



BFREE

WHO ARE WE?

BFREE is an Non-Governmental Organization that owns and operates a field station on a 1,153 acre privately protected area in the rainforest of Southern Belize committed to conserving the biodiversity and cultural heritage of Belize.

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• THE HICATEE CONSERVATION & RESEARCH CENTER

This is a captive breeding facility dedicated to the critically endangered Central American River turtle, also known as the Hicatee turtle. This is a facility where scientists, researchers, students and conservationists acquire and share Knowledge about this unique species of turtle.

• WHAT ARE WE DOING?

Team Hicatee is based at BFREE but travels throughout Belize in order to learn more about the status of the species in the wild. We do this by:

- Scientific Research and Monitoring
- Community Outreach
- Policy Advocacy and Lobbying
- Ethical and Cultural Preservation

• WHY ARE WE DOING IT?

The Hicatee species is at risk of extinction due to overharvesting. Our hope is that by collaborating, forming partnerships, raising awareness about their status, and conducting research, we can make informed decisions to ensure the preservation of Belize's Hicatee population for years to come. Join us in securing their future!



BELIZE HICATEE

LAWS AND REGULATIONS

1. It is Illegal to Buy or Sell a Hicatee
2. No person shall have in his possession more than three turtles at any given time.
3. It is illegal to catch Hicatee between the 1st of May and the 31st of May.
4. No person shall transport more than five turtles in any vehicle.
5. There are size limits: caught females must be between 15.2 inches and 17.2 inches (carapace length). To measure length, hold the turtle securely, stretch measuring tape from the top edge of the shell (head region) down the center of the shell (carapace) to the bottom edge (tail region).
6. No person shall possess or use a net to take Hicatee.
7. It is illegal to capture Hicatee in the following areas: Belize River: Beaver Dam Creek to Labouring Creek, New River: Irish Creek to Water Bank, Rio Bravo: Upstream from Dos Bocas Dam, also Booth's River, Cox and Mucklehany Lagoons, headwaters of Mussel Creek, Northern and Southern Lagoons and tributaries (Manatee Lagoons and Manatee River), and SibunRiver: between Ferguson Bank and Sibun Bar



"Fueling Conservation through Research and Awareness for a Greener Tomorrow and Thriving Hicatee Today!"

