

GREENTREK Cia. Ltda.

Address: El Espectador E8-13 y Shyris. Edificio El Espectador. Oficina 203. Quito – Ecuador

Phone: +593-2-600-4954 - Mobile: +593-9-9258-8303 - US Phone: (312)-450-3176

www.greentrek.org/ volunteers@greentrek.org/ Skype: greentrektravel



Galapagos Islands - Habitat Restoration Project



1. Program overview

The highland forests of the populated Islands in the Galapagos have been greatly altered due to the introduction of exotic and invasive species of animals and plants. As a result of the lack of fruit and vegetable production on the Galapagos Islands, boats from the Ecuadorian mainland unload fruits and vegetables to hotels, restaurants, and markets on a daily basis. Quarantine regulations are consistently ignored and at least two exotic and/or invasive plant or faunal species enter the islands each day. This is the reason why one of the main current problems on the Galapagos Islands is the introduction of non-native species (plants and insects), estimated at one or two new species introduced to the islands every day, mainly through the importation of food to the islands from mainland Ecuador.

Our partner on the Galapagos has worked to develop reforestation, habitat reconstruction, and agroforestry activities utilizing native species for the last 18 years. Consistent with past work, one of the objectives of this station is to develop the technology to reconstruct native habitat in the highlands on San Cristobal, and to serve as a centre for similar projects in the highlands on other populated islands in the Galapagos. The reserve is dedicated to eradicate invasive species of plants, especially a type of invasive raspberry, in order to plant native trees and vegetation.

- Minimum time commitment: 1 weeks
- Spanish level recommended: Beginner

2. Life in the program

The station is composed of two houses with a mix construction (native bamboo and cement) containing 11 rooms each and resting areas. Separated from the houses you have the dining and the kitchen. The accommodations are rustic, with room for groups of up to 45 people. The reserve has electricity, but there is no internet or telephone access. Volunteers work Monday thru Friday having most of the weekends free to enjoy the beautiful scenery of the Galapagos!

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3. Project details & activities

Volunteers will work on both the habitat restoration and agricultural components while at the reserve. In addition staff will lead volunteers on various destination hikes to a nearby lagoon, native forests, beaches, and local villages to explain the ecological and human dynamic of Galapagos. Opportunities to work on group research and monitoring projects are available.

The volunteer activities are organized on a weekly basis and have emphasis in certain areas of interest. A typical week for a volunteer is as follows:

- 1 day: reforestation with native and endemic species in the reserve and in local farms (collecting seeds, classifying seeds, nursery work, out planting within the reserve or nearby reserve, help maintain reforestation lines, etc.).
- 1 day: environmental education with local people and schools.
- 1 day: station maintenance (trail maintenance, sign elaboration for trails, basic construction activities, help clean fresh water supply, help in kitchen, etc.)
- 1 day: organic agricultural activities and vegetable production (help maintain and secure food production for the station).
- 1 day: guided hike throughout reserve and/or nearby related areas (learn about biodiversity themes, natural history, & ecology.).

We also have mini-projects where volunteers can participate, but because of the amount of work that is needed at the station with the above mentioned projects, volunteers cannot dedicate entire days to the mini-projects:

- Petrels observation: nests finding, clearing around the nests to facilitate the mother's entrance, monitoring of birds behavior.
- Phenology studies and flora inventories: observation and classification of native, endemic and invasive species.
- Monitoring of birds at the reserve to determine if they are native, endemic or invasive.
- Germination Project: Determine the most effective method for germination in vegetable production and other species.
- Coffee production.

*(*Occasionally volunteers are expected to work half days Saturdays, but for the rest of the weekend volunteers may dedicate their time to rest, read, wash clothes, and/or travel locally to Puerto Baquerizo and use the internet and phone services..)*

4. Things to see and do!

All activities are optional for volunteers to do in their free time and they need to cover their own expenses. On San Cristobal you may be lucky to see the red footed booby - the least seen of the bunch. It's also the home of the Chatham mockingbird, only found here on the island.

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There are many visitor sites, some of which can be reached by foot from Puerto Baquerizo Moreno. It's a charming, peaceful island, and worth the visit. Take your time in the village to get to know the people.

If you want to see where the Frigates nest, go past the Centro de Interpretacion, northeast into Scrub forest. It's a great 35 minute walk to the cliff areas of Cerro Tijeretas, and you don't need a guide.

There's a good surfing spot at Playa Punta Carola. The waves may be too big and daunting for swimmers, and so we recommend Playa Mann (through Avenida Northia) or Playa de Oro. The waters are calmer and there are some beach hotels as well.

Take a 20 minute walk south of town to La Loberia. Here you'll enjoy the sea lions, marine iguanas, bird watching, and even tortoises. Don't forget to always stay on the path. Try not to disturb the wildlife!

5. Cost

One week:	USD 340
Two weeks:	USD 622
Three weeks:	USD 900
Four weeks:	USD 1175
Five weeks:	USD 1425
Six weeks:	USD 1660
Seven weeks:	USD 1900
Eight weeks:	USD 2145

If you wish to stay longer ask us for a quotation!

There is a USD \$50 application fee that is valid for 18 months and you can apply to as many programs as you like without having to pay this again.

Your flight to the Galapagos can be on Sundays. We can help you book and purchase your flight to the Galapagos. Please let us know in advance if you would like us to arrange this for you.

Please note that you will be responsible for your own travel costs to the individual project site, You will need to allocate US\$423 for the flight. Once arriving to the Island volunteers will have to pay a \$110 USD Galapagos National Park fee. This fee should be paid when arriving to the airport in cash. The amount of luggage you can take in these flights is 40 pounds. There is an airport in San Cristobal, but if by any chance this airport is closed, then all flights arrive in Baltra. From Baltra you will need to take a boat to go to San Cristobal. The cost of the boat is US\$35. Once you arrive to San Cristobal, you need to take a truck to go up to the station. The cost for the truck is US\$20.

The Ecuadorian currency is the US Dollar. In general we recommend that you take travellers cheques or worldwide recognised credit cards instead of cash as your main source of money. However between US\$500 and US\$700 upon arrival is recommended. This is to cover your flight, Galapagos park fee, and any additional costs. Please be aware that you may have a maximum limit on cash withdrawal for your bank card in a single day, so it is advisable to come with most of the cash you'll need right away to avoid complications or delays in getting the cash you need.

What is included

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- Pre-departure support
- Arrival orientation (Monday thru Friday at 3 PM at our offices in Quito)
- 24-hour in-country support
- Location orientation
- Welcome meeting
- Lodging at the volunteer house located in San Cristobal Island
- All meals at the reserve.
- Drinking water in the volunteer house.
- All transportation expenses that are directly related to the projects.
- Training, field coordinator and field equipment/material.

What is not included

- Transportation within Ecuador.
- Lodging outside the volunteer house in San Cristobal.
- Personal expenses such as laundry, telephone calls, etc.
- Flights
- Medical and travel insurance
- Visa costs
- Personal kit
- Additional drinks and gratuities
- Extra local excursions
- International and domestic airport taxes
- Lodging outside the project

Suggested packing list Luggage

A rucksack is preferable to a suitcase if you intend to travel after the project. A day-pack is necessary for everyday use.

Sleeping

- Sleeping Bag
- Mosquito bed net
- Towels

Clothing

- Walking boots
- Rubber / Wellington boots – these are essential. You can bring them with you or buy them in Quito for less than US\$10.
- Sandals/comfortable shoes

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- Flip flops / rubber sandals (which can get wet)
- Raincoat / rain hat (essential – you will get wet!)
- Long sleeve trousers and shirts to offer the best form of protection in the evenings.
- Face net (to keep mosquitoes off)
- 'Work clothes'
- Sun Hat
- Sun Glasses
- Swimming costume

Medical Kit

It is always useful to carry a small personal medical kit. This should include: Plasters, wound dressings and bandages, personal medication to last the duration of the expedition, anti-histamine cream/ tablets, fungicidal foot powder/cream, antiseptic cream/solution, Imodium tablets (x30) and rehydration (e.g. dioralyte) sachets (x 20), mild pain killers (e.g. Paracetamol), tweezers, scissors etc.

- Sun Cream
- Biodegradable Insect Repellent (this is essential – you will need it! Bring enough for your entire stay as it is difficult to get here)
- Water bottle
- Clothes washing soap
- Zip lock bags
- Gardening gloves

Personal Equipment

- Camera
- Torch
- Flashlight
- Alarm clock
- Penknife
- Gardening Gloves

Other Items (non essential)

- Batteries for any electrical appliances
- Sewing kit, Money belt, pens, pencils and stationery
- Books / journals
- Games

Preparing for your Trip

Passport / Visa Requiriments

Please note that you need a full valid passport. Some countries do not require a visa for Ecuador, please confirm this with the embassy. Upon entry you will be issued with a 3 month permit (at no cost). Make sure the correct date and length of stay in the country is entered onto

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your visa when at immigration. Longer-term visitors need to obtain a volunteer visa in their home country. We can help you sending you all the documents you required for paperwork.

Arrival / Departure Information

You need to fly to Quito international airport, and make your way to a hotel. Taxis from the airport to the center of Quito cost approximately US\$8. If you would like to have the transfer service and/or hotel reservations please contact us in order to arrange this for you. After arrival you have to attend an introduction meeting at our main offices in Quito. Introductory meetings are at 3pm Mondays through Fridays. During these meetings you will receive all the information you need to volunteer in the project. If you need to change this appointment time let us know in advance.

(IMPORTANT NOTE: We kindly ask you to arrive in Ecuador at least a two days ahead of the start of your volunteer placement. Most projects WON'T receive volunteers on the weekends so please plan accordingly. Also remember you have one meeting with us at our offices, this happens at 3 PM Mondays thru Fridays.)

Direction to our Offices

Directions to our offices in Quito:

Take the Ecovia (Red bus running along 6 de Diciembre Avenue) & get off at the Estadio Olimpico stop. Walk west in Naciones Unidas Avenue (towards the big mountain, Pichincha) and get to the corner of the Naciones Unidas and Shyris Avenue (on the corner of Quicentro Shopping Mall). Cross Shyris avenue; then walk two blocks north (to your right) in Shyris avenue until you reach El Espectador street. Look for a building with blue windows called El Espectador. We are on the second floor. Office 203

Our Address

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Finance

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Ecuador is a cheap country in which to live. A normal person's daily expenses (excluding room, laundry and board) range between US \$20 to US\$25. Urban public transport is US\$0.25 one-way regardless of distance.

Medical Information

High altitude, e.g. in Quito (2800 metres) can affect some people's health. You should check with your doctor if you have any doubts before you travel. If visiting Quito you are advised to take it easy for the first couple of days.

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**Health and Safety****Field Base safety**

All volunteers will be informed of the risks, health and safety procedures for the field on the arrival orientation. It is imperative that everyone both understands and respects them.

Volunteer safety

Look after your passport and take a separate photocopy with you. Do not wear jewelry or walk around areas outside with valuable items on display e.g. cameras. Do not carry large amounts of cash. In the unlikely event that you are targeted for your belongings, hand them over without resistance. If you are traveling in public transportation in Quito, always be aware of your belongings; put your backpack on your front instead of in the back. Be careful with your wallet and keep it in your front pocket. If you are taking taxis, be sure to get on an official taxi (yellow with orange plates).