

NEWS FROM...



FOR: NEWS EDITORS

RE: JAGUAR APPRECIATION DAY AT THE PALM BEACH ZOO

DATE: SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 2008

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September 2008, West Palm Beach, FL- Join the Palm Beach Zoo on Saturday, September 20, for a celebration of all things “**spotted**” in support of jaguar conservation. Learn more about these alluring creatures through keeper talks and enrichment sessions, and help say “Happy 3rd Birthday,” to “*Izel*,” one of our resident jaguars. Children can enjoy a host of activities throughout the day, including games, arts and crafts.

Jaguars (*Panthera onca*) are known for their elegant, spotted coat. Generally smaller than a tiger or lion, they are similar in appearance to the

African and Asian leopard but have shorter tails and a more powerful and compact body. Historically they have been found from the southwestern United States to southern Argentina. Its range is now reduced due to deforestation, conversion of land to other uses, and killing of jaguars and their prey. The majority of loss has occurred in Mexico and the United States, and in Brazil and Argentina in the south.

The Palm Beach Zoo currently sponsors conservation projects in numerous regions of the world, including a program designed to understand and conserve the Jaguar habitat in the Yucatan. The zoo helps to fund the “camera-trapping” aspect of the Jaguar Species Survival Plan (SSP). Camera trapping involves setting up cameras in remote areas that jaguars are known to inhabit. A sensor on the camera will pick up motion and photograph a certain area or animal when it is triggered. This way, animals have no human interaction and the cameras can “catch” animals in their natural, wild state. This type of study also helps obtain population demographics of many species that inhabit the area as camera sensors will respond to any animal movement. This camera-trapping will help researchers gain a better understanding of the number of jaguars and other animals in the area.

The Palm Beach Zoo is a non-profit zoological organization located at Dreher Park in West Palm Beach, housing over 1,500 animals within 23 acres of lush tropical habitat. Its mission is to provide an outdoor classroom of living creatures to foster awareness, appreciation and respect for the natural world.

All activities are free for Palm Beach Zoo members or with regular paid admission. Palm Beach Zoo is located at 1301 Summit Boulevard, just east of I-95 between Southern and Forest Hill Boulevard. Regular zoo admission: Regular \$12.95, Seniors 60+ \$9.95, Children 3-12 \$8.95, under 3 years and Zoo Members are free. For more information regarding the Palm Beach Zoo, please visit www.palmbeachzoo.org.