

Suggested 4 week itinerary for environmental science expeditions



Students interested in environmental science can take advantage of the environmental analysis lab at our research site on Utila, Honduras.

Honduras - Utila

Itinerary

Week 1 - HU007 Utila Reef Ecology

Week 2 - HU012 Advanced Marine Survey Methods

Week 3 - HU108 Mangrove surveys

Week 4 - HB107 Research assistant pool Utila

This expedition takes the student to the Honduran island of Utila where Operation Wallacea has access to the laboratory facilities at the Coral View Research Center. This will allow the student to develop a range of skills and experience in sampling and analysis of environmental measurements in the marine environment and learn how such measurements are used towards conservation and research.

The first week of the course involves the reef ecology course where students will learn species identification of fish, corals and invertebrates. The course also involves elements of reef conservation, surveying and ecology.

Following on from this course students will join the advanced marine survey methods course where they will learn a wide variety of skills and techniques used by marine biologists to survey the marine environment. This will include techniques for surveying reefs, seagrass systems and mangrove beds using diving, snorkelling and other methods.

After the two weeks of training the student will get the chance to use the skills they have developed in the field collecting data that will be used towards research and conservation. This will start with a week in the mangrove systems of Utila. These extensive systems are remote and very rarely visited as they are only accessible by kayak. The student will join a small team of researchers paddling to remote parts of the mangrove systems to take a suite of environmental measurements. Many of these can be taken in the field, while others require samples to be taken in the field and returned to the laboratory for more advance analysis.

For the final week the student can join the Research Assistant pool, allowing them to join a variety of different projects on the reefs. These will involve a range of tasks such as measuring benthic coverage of the reefs, sedimentation rates, fish populations and the impact of algal growth on coral reef health.