



## Tropical Forest Volunteers



### Highlights

- Living and working within a reserve surrounded by incredible flora and fauna.
- Assisting the local community with the preservation of this important natural area.
- Spending your free time wildlife watching and enjoying your incredible new surroundings.

### About the project

You will be located in a reserve located in the western range of the Andes. Within the reserve there are over 280 species of birds, and 40 species of mammal. The project works to preserve the incredible biodiversity of the cloud forest. This is achieved through a wide range of activities, including reforestation, restoring degraded areas of the forest, monitoring human activity and conducting environmental education.

The reserve is also striving to become a model of integrated farming where agricultural practices complement the primary objective of preserving the natural forest. Combining conservation and agriculture will enable the reserve to promote economic activities that are environmentally friendly and beneficial for the local inhabitants.

### Volunteer Role

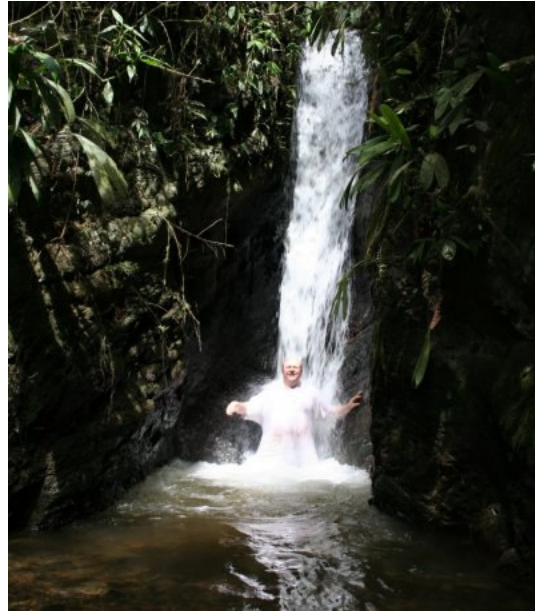
The first Monday at the Academia is an orientation day. All new students and volunteers go on a city tour of Quito to get to know the city and learn how to get around and use the public transport system. In the afternoon there's an information session in which you will learn about the Academia, as well as about important issues such as security, do's and don'ts in Quito, accommodation, volunteer work etc. You will then travel to the project on the Tuesday – it is two hours by bus from Quito.

There are three main areas in which volunteers can get involved – conservation, sustainability and social development. A great benefit of this project is that all volunteers live together, yet you can choose the area of work that suits your interests.

### ***Conservation Option***

Volunteers will take part in some or all of the following activities:

- Cultivating plants in the nursery
- Collecting and planting seeds
- Maintaining the nursery
- Replanting seedlings
- Conducting forest surveys to evaluate tree growth and survival
- Bird and mammal surveys
- Monitoring bird nests
- Planting botanical species to provide a natural source of food for wildlife
- Collecting and analyzing flora and fauna data
- Conducting weather surveys
- Constructing and maintaining trails
- Maintaining the medical garden



### ***Sustainability Option***

Volunteers will take part in some or all of the following activities:

- Tending to the organic vegetable garden, including preparing soil, planting seeds, weeding and harvesting
- Producing organic fertilizers and pesticides
- Organic agricultural activities, including clearing, weeding, fertilizing, pruning and harvesting banana, coffee and sugar cane plantations
- Animal farming duties, including feeding animals, planting crops for animal feed, fence construction, milking the cows and goats and taking the milk into the town
- Food production, including homemade cheese, butter, yoghurt, chocolate, coffee, pasta, bread, pizza, dry fruits and vinegar
- Forestry programme - collecting seeds, nursery maintenance, trail maintenance, tree care and reforestation
- Maintaining the medical garden
- Assisting with a alternative energy projects

### ***Social Development Option***

Volunteers will work within a small village close to the station. There are 50 families, a two-room school, a medical centre, two carpentry shops, a small store and a traditional sweet factory.

- Teaching at the nursery school
- Teaching at the elementary school (Not available from February until mid-April)
- Working within the community health clinic alongside the nurses (for volunteers with first aid or medical experience)

As a volunteer you will work for around 7 hours each day, Monday – Friday. Your weekends will be free to spend as you wish. On the first and third Friday of the month you will be taken on a guided hike, and you will have the second and fourth Friday off each month off to allow you to take long weekends and travel further a field if you wish.

## Location

The project is located in the Pichincha Province of Ecuador, 90km from Quito.

During your free time there is plenty to do in and around the reserve. In the evenings volunteers often gather around a campfire at the lodge. There are also board games, card tournaments and football matches! You can walk through the cloud forest along streams and to waterfalls, go bird watching, try your hand at horse riding or rafting, take night hikes to search for nocturnal animals, visit nearby beaches and thermal pools (activities at own expense).



## Accommodation

You will stay in a volunteer house with beautiful views of the forest. You will share a bedroom with up to four other volunteers. It is possible to upgrade to a private room with an en-suite bathrooms at an additional fee (please enquire at the time of booking). Meals will be provided and will consist of typical Ecuadorian food – vegetarians can be catered for. Alcohol is not permitted at this project.

## Requirements

Volunteers choosing the conservation option must be able to commit to at least 2 weeks, for those opting for the sustainability option its 3 weeks, and the social development option requires a minimum commitment of 4 weeks.

All volunteers must hold at least a low intermediate level of spoken Spanish. If your Spanish is at a lower level, you must join our Spanish language school prior to commencing your volunteer work.

When choosing to volunteer in a developing country such as Ecuador, it is important to remain flexible as the needs of the project are constantly evolving. This is what makes volunteering so rewarding – the fact that you are on hand to lend your support when and where it is needed. By choosing Academia Latinoamericana de Español you will have a comprehensive safety network behind you as we are here to help throughout the duration of your entire stay!

## Feedback

*"This place was very relaxing and the people working there were great. I enjoyed the hikes and taking the mule down into the town to deliver the milk! Overall the experience was wonderful and I feel I have learnt a lot about private reserves in Ecuador".*

Mike Edwards, UK

## Programme Fee Includes

- Accommodation
- All meals
- Project Support
- A donation that goes directly to your project
- Orientation and city tour
- Pre-departure information

- 24 hour emergency support

### **Programme Fee Does Not Include**

- International flights
- Visas
- Travel Insurance
- Inoculations
- Excursions over and above the itinerary
- Transport to project

### **After Your Project – Travel Ideas**

We are fully equipped to help you with making weekend travel arrangements, and onwards travel arrangements following your time at your project. We work with the best tour companies to offer safe, reliable and competitively priced trips. Weekend and day trips include:

- Otavalo – a famous Saturday market offering a dazzling array of textiles, crafts and jewellery just a couple of hours from Quito.
- Papallacta - 8 natural hot springs to soak away the day in! A great day trip from Quito.
- Cotopaxi – you can choose to hike this immense volcano, or take a more moderate tour to see it!
- Banos – great for trekking, mountain biking, rafting and taking a dip in the hot baths! This makes for a nice weekend break from Quito.
- Mindo Cloud Forest – swing in a hammocks, spot exotic birds and animals, bath in waterfalls, float down the river in inner tubes, trek and horseback ride! All this and near enough to Quito to make it a great weekend excursion.
- The Amazon – A fantastic option for those looking to travel after their volunteer project. Stay in rustic jungle lodges, swim with pink river dolphins, search for anacondas and swim in hammocks!
- The Galapagos! Ecuador's true gem! Experience for yourself the exact places Charles Darwin got his inspiration! Take a cruise around the beautiful islands and spot seals, turtles, sharks, albatross, blue and red footed boobies, iguanas and more as you trek, swim, snorkel and explore! An unforgettable way to end your time in Ecuador!

### **Apply Now**

If you have some further questions about this project, please feel free to contact us at [info@latinoschools.ec](mailto:info@latinoschools.ec)

If you would like to book this programme, please [click here](#) to complete the booking form. We will be in touch within one week of application to confirm your booking!