



A Squirrel at Barra Honda

What's Inside...

- 1 Cover – A Squirrel at Barra Honda
- 2-3 Costa Rica Inside and Out – Liberia Town
- 4-6 News Updates
- 7 Volunteer's Moment – Dylan Heneck
- 8 September Diary
- 9 These are the days of our lives
- 10 What to do on weekends – Tortuga Island
- 11-13 Volunteers' Contact Details



The Costa Rican City of Liberia was founded in 1769. In this dry and hot city you will find hotels that range from economical to upscale lodgings. The city has more than 30,000 inhabitants and is the transportation centre of north western Costa Rica. Freight haulers coming from and going to Nicaragua and the rest of Central America pass through Liberia's outskirts via the Inter-American Highway.



This town is the home of Daniel Oduber International Airport, named after a former president who supported the development of Guanacaste during his administration. The airport has regular direct flights from Miami, Atlanta and Houston. This airport is a better travel choice than the one near the capital if you want to be close to the beaches. It is also well suited for expansion to meet the future needs of air travel to and from Costa Rica.



Liberia is 136 miles northwest of our capital. Driving from San Jose to Liberia will take you about 4 hours. Buses depart to Guanacaste on a daily basis. You also have the choice of booking one of several domestic flights that head towards that area every day. Also, for your information, Liberia is also referred to as "The White City" because some of its 19th century buildings were painted and protected from the elements with whitewash. The heart of the city is the central park and from there you can walk through the town to any direction.

Make sure that you visit the church La Ermita, constructed in 1865 to fulfil the village's need for a religious centre. Local craftsmen erected this church with supplies provided by the community. The church is open to the public daily from 2:30 pm to 3:30 pm. Another interesting place to visit is the "Museo Del Sabanero". Sabaneros are Guanacaste's cowboys; here you will be able to find hand-made saddles and other memorabilia pertaining to the area. Amidst the historic colonial constructions you will see well known fast food restaurants, a mall, and amazing activities to make the best out of any trip, no matter the time of the year.



A popular event that can be enjoyed in this town is "Las Fiestas del 25 de Julio". This series of parties is held in late July, in celebration of the annexation of Nicoya to the Costa Rican territory. It is an upbeat event featuring parades, "topes", music, dancing, carnival rides, and a lot of other fun activities. In this town you will experience a lot of the past blending with the present. It is a very unique town that offers warm weather, as well as warm people. It is a prime region

for development with large farms and ranches throughout. Its proximity to the popular Northern Pacific beaches and the convenient airport location, as well as the many things to do in Liberia, add to its importance.



News Update

...bits and pieces of information about placements and accommodation here in Liberia.



We are all very happy that you guys will join us this month...I'm very sure you will love your experience in Costa Rica!! We do have a very nice group of volunteers here already, and we are waiting for you to arrive!!

We welcome you and wish the best!!

Costa Rica Conservation Update – July 2009

July was a very interesting month for us here in Costa Rica. Months of planning, meetings, modifications and phone calls all to organise the work, accommodation and trips for our busiest month of the year!



¡BIENVENIDOS!

01/09/2009	David Jean-Jacques	Care & Sports
02/09/2009	Jeanine Timmermans	Care
02/09/2009	Berndien Pruijm	Care
08/09/2009	Miranda Kok	Sports, Teaching and Care
10/09/2009	Emily Stember	Care
10/09/2009	Ellen Franse	Teaching
14/09/2009	Samuel Dieffenwierth	Teaching
14/09/2009	Sarah Merfeld	Teaching
15/09/2009	Bernand Lagrange	Teaching
15/09/2009	Axel Biamonti	Teaching
17/09/2009	Erin Eisenberg	Conservation
19/09/2009	Devon Julian	Teaching
21/09/2009	Shayna Marmon	Teaching
23/09/2009	Wim Vanderleyden	Sports
23/09/2009	Lieselot Nijs	Care
29/09/2009	Leonie Scha efer	Care
30/09/2009	Bernedikt Fridrich	Teaching ^o

In July we welcomed the 2 Week Special programme volunteers. We carefully planned these two important weeks to show our 2 week volunteers how exciting, beautiful and different Costa Rica is to what they are used to at home. This included trips to the cave formations, the Mirador viewpoint and the waterfall system as well as some very important work.

However, the first thing I would like to mention is our visit to the Bat cave (no reference to Batman intended!). Several of the Barra Honda caves are known world-wide for the huge populations of bats that live in them. On several occasions in the past we have taken volunteers to these caves to try to catch and identify some of the species found within them, as well as give the volunteers a short but detailed explanation on the evolution of bats.

On both occasions we were lucky to catch two different species of bats in the net. I say lucky because we could only use a handheld net at the mouth of the cave and even considering the amount of bats that leave it was still difficult timing the swing to actually catch something!



One of the jobs that we have been planning since the start of this year - in conjunction with the construction of the nursery garden - was reforesting areas along the creeks and rivers. After many discussions outside of the park with local farmers and landowners we decided that we should start with two farms, one just down the road from us and another close to Oscar's house in "El Flor". We began the work of marking the sites in June, which was a long, hot job, but with so many more people in July the work was surprisingly easy. The work involved carrying the plants to the site, then splitting into two groups, some people digging the holes, some people carrying the plants to the holes, and some people putting the plants into the holes and marking them. We were pleased to complete the work in just under 4 hours, much less than we thought possible.

The reason why planting trees along rivers and creeks is so important, is because of the shade that the trees provide as well as the plants' ability to bind the soil; both factors which help with water retention, something that is very important during the dry season, when these creeks and rivers are vital for farmers and animals.

At the end of our busy weeks with these amazing groups of volunteers, we decided that a slightly easier day would be good. We organised a few hours work in the morning before taking the volunteers on the "Tempisque River Tour" Which was organised in conjunction with the Ministry of Environment and Energy (MINAE). We began both these days working with guides from Barra Honda and Mata Redonda National Park, the first time collecting rubbish along the Tempisque river bank and

the second helping to do some maintenance work at a ranger outpost in Mata Redonda.

Both tasks were done with maximum energy and vigour like always and then we were able to slow down for 3 hours as we slowly drove along the Tempisque river, observing the iguanas, crocodiles, spoon-billed herons and many other beautiful specimens of wildlife as we returned to the Tempisque Bridge to be picked up again before heading back to the park.

During July we also continued our investigations into the Park's Mammal and Butterfly populations. Our sensor cameras are still bringing in great results. In the last couple of months we have seen a change in the principal population which used to be the White-tailed deer and now appears to be the Central American Agouti. This suggests to us that with the rains, the deer are now moving around a different section of the park. So far we have not been able to find their new location, but assume it to be further down the side of the hills where the vegetation is fresher.

The butterfly inventory is still bringing in new results each time, we now have around about 20 species preserved for display in the park. These specimens are important for several reasons, giving us solid evidence of what species we have in the park and also to help us show visitors to the park what they can see and what it is called.

Finally I would like to say to all the volunteers who visited us during July, a big thank you to all of you for your hard work, enthusiasm and for having such a great time with us. All the staff here in Costa Rica hope you will take something special back with you and visit us again some day!

Richard Munday
Conservation Coordinator
Barra Honda National Park
July 2009



Bat



Deer



Rattler Snake

These are some of the animals that we can see at Barra Honda National Park (Our Conservation & Environment Project)

Volunteer's Moment

At the beginning of my trip to Costa Rica I believed that one month was a long time to spend on an experience such as this, but I have come to realize that one month goes by fast. Just one month in this bright and cheerful country has taught me so much about the culture and landscape of a completely different life to my own.

Although volunteering was my main goal, towards the end of my trip I noticed not only how much better I have gotten at Spanish but also how big a learning experience this trip was. Whether it was the difference I could see I was making in the less privileged lives of the children I was instructing, or being almost adopted into a local home. I have progressed immensely within my own being, but I have also helped others.

All of my learnings here on my Project Abroad in Costa Rica have changed me for better and will last with me forever. ¡¡ Pura vida mae!!

Dylan Heneck



This is Dylan, he always is making faces and having a good time. He left us and now he is in Peru also with Projects Abroad.

Hey Dylan, have a great time there and keep in touch, we all love you!!

September Diary

Whats happening around you...

September Weather in Costa Rica...

This month is when usually rain really starts, but this year, as weather has been so crazy all over the world, we are yet to get any rain at all. So, for this month volunteers, let me tell you that you will have pretty days with lots of sun outside instead of lots of rain.



Quiz nights and month dinner

We will inform you by e-mail the place, time and date of our future quiz nights and dinners. See you there!!

COSTA RICA INDEPENDENCE DAY SEPTEMBER 15TH



Celebrations start the day before in the evening with a parade of homemade lanterns representing the night the news arrived to Costa Rica. Big patriotic parades celebrate Costa Rica's independence from Spain in 1821.



These are the days of our lives



***Jauja** is a German restaurant where volunteers have been meeting up since last January. Every day at 07:30 p.m. they still go there, that's why I wanted to show these pictures to remind other volunteers about this place, its owner, Hans, and its waiters. Manuel is one of them and I'm sure every body knows him.*

TORTUGA ISLAND

Particularly enchanting for its beauty, Tortuga Island is known for its immaculate beach and turquoise waters, a perfect stop for swimming and snorkelling. You will experience blue water, white sand, green mountains and a nice service as Calypso's Supper catamaran, Manta Raya, glides past more than seven island in the Gulf of Nicoya. Her final "Port of Call" is the enchantingly beautiful, palm-studded Tortuga Island where you can walk the impeccable white sand beach, swim and investigate the marine life while the crew prepares a sumptuous feast. Enjoy dining in the shade of white umbrellas with tables covered in white linen.

