



Biology in Costa Rica

Spring Break
March 5 - 13, 2027

Natural Science Core
- - or - -
CCI Core

ASHLAND
UNIVERSITY

STUDY ABROAD

Hola!

Welcome to Costa Rica!

CONTACT

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IMPORTANT DATES

March 1 to 31 – Priority sign up for Biology majors and minors

April 1 to October 15 – Sign up open to all majors

October 15 – \$500 non-refundable deposit charged

December 1 – Remaining balance charged to AU account

HOW TO SIGN UP - Only 15 spots available!

Submit \$500 non-refundable deposit with credit/debit card to the Study Abroad Office by calling 419-289-5870.

ABOUT BIOLOGY IN COSTA RICA

This program explores the ecological and cultural diversity of Costa Rica through hands-on fieldwork and research. Students investigate how environmental gradients influence tropical biodiversity, with emphasis on plant and insect communities, conservation, and sustainability. This course is connected to spring semester offerings in BIO 202: Organisms, Adaptation, and Diversity; BIO 110 Ecology & The Human Environment; or BIO 497: Directed Lab & Field Research. Students in BIO 497 (3 credits only) may add FL 299: CCI Narrative to meet the Core CCI requirement.

Students in BIO 110 and 202 will attend class labs & lectures until the tour's departure. They will complete additional labs while in Costa Rica. Upon return to campus, students will attend BIO 110 and 202 lectures only, as their lab work will be complete. All students participating in this program will prepare a final lab report.

HOUSING

Homestay families welcome 1-2 students into their home providing a private bedroom, breakfast and dinner daily, and laundry service. Students will live and learn the "Tico" culture from the perspective of a local family who are within easy commuting distance to campus.

SPRING SEMESTER 2027 COURSE OPTIONS (CHOOSE ONE):

- BIO 110 Ecology & The Human Environment – Natural Science core class
- BIO 202 Organisms, Adaptation & Diversity – Natural Science core class
- BIO 497: Directed Lab & Field Research, 3 credits – CCI core class

ESTIMATED PROGRAM COST

\$3,990 (tentative until flights are booked)

INCLUDED: Airfare, 8 nights' accommodations with local families, 3 meals a day except one Friday lunch, classroom and lab access at the Universidad Nacional de Costa Rica (UNA), international health insurance.

NOT INCLUDED: Expenses for passport (\$165), one checked bag (\$40), lunch on Friday, 10x42 Bushnell waterproof binoculars (\$100), items on packing list, mandatory international phone plan, and personal expenses.

LOCATION

The local host is the Universidad Nacional de Costa Rica in the city of Heredia. The city's population is 351,000 and located outside of Costa Rica's capital, San José.

DAY	DATE	TENTATIVE ITINERARY
1	Fri, 3/5	Departure day. Fly from Ohio to San José.
2	Sat, 3/6	Welcome orientation followed by a tour of Heredia. The afternoon offers an introductory lecture and lab on diversity indices and project design. Finishing up the day with a traditional group dinner.
3	Sun, 3/7	San Jose walking tour highlighting national museum of Costa Rica and Central Market. Spend the rest of the day at Zoo Ave or Toucan Rescue Ranch to explore conservation in practice.
4	Mon, 3/8	Spend the day in Tirimbina for field sampling, birdwatching, and biodiversity assessment. Finish the adventure with a visit to a pineapple plantation.
5	Tues, 3/9	Visit Cerra Dantos to survey aquatic insects, make amphibian observations and participate in riparian zone studies. End the day with a biodiversity and water availability discussion.
6	Wed, 3/10	Visit El Rodeo for a half day trip focusing on succession, canopy cover, and phenology. End the day participating in a Costa Rican cooking class.
7	Thurs, 3/11	Spend the first half of the day at Barva Valcano altitudinal comparisons of biodiversity focusing on mosses, ferns, and birds. End the day synthesizing data and calculating alpha, beta, and gamma diversity.
8	Fri, 3/12	Start the day with a visit to Coope Naranjo Coffee Plantation and ending it with a farewell dinner with student reflections or presentations.
9	Sat, 3/13	Departure day. Fly from San José to Ohio.