

The official Newsletter from Costa Rica



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Edittors' Letter

Greetings from Costa Rica to Everybody!

This is our April Edition and still very grateful to know that you are reading the information that we have created for you all. This time we wanted to share different notices that were part of our culture, volunteer experiences, social events and more. Thanks to all of you and hope this helps you to know more about us!

Laura Estrada

Social Manager

April 11th, Battle of Rivas

People in Costa Rica used to celebrate the anniversary of the Battle of Rivas, Nicaragua, in which the Costa Rican army emerged victorious over the force loyal to William Walker, the U.S. filibusterer.

Commonly called Juan Santa Maria's day, Costa Rica is very proud of this historical feat in which students mark the day April 10th because the following day is a holiday. However, many students are marching in parades, and doing cultural activities because of this celebration.

The big one is in Alajuela because that was the hometown of Juan Santa Maria, the hero of the battle, who died igniting an enemy stronghold.



La Casona de Santa Rosa, Guanacaste, Costa Rica

English and French Lessons to Local people, Liberia.

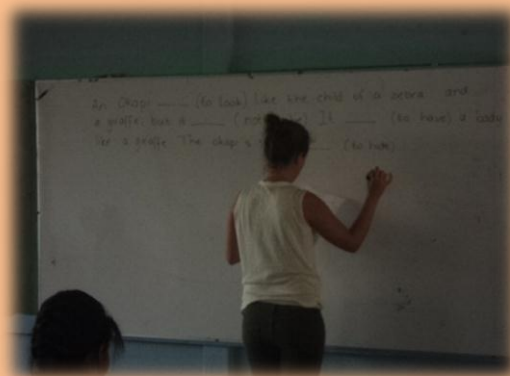
On April 1st Projects Abroad started to give French and English lessons to local people in Liberia city. We have some groups at the moment, and some volunteers are giving these classes during the week at one special place that we have chosen close to Liberia downtown. At around 5pm students start to arrive for the opportunity to learn two of the most important languages nowadays.

As member of Projects Abroad, Costa Rica for me is a pleasure to share this important note with all of you, people are very grateful for all the volunteers who have made this enriching experience possible, not only as a local student, also to our volunteers in program which are getting a great experience from this.



English Lessons to Students as part of the College “Liceo Laboratorio de Liberia” in Liberia City.

Volunteers in program are helping with English lessons to some students of one college in the city, called Liceo Laboratorio de Liberia. These students are facing some problems in this high school, because the teacher doesn't give classes in a good way to them. That's why Projects Abroad is helping with the structure of their English lessons, looking for a clear way for them to learn.



Anna Griffin's Story a Teaching Volunteer

I decided to take part in the Projects Abroad Teaching Project because I wanted to give a helping hand to some Costa Rican children in learning English. My dad's from New Jersey so I speak English. Although I prepared my lessons before leaving Italy, where I live, and have to admit I was a bit worried with the grammar, I have to say the experience was excellent. The children are so sweet and gave me so much. I was actually learning from them...they gave me advice of which places I should have visited, and helped me improve my Spanish quite a lot! This is also the reason why I chose Costa Rica as the destination for my volunteering.

My placement was in Bagaces, which I reached after a thirty minutes bus ride. My work was divided in mornings and afternoons, so when I started in the morning I had to get up at 5.15! But it was worth the effort. It was really nice to get to the school and see so many of the kids smiling and running towards me saying "Hola Ana!" After my placement ended (I did one month) many of the children kept on writing to me via Facebook or on my phone. I also am still in contact with the teacher, who now and then tells me the kids are missing me. I never thought I would get so attached to these wonderful and funny children! It was also satisfactory seeing how the children cared about getting good marks on their homework or their exams and stayed seated until they had finished their work although it was break time. I also have to admit that the work I had prepared at home was more than enough (I actually used very little of my material, since the age of the children was lower than I thought so grammar for intermediate or high levels wasn't necessary). A typical day was about five or six hours long and mainly I helped the teacher when it was time for a dictation or when I could help out with a "more English" pronunciation of words. Occasionally I took the class by myself and there came the time for games or learning new vocabulary. The children liked when that moment came. And learning didn't end when the bell rang! During break many children would gather with me and ask me things about my country etc...they're really curious.

I advise future volunteers whom choose to come to Costa Rica in a period between October and April that it's very hot! Don't let this put you down on your placements...you'll get used to it!!! Also, the kids are really super active: they run, jump around, scream etc...so do not expect a class of silent, still children. Do not lose your temper if they get easily distracted or don't listen! If they are interested they'll be following...so try to get them interested in what you're doing ☺



Culture Workshop, April 26th

Last Friday 26th of April we had the 2nd Culture Workshop at the office, I would like to thanks to the volunteers Lutz-Georg Schmitz and Natalie Akeret for being there in the activity.

Basically what volunteers learn with this presentation is about how people behave in Costa Rica, such as customs and more. This is very useful to the volunteers because they can expect how people behave at the moment to speak, treat, etc.

I want to thanks to them for their participation, hope all what we talked about has been helpful.



Costa Rica Dry Tropical Forest Conservation and Environment Project

We are in one of the hottest months of the year, however the park's wildlife is typical to dry tropical environment with the existence of many insects and a variety of mammalian species. Is varied: the monkey-faced, coyote, armadillo armadillo, deer, raccoon, coati, the opossum, fox stinking copetona magpie, the Catano and zapayol or turkey vulture, are some of the species that can be observed in different areas of the park. Among birds tucancillo piquianaranjado highlights the warbler Collared Aracari and honeypot (pinchaflor). The gecko (*Hemidactylus frenatus*) is a habitual resident in the area, like black iguana (*Ctenosaura similis*).

Conservation Projects:

1- Bat Project

Good news for the bat Project, in the last expedition found a new species of bat (*Nociliu neporinus*) or fishing bat. We are discovered each month a new species of bat.

In Costa Rica, a small territory recorded 109 species of bats, this means 11% of species worldwide. Half of the mammal species in Costa Rica bats, only three species feed on the blood and all three have in Barra Honda. To project these data are very important and we are happy that we are working with the preservation of this country.

2- Butterfly project

New species: the butterfly project continues in the east of the Park, the most important: we found a new species that had not registered with the project is called (*Hamadryas amphinome mexicana*) was much happiness by the group of volunteers who discovered the new species. Although we find this kind of activity is very low, because we are in dry season, another important point is that we are investigating at the hardest part of the National Park, we have to walk 14 kilometers to get the transects.



Another important work in this project is that we are building new traps for catching butterflies

3- Biodigester

Finally we have almost finished our bio digester, remember that a digester is an anaerobic tank (oxygen-free), which digests organic material biologically. It is used to treat black water (human waste) on site, eliminating pathogens and malignant bacteria, so the treated water can be used for irrigation. In addition,



when organic material decomposes without oxygen, it produces methane, a potent greenhouse gas. Bio digesters combust this methane, ensuring it is not released into the atmosphere, and instead allow it to be used as gas for cooking, lighting and heating.

We have been working in the bio digester for eight month, and we feel proud because we will be self-efficient. We are produce energy.

4- Cave explorations

This month we have made many visits to the caves; The Terciopelo cave is 63 meters deep and has three rooms to visit. It is perhaps the most spectacular caves in their forms of decoration. Some of the formations are tasty "The body" consisting of several parts that produce different tones continued to be hit softly, "lion's head" and "Curtains" among others. The exploration inside the cave can take between 45 minutes and an hour. The indoor temperature is perhaps a little warmer than the outside temperature.

The Barra Honda has an extensive cave system independent of each other, of which 19 have been explored. The Santa Ana cave reaches 240 meters deep,

and is one of the deepest, with a profusion of stalactites, stalagmites, columns, beads, flowers and gypsum needles, helicitas, popcorn, mushrooms, shark teeth and other formations.



5- New projects

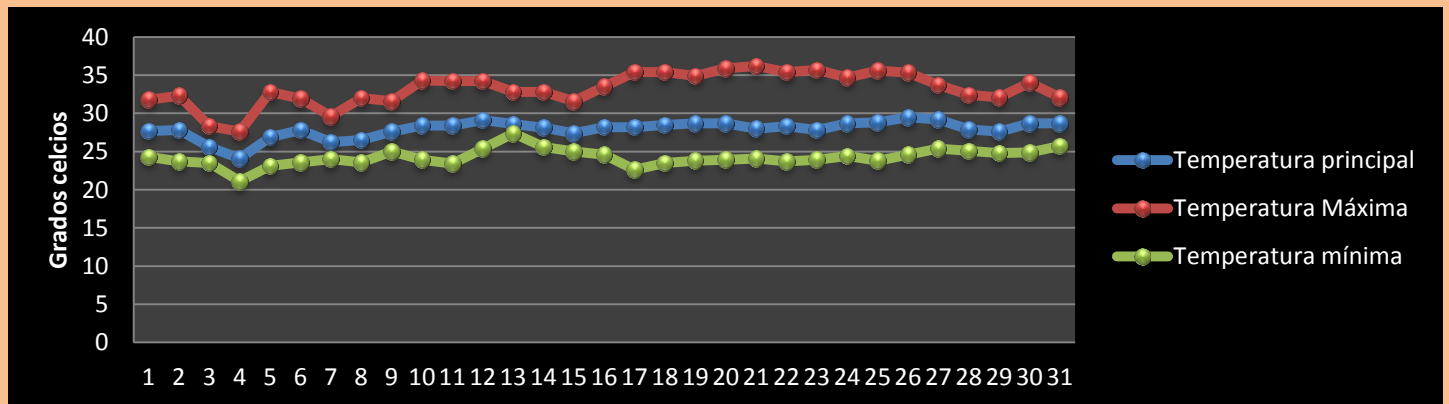
We are writing the proposal for a new project:

- Population of White-tailed Deer:
- Census bird

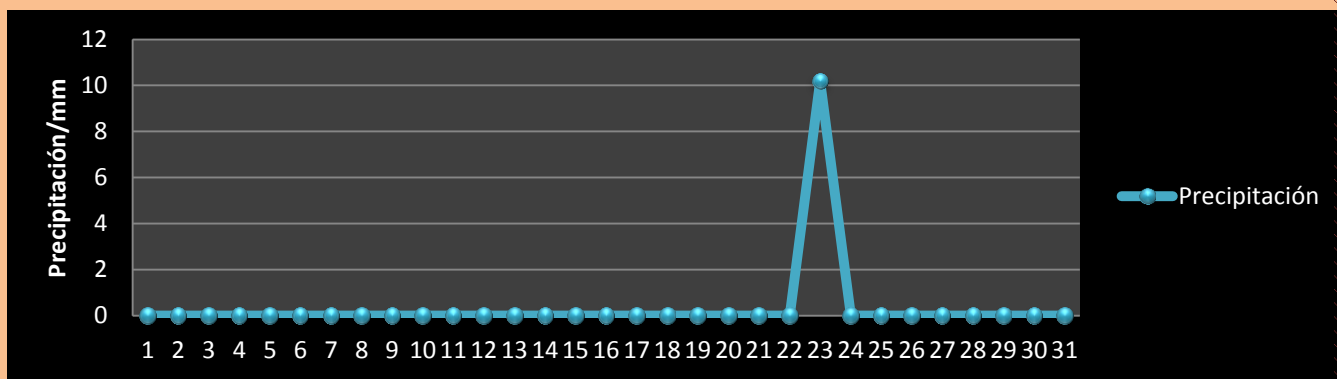
6- Volunteers in free time.

But... the volunteers have free time; we have some games in the camp such as: Monopoly, Risk, Uno, Frisbee, and also we play football in our football field.

7- Information of the weather for March.



temperature of March



This is the winds for March.

See you next month:

Anthony Ruiz
Conservation Manager
Oscar Rosales
Assistant Manager