

Ocelots rescued from traffickers returned to wild in Ecuador

September 12 2021



Ocelots (like these pictured in 2015 at a center in Colombia before their return to the wild) are found in the rain forest across South and Central America and even as far north as Texas.

Six ocelots rescued from illegal wildlife traffickers have been returned

to the wild in northern Ecuador, the environment ministry said on Saturday.

"They released six female ocelots (*Leopardus pardalis*) in the Cotacachi Cayapas Reserve," near the border with Colombia, it said in a statement.

"All the specimens returned to their [natural habitat](#) after a rehabilitation period of approximately one year."

Rescuers said the ocelots were dewormed and [blood samples](#) were taken to assess their health. They were also marked with microchips to identify them in the future.

The nocturnal wildcats were released "in an area where humans have no contact with them and where they can live in their habitat and develop freely," according to Placido Palacios, director of the private James Brown Rescue Center, where the [animals](#) underwent rehabilitation.

Illegal wildlife trafficking is punishable with up to three years in prison in Ecuador.

Over the past seven years more than 6,000 [wild animals](#) have been rescued from the trade, according to figures from the country's environment ministry.

© 2021 AFP

Citation: Ocelots rescued from traffickers returned to wild in Ecuador (2021, September 12) retrieved 9 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2021-09-ocelots-traffickers-wild-ecuador.html>

<p>This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.</p>
--