



TERMS OF REFERENCE – RESEARCH OFFICER (MAMMALS)

Reporting to: Science Director

Introduction

Ya'axché staff are expected to work cooperatively with others; demonstrate flexibility in organizing work; have good communication skills; and demonstrate thoughtfulness in decision making. Staff must be non-judgmental and receptive in approach and reflect genuine concern for conservation, respect and commitment towards the individual, family and communities.

Purpose:

The **Research Officer (mammals)** supports the implementation of Ya'axché's mammal research and monitoring program, with particular responsibility for camera-trapping activities, mammal data management and wildlife-conflict response, while contributing to field research, technical reporting, community outreach and project implementation under the direction of the Science Director.

Officer Level: Entry Level (Level 1)

Primary relationships

- Supervisor: Science Manager
- Technical Oversight: Science Director
- PAM/COL/SCI Teams
- Communication and Education Staff
- Visiting Researchers & Student Groups
- Citizen Scientists

Key areas of responsibility

- Science Program Support
- Biodiversity Research and Monitoring Support
- Fieldwork and Logistics Coordination Support
- Data Management, Analysis, & Reporting Support
- Wildlife Conflict Mitigation

Main Duties and Responsibilities:

The Research Officer (Mammals) is accountable for:

1. Providing support and training to research and monitoring rangers and citizen scientists to ensure proper data collection in field activities related to camera trapping.
2. Continuous data management, validation, and entry to appropriate databases for camera trapping, and other program areas as needed.
3. Work with the Science team in planning, designing, and modifying monitoring methodologies where appropriate and ensuring that the ranger team is informed of any changes.
4. Assisting with data analysis for camera trapping and contribute to annual and project reports requiring this data.

5. Assisting in coordinating field work, logistics, and implementation for any projects which require mammal and camera trapping expertise.
6. Assist in the preparation of datasheets for the program as needed and socialize with rangers.
7. Identifying wildlife captured in camera images with guidance from the Science team.
8. Assisting the Science Manager in the maintenance and seasonal inventory of equipment for the Science Program.
9. Support the Science Program with the development of Education and Outreach materials for dissemination to schools and Ya'axché educational activities and community forums and meetings.
10. Contributing to the development of technical documents such as Farmscape Biodiversity and State of the Protected Areas reports.
11. Liaising with COL team to share results of research and monitoring activities to communities.
12. Respond to jaguar attack reports coming from community members.
13. Conduct farm visits to provide adequate technical advice on conflict mitigation measures for wildlife conflict.
14. Support the maintenance of professional relationships with visiting researchers, student groups, citizen scientists, government agencies, and other partners relevant to the position. Performing any other tasks from time to time that may be requested, highlighting skills and experience.

Outcomes and Performance Indicators to be achieved by the position:

Outcomes	Performance Indicators
<i>1. Research & Monitoring Support</i> Scientifically sound and effectively functioning research, inventory, and monitoring activities.	▪ Research, Inventory and Monitoring activities are scheduled each month according to the Biodiversity Research, Inventory, and Monitoring protocol ▪ High quality data is collected by the ranger team ▪ 90% of monitoring activities completed on time ▪ In collaboration with Science Director, at least 4 biodiversity training sessions are held annually for Research and Monitoring rangers based on needs assessment ▪ BRIM guidelines are updated as the need arises based on new developments in science and technology

<i>2. Data Management and Reporting</i> Accurate and complete camera trap data entered in database on a regular basis.	▪ Ranger monitoring data are entered in an accurate and timely manner ▪ Databases are maintained and improved where necessary, and new databases created as needed to accommodate new data sets ▪ Data storage safeguards are in place (backup of electronic and proper storage of hard copy) ▪ All data are ready for analysis in time for the yearly reporting period
<i>3. Wildlife Conflict Mitigation</i> Community members are supported by advice and mitigation measures to reduce conflict with jaguars.	▪ 90% of conflict calls responded to ▪ 5 community members are supported annually with mitigation equipment in response to confirmed jaguar attack ▪ All conflict response data are collected using Survey123 and shared with the Forest Department immediately once returning to office
<i>4. Research & Monitoring Project Activities Implementation</i> Efficiently implement projects as outlined in the funding agreements.	▪ 100% of project research activities are completed where feasible and modified where necessary ▪ Project supporting documentation submitted to project manager in a timely manner ▪ Ya'axché's donors satisfied with quality and professionalism of the science program ▪ Project research activities contribute to Ya'axché's decision making process for management of protected areas
<i>5. External Relationship and Outreach</i> Contribute to the organizations overall success by supporting the science team in maintaining communications with partners.	▪ All current partner relationships remain strong and support establishment of new collaborations ▪ Ya'axché is represented at national working groups, workshops, and other relevant meetings ▪ With COL, EDUC, and Communications Teams, science program activities/findings are regularly shared with communities and the general public

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- Ya'axché maintains a reputation as a reliable, science-based organization
 - Public awareness of research and monitoring activities is increased
 - The Science Program contributes effectively to the implementation of education and awareness events
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Place(s) of work:

- Main Office: #3 Ogaldez Street, Punta Gorda, Toledo District, Belize
- Secondary locations: Golden Stream Field Station, Golden Stream Corridor Preserve, Toledo District, Belize; Maya Golden Landscape in southern Belize

Qualifications:*Essential:*

- Associate's degree in natural resource management, wildlife management, biodiversity conservation, or related field
- Alternatively, 2 years in field research and data handling and management
- Ability to work with a diverse team and diverse cultures
- Proactive at work and willing to learn
- Experience working on research projects
- Experience identifying Belizean wildlife
- Excellent communication skills, verbally and in technical writing
- Excellent interpersonal skills to build collaborative relationships and network effectively
- Ability to work independently and within a team
- Ability to work in remote and dense jungle for an extended period of time
- Working knowledge and capacity to do basic statistical analysis of datasets
- Valid driver's license

Desired:

- Knowledge of camera trap surveys is an asset but not essential
- Familiarity with the culture and traditions in Toledo District is an asset
- Sensitivity to the needs of persons with low literacy and/or English as a Second Language (ESL) when creating written materials
- Ability to work with a wide variety of individuals (including a multicultural in-house team) by using tact, diplomacy and flexibility, resolve conflict effectively
- Ability to work under pressure, manage multiple tasks and allocate time effectively to meet internal and external deadlines
- Ability to think strategically, logically and to apply common sense, meticulous attention to detail, dependable and reliable, with a positive attitude
- Effective team player and committed to support and improve the overall work of Ya'axché