Stopping Traffic

A Drexel environmental science student spent her spring on a co-op in Vietnam protecting the world’s most trafficked animal.

Ashleigh Jugan, a fourth-year environmental science major in the College of Arts and Sciences, was halfway around the world this spring working with an animal you’ve probably never heard of. The pangolin looks something like a cross between an armadillo, an anteater and a reptile – or a long-lost Pokémon. It’s also believed to be the most heavily trafficked animal on the planet.

Jugan’s 10-week co-op in Vietnam working with Save Vietnam’s Wildlife, an organization devoted to creating harmony between people and nature in which wildlife like the pangolin can flourish, gave her a chance to reaffirm that conservation in the field is her true passion.

“I couldn't even describe a more ideal job for myself: out in the jungle rescuing pangolins, caring for them and bringing them back to health before they are released back into the wild,” Jugan said. “Every day I feel like I'm making a difference in the world, helping to ensure the Sunda pangolin does not go extinct. I've never worked so hard, or enjoyed a job as much as I have working here.”

Learn about everything an international co-op can offer.