

Suggested 4 week itinerary for genetic research expeditions



Students who wish to develop an understanding of genetic research can join the expedition in the Cusuco National Park in Honduras and use the genetic analysis facilities in the laboratory there.

Honduras - The Cusuco National Park

Itinerary

Week 1 - HM001 Jungle Training

Week 2 - HM003 DNA field sampling course

Weeks 3,4 - HM101 Biodiversity monitoring

This course will allow the student to develop an understanding of genetic analysis techniques and apply these techniques in the field towards conservation research. The course is based in the Cusuco National Park in the cloud forests of Northern Honduras. It encompasses general forest ecology and survival techniques before moving onto specifics of field genetics including how to collect and process samples, and then how to use this information towards conservation.

The first week of the course is the jungle training course where students are taught general forest ecology, including some of the main species in the area and their ecology. The course also highlights the specific requirements for working in the forest environment including safety considerations and conservation needs of the area.

For week two the student will take the DNA field sampling course. This course teaches the student how to take samples from the field that can be analysed for genetic information in the field laboratory, these samples are then processed by the students using PCRs and primers. The students are then taught how this genetic information is used in conservation and the importance of genetic conservation.

During the third and fourth weeks the student joins the biodiversity monitoring programs, these include studies on a wide range of animals, plants and habitats which the student can choose from and will allow them to contribute towards the yearly monitoring program of the forest and continue to use the knowledge they gained during their DNA course in the field.