustainable Development, a community-based organization in the local community that holds co-management responsibility for Corozal Bay Wildlife Sanctuary. Wildtracks and its volunteers provide technical support and input, working with the local fishermen, the schools and the women in the community.



Cabanas

Accommodation is basic, with shared thatched cabanas (sorry - no air conditioning or fans!), with adjoining bathrooms. However, there is generally a breeze coming off the lagoon, keeping temperatures lower than further inland. The cabanas are fully screened from insects but you may feel more comfortable with a mosquito net. The number of mosquitoes in your cabana will increase proportionally with the time the door is left open, particularly in the early evening – if you find you have a problem with insects, ask Paul or Zoe for a mosquito coil.

Smoking is not allowed in any buildings, or near the thatched cabanas (thank you!).

Water: Water in the cabanas is *not drinking water*. It is pumped from a well into a header tank, via a solar pump (which therefore only operates during daylight). It will therefore run out at some times – if toilets are left running or in overcast weather. Practice active water conservation - try to limit the length of shower you take, and when flushing the toilet, check that the toilet handle returns all the way up, and that the water does not keep running. Do not put anything in the toilet except for toilet paper (**NO** tampons, baby wipes etc.), as these will block up the septic system. If you are having a problem with your toilet, wash basin or shower, please tell Paul or Zoe immediately. Bedding and pillows are provided, and toiletry items such as shampoo, soap, etc. can be bought in the village.

Power: The entire facility is on solar energy, and you should therefore practice energy conservation - ensure you switch off lights when you are not using them, and charge any electrical appliances during sunlight hours. The only outlets are in the main house and not the cabanas.

The cabana is yours (and your room mates) for your stay, but it is appreciated if you can keep it clean - there are brooms, mops and cleaning equipment available in the main house. Small bags for garbage are available under the kitchen table top near the spices, and when full, should be placed in the bin in the car park, beside the sheep paddock. Please do not bring opened food into your room as ants, rodents, cockroaches and other creatures will find their way in!



Food and Drink

Breakfast, lunch and dinner are all supplied at Wildtracks, and generally eaten in the main house. Both vegetarian and non-vegetarian food is provided, and most food allergies can be accommodated. As many of the food items have to be purchased outside of Sarteneja (either in Orange Walk, Belize City or Belmopan), it is requested that you do not raid the kitchen between meals, as it can throw out meal planning if essential ingredients are suddenly found to be missing.

Meal times: As some work requires an earlier start than others, breakfast tends to be spread out from 6:00am onwards, with people preparing their own breakfast as they pass through the house. Everyone should have finished breakfast by 9:00am, unless on night shift. There is generally home-made bread and granola, cereal, fresh laid eggs, and tea and coffee available. Lunch and dinner are generally prepared by Paul and / or Zoe, and generally communal. Lunch is served at about 1:00pm, and dinner around 7:30 pm. Washing the dishes is a group effort, and everyone is expected to do their fair share...make sure you do your bit! Please be conscientious about washing up, as poorly washed cooking and eating equipment may result in everyone at Wildtracks going down with gut upsets (not nice!!).

Drinking water: Drinking water is filtered rainwater, and is available in the house (the left faucet in the kitchen), whilst washing water in both the house and the cabanas comes from a nearby well. Bottled drinking water is available from the village shops.

The Fridge: A scary item of discussion! Fridges in the Tropics have a harder time keeping things cold than in temperate countries, so it is important to make sure the fridge door is not open for longer than absolutely necessary, and that it is then completely closed. This is essential for ensuring that food remains fresh, and everyone at Wildtracks remains healthy! You are welcome to store soft drinks / beers /chocolate in the fridge but please tag them so everyone knows whose they are, and please respect other peoples drink / food. Please do not put anything warm in the fridge, nor anything uncovered (including mugs or glasses). If you empty the ice cube tray, remember to refill it.

Eating out: Feel free to go out for lunch or dinner - just tell Paul or Zoe in advance so they know how many to prepare meals for at Wildtracks.

Options to eat out in Sarteneja include:

Estrella del Mar (Pablito's)
Richie's
Liz's Fast Food
Backpackers' Paradise

The first three are local enterprises, and actively support the local economy.



Communication - Telephones & Internet

Telephone: There is no cell phone service here, but Wildtracks has a phone available for use with phone cards, which are available in the village. Please do not abuse the system by making personal calls without using a phone card, and clear work-related calls before making them. Feel free to receive phone calls – the number is (00 501) 614-8244 when dialed from outside Belize. There is mobile phone service in Sarteneja itself.

Internet: The internet is usually on from 8am to 5pm (during daylight hours) – all computers should be unplugged by 5pm. There is a daily bandwidth limit (425MB), so we ask that you are careful about internet usage - if you wish to send or download anything over 1MB, please clear it with Paul first. If the daily limit is exceeded, the internet transmit rate slows to snail pace for 24 hours, to the frustration of everybody! Uploading/downloading personal pictures, playing streaming radio / music, watching Youtube videos (even on Facebook) and using Skype are all examples of heavy bandwidth use that you are asked to avoid. There are internet cafes in Sarteneja with unlimited bandwidth, and we encourage you to use them for these activities.

As everyone works within the same general area, it is important to respect other people's work environment – if you wish to listen to music, please use headphones. If you are using a Wildtracks computer remember that, for non-work-related use, there should be equal access for all – please don't hog the computer if others wish to use it! We also ask that people do not open unsolicited attachments on Wildtracks computers, to avoid risk of viral infections.

Laundry

We currently do not have a washing machine and all laundry has to be done by hand. It can be hung up on the various clothes lines behind / beside the cabanas. Laundry detergent is available in town. Mrs. Carmela, who does have a washing machine, will do your laundry for a small fee, if preferred (and it comes back folded and smelling clean!).

Contact Details

Tel: (00 501) 614 8244

Mobile: (00 501) 670 0088

E-Mail: office@wildtracksbelize.org

Postage Address:

Wildtracks

P.O. Box 278

Belize City

Belize,

Central America

Rehabilitation Etiquette

Please maintain a minimal noise regime around the rehabilitation facilities.

Manatees: Only authorized people should be anywhere near the manatee rehabilitation area. Please do not touch, call or swim with the manatee unless you are part of the manatee rehab programme, and this is part of your job. Also, please ensure that if you are working with the manatees, no foreign objects fall into the water (hair ties, pencils etc.), and if you do lose (or think you have lost) anything in the water, you inform Paul or Zoe immediately.

Monkeys: Depending on which monkeys are in care at any time, there may be very young monkeys around. These have dedicated carers, and when out, should be avoided, as they should not become too used to humans other than their carer. Only authorized people should be anywhere near the monkey enclosures.

Time Management

People arrive at Wildtracks because they are inspired by wildlife conservation and want to make a contribution. They are expected to be self-motivated and packed full with initiative. As someone who is 'self-motivated and packed full with initiative', time management is, to a greater extent your responsibility, as long as the work get done. There won't be someone continually checking up on you, but if you need help, ask!

If you are a manatee or primate carer, your time management needs to be worked around the requirements of your charges – as they rely on you, their needs have to come first. Ensure you are punctual in preparing feeds and other rehab tasks.

Time off: Nobody is expected to work 24 hours a day, seven days a week (except Paul and Zoe!) – make sure you take time to explore Sarteneja. You can arrange time off as and when needed, to plan mini-trips (2-3 days) during your time at Wildtracks, to explore other parts of Belize - it is an amazing country! You will, however, need to provide sufficient notice for other people's shifts to be re-organized to cover your duties.

Wildtracks is a team effort, with everyone expected to pull their weight, whether it is weighing manatees or washing up. Be part of the Team!

Basic Rules of Wildtracks

...particularly .if Paul and Zoe are not there!

- If the phone rings, please answer it and take a message and / or give Paul's mobile phone number
- If a car pulls up in the car park, please see who it is and what they want, and take a message
- **No-one** is allowed to pass through to the lagoon, or to see the manatees or monkeys if Paul and / or Zoe are not there – tell anyone who asks that you can't let them through without permission from Paul or Zoe
- Lunch should be prepared as usual...please make sure that Peti is fed!
- If there are people at Fireburn, please ensure that someone is within earshot of the phone, in case of emergencies.
- The Wildtracks Facilities should **never** be left unattended – there should always be at least one person on site, to ensure everyone's kit is secure. We have never yet had a security issue – let's keep it that way!!
- The back garden is **out of bounds...DO NOT ENTER!!** Peggy, the collared peccary lives here, and is best avoided.
- The dogs should never be let out of the house together, as they will run off, and may be eaten by puma or jaguar (both of which show a preference for dog, locally!)



How to get to Wildtracks! ...

There are several options for reaching Sarteneja:

By Bus:

From Belize City: Four Sarteneja buses leave each day from beside the Swing Bridge in the centre of Belize City, from 10:30am onwards, the last leaving at 5:00pm

From Chetumal: One bus leaves Chetumal for Sarteneja at between 12:00 and 1:00pm (depending on the time difference between Belize and Mexico). This is useful if you are flying into Cancun, Mexico.

You can fly from Belize International Airport to San Pedro, then take a connecting flight or water taxi on to Sarteneja:

By Boat:

Once in San Pedro you can take the water taxi (Thunderbolt) from San Pedro to Sarteneja.

By Air:

Tropic Air has two flights a day from San Pedro to Corozal, at 7am and 5pm-ish. which stop at the Sarteneja airstrip on request. If there are more than two passengers requesting Sarteneja, they will also stop during other San Pedro- Corozal runs (www.Tropicair.com)

However you travel, once you reach Sarteneja, we can pick you up in Sarteneja.

Contact Information

Address

c/o Wildtracks
P.O. Box 278
Belize City
Belize

E-mail:

office@wildtracksbelize.org

Telephone:

House: (00 501) 614-8244
Mobile: (00 501) 670-0088



Packing List

Essentials :

Head torch/ flashlight

One or more towels (quick dry towels help)

Sun screen (sunscreen is not sold in the village)

Bathing suit

T shirts and shorts that you don't mind getting dirty

Water bottle

Long sleeved light shirts

2 pairs of light pants

Day pack

Toiletry items (shampoo, soap, toothpaste, shaving cream, razors etc. are available in the village when you run out)

Sandals

Sneakers (it's safe to run here so if you want to work out, bring running sneakers)

Basic medical kit (plasters / band aids, pain killers, anti itch cream)

Between October and March, you will need a warm fleece or sweatshirt

Recommended:

Dry bag (if working with manatees)

Books to read (there are some books here to read but it's worth bringing more)

Mosquito net

Hat

Rain jacket

Camera

Computer / Net Book (there is internet here but only one general access computer)

Extra batteries (for head lamp, camera, etc. - they're expensive here)

Sleeping bag/sack (sheets and pillow are provided)

Watch with alarm (comes in handy when or with the manatee or with monkeys)

Water shoes (if you don't think you're likely to like walking in the mud of the lagoon)

Sunglasses

Insect repellent is available in Sarteneja