



Volunteer Program

Description

In 1998 this site was declared as a protected area with the name of "National Wildlife Refuge Joint Category Romelia". There are many reasons to conserve this area: it is a buffer zone and part of a biological corridor of Cabo Blanco Absolute Reserve, the Nicoya Peninsula Protected Area and Nature Reserve Absolute Nicholas Weesberg. There is also a wide biodiversity. This protected area was established with the intent to meet the needs of the nearby population research, recreation, environmental education and sustainable utilization of natural resources.

It is for this reason that in 2009 ASVO started to work in Romelia with the aim of evaluating and protecting populations of sea turtles that nest on the beaches of the Refuge and on adjacent beaches. Our Research Department is working to

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determine the number of turtles that come to lay eggs and the anthropogenic and natural threats that have the eggs to achieve a satisfactory hatching success.

So far it has been determined that significant threats and looting by local people and high tides cause harm to avoid nests that hatch. We have implemented various methods of mitigation and relocation of nests in sites considered safe at the beach. In the months of August and September a nursery was constructed where the nests are being deposited for safety.



Location

It is on the southern Nicoya Peninsula. It is 30 minutes by walk from Montezuma a beach famous for its breathtaking beauty. It is also near Cabo Blanco Reserve.

How to get there

Public transportation in Costa Rica is quite inexpensive and you can get almost everywhere by bus. When you are sure where you are going we will give you the bus schedule and the final tips to get to your host park

Accommodation

The campsite is very basic, but has special condition for volunteer. We have potable water and the water for showers. There are a special basic building that is used as bedrooms for volunteer, you will have a mattress and you will keep your

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belongings inside your bag. The camp has toilet, two shower, rustic kitchen and rustic dining room.



Food

Breakfast, lunch and dinner will be provided by the coordination group.

The food is Costa Rican typical food so you will be eating a lot of rice and beans and they are mainly served with

some type of meat and sometimes you can enjoy tropical fruits. If you are vegetarian or have any special dietary restrictions let us know. In most of the cases there is a cook in charge of the meal preparation but if not you may have the chance to learn how to prepare Costa Rican food.

Free Time

You can pick your day off, but most of the time the day off is on Sundays. In Romelia you will find tidepools, white sand beaches for swimming and surfing and few people. The reserve is also near the waterfall “Montezuma Falls”.

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General Tasks

- Night patrols
- Hatchery (24 surveillance)
- General infrastructure maintenance
- Hatchery building
- Counting baby turtles and releasing them
- Take biometric measurements of turtles
- Making Information signs
- Beach cleaning
- Work in the organic gardens and in trail building activities.
- Composting –also known as brown manure, compost consists of aerobically decomposed remnants of organic matter, such as grasses, leaves, table scraps (no meat or dairy), animal excreta and other organic substances; generally used to feed, condition, and fertilize soil for cultivation.



The sea turtle conservation program is a scientific based conservation activity in which we try to increase the amount of sea turtle hatchlings to give higher survival possibilities to this beautiful reptiles. This project was created with this conservation purpose. We help within the administration of this area to preserve the sea turtles and the associated ecosystems.

Sea turtles are a wonderful legacy from the prehistoric times lets help them to survive.

What to bring

- * High quality Rain gear (it can really rain in the tropics).
- * Good quality shoes for walking (in turtle projects walks can be very long) and sandals
- * Flashlight and batteries (headlamps are a very good idea as well as rechargeable batteries).
- * Alarm clock (battery powered) and a wristwatch.
- * Swimsuit
- * First-aid kit (if you have special medication let us know, anti itch cream is a good idea tropical ,mosquitoes can be vicious)
- * Insect repellent.
- * Towel (fast drying ones are ideal).
- * Waterproof Sunscreen (bring a lot, sun rays are very strong).
- * Sunglasses.
- * Camera and film (water proof can be a good idea for baby turtles in the water)
- * Journal (it will be an unforgettable experience)
- * Light clothing (it dries fast)
- * Bring a jacket it can get a little chilly
- * Rubber boots (is not compulsory)
- * Mosquito net and bed linen (sleeping bag is an option as well)
- * Personal hygiene items



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- * Snacks (you will be provided with 3 meals per day)
- * Entrainment things like: books, music, guitar, paints, cards, jenga are nice to socialize.
- * Pocket Spanish dictionary (may be useful)

Recommendations

Please keep your belongings in order, maintain your personal hygiene (due to tropical weather conditions it is highly recommended to shower everyday), do not seat at the table without a shirt and keep good manners. Every project has specific behavior rules so please follow them.

It is prohibited to drink alcohol and to use illegal drugs.

FAQ's

Are male volunteers preferred over female volunteers? No.

What level of Spanish is needed? Basic.

Is there a minimum age requirement? Yes, 18 years old.

What is the daily schedule like? Generally, volunteers are on duty from 8am to 4pm. However, our principle work takes place during the nightly patrols for marine turtle protection and collection of information.

Is experience necessary?

No prior experience is necessary, however you must have the ability to adapt to a tropical environment, be in excellent health, and willing to help in the conservation of marine turtles and other natural resources.



Association of Volunteers for Service in Protected Areas

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