

# Ron Magill Conservation Heroes Award



Ron Magill  
Director of Communications  
Zoo Miami



**ZCOG's Ron Magill Conservation Heroes Award** (RMCHA) recognizes outstanding contributions to *in-situ* wildlife conservation in Latin America and the Caribbean Basin by promoting capacity building and project development. The award provides Latin American and Caribbean field conservationists with opportunities to fulfill their conservation potential by funding capacity building—in the form of professional training—and providing project development assistance—in the form of field equipment purchases or data collection and monitoring services. In doing so, the award bridges ZCOG's dual missions to promote capacity building through professional development and provide direct support for wildlife conservation in the Americas.

## Yara de Melo Barros, Ph.D. 2019 Award Recipient



Yara de Melo Barros, Ph.D., Executive Coordinator  
Project Jaguars of Iguazu

### Conservation Hero

Dr. Yara de Melo Barros is Executive Coordinator of Projeto Onças de Iguazu. For the past two years, Yara and her dedicated team of researchers have worked tirelessly to document, research, and protect remaining jaguar populations in the Atlantic Forest of Brazil's Iguazu National Park, and their efforts are yielding important data needed for the species' conservation. Since 1995, Yara has committed her career to conserving wildlife and wild places in Brazil, serving in field and captive coordinator roles with the Spix's Macaw Conservation Program (1995-2009), as Technical Director of Parque das Aves, and President of the Sociedade de Zoológicos Brasileiros (2013-2015). In 2013, Yara was awarded ZCOG's Patrick Jones Memorial-Chattanooga Zoo Conservation Award for promoting capacity building in Brazilian zoos.



### Protecting Jaguars

Jaguar populations are threatened throughout their entire geographic range, including locations like Iguazu National Park, which holds one of Brazil's largest remaining tracts of Atlantic Forest biome. In fact, the situation is so critical that it is estimated that less than 300 jaguars remain in Brazil's Atlantic Forest—with only 28 individuals documented in Iguazu National Park in 2018!

To address this issue, Projeto Onças de Iguazu has developed field research, conservation education, and community engagement programs to collect baseline data on remaining jaguar populations within the park, reduce the potential for human-jaguar conflict, and promote the protection of the species.

Funds from ZCOG's 2019 RMCHA will be used to purchase field equipment to advance these project goals.

Learn more at [www.zcog.org](http://www.zcog.org)

