



ECOLOGY PROJECT
INTERNATIONAL

2022

EPI

STUDENT TRAVEL GUIDE

WHERE YOU'LL FIND EPI

YELLOWSTONE

pg. 11

HAWAII

pg. 29

BAJA

pg. 15

BELIZE

pg. 19

COSTA RICA

pg. 21

GALAPAGOS ISLANDS

pg. 27

STUDENTS EXPLORE BIODIVERSITY ON BELIZE'S REEFS.

3 | What Sets Us Apart

6 | Focus Areas

7 | Environmental Literacy

9 | Science & Sea Turtles

Programs

Yellowstone.....	11
Baja.....	15
Belize.....	19
Costa Rica.....	21
Galapagos Islands.....	27
Hawaii.....	29

32 | So, Why EPI?

33 | Financial Aid & Scholarships

34 | EPI's Local Connection

36 | More Paths to the Field & Your Next Steps

37 | Program Index



For detailed information on programs, visit www.ecologyproject.org

WHAT SETS US APART

EPI isn't your typical travel company.

We invest deeply in the communities where we choose to work. EPI's in-country field offices, located at each of our program sites, allow us to form lasting partnerships with researchers, national parks, and local communities. For us, local connections foster larger strides toward our mission of strengthening conservation efforts around the world. For you, it means a deeper, richer experience than any other organization can provide.

We take care of ALL the details. From airfare to an in-country itinerary, we take on the daunting details so you don't have to. As the first line of contact with your students, you're in the best position to motivate and excite them about the possibilities of field science. The best way we can help you do that is by taking all the burdens of planning off your shoulders. At the same time, we're here to help personalize your field experience as much as possible to meet your needs and those of your students. We're available every step of the way, from planning to departure.

We hire the best. Our instructors are experts in biology, ecology, and the natural sciences, and they're chosen for their experience teaching in field settings. They're trained in leadership, group dynamics, and safety, and they go out of their way each day to make science approachable and fun.

We're a non-profit organization dedicated to science education. The tuition paid by our participants goes directly toward furthering our mission, allowing us to expand our work into the local communities that need us most. It also allows us to focus on what we know best - connecting you with critical science and research in some of the world's most biodiverse ecosystems.

We were born in the field. On a Costa Rican beach in 2000 to be precise. That's when EPI founders - a scientist and an educator - brought the first group of local students to a turtle reserve less than four miles from where the students lived. For the first time, these students witnessed the incredible sight of sea turtles coming ashore to lay their eggs. Twenty years later, that kernel of an idea - to engage youth in conservation science - has grown to cross continents and includes more than 40,000 participants. Today, you and your students have the opportunity to experience that same awe of real-world scientific exploration.

So, to all those seeking a one-of-a-kind travel program rooted in science and discovery - teachers, students, and parents - we say, *welcome!* The field is waiting for you.



From this course, I became very interested in field investigations and how to access science to solve problems.

-JEAN PAUL, LOCAL COSTA RICA PARTICIPANT



EPI'S MISSION

Improve and inspire science education and conservation efforts worldwide through field-based student-scientist partnerships



PARTNERING WITH YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK, STUDENTS UTILIZE THE TOOLS OF THE PROFESSIONALS TO MONITOR UNGULATE POPULATIONS.



FROM THE SIERRAS TO THE SEA, EPI STUDENTS STUDY THE IMPACT A GROWING HUMAN POPULATION HAS ON THE WILDLIFE OF THE GULF OF CALIFORNIA.

FOCUS AREAS

Every EPI program provides a hands-on field experience. While each of our sites has a unique realm of study, they all share a common DNA: meaningful field science, hands-on research, and a commitment to deep engagement with local issues. Look for these icons throughout the catalog for insight on what specialties each program site might offer.



Sustainability Studies
Specify ecosystem boundaries and corridors and their impact on endangered species



Community Engagement
Explore diverse cultures through language, food, crafts, and traditions



Wildlife Tracking
Engage the tools that allow scientists to understand the movements of wildlife



Consumer Ethics
Focus on how living in a group can impact decisions



Marine Ecosystems
Experience the world under the waves



Tropical Ecosystems
Explore the unique ecosystems of the tropics



Restoration
Lend a hand to repair vital habitats impacted by human activities



Stability & Change
Witness the real-life impacts of climate change and their effects on fragile ecosystems



Structure & Function
Explore how the unique characteristics of wildlife enable them to survive

EPI MEANS ENVIRONMENTAL LITERACY

Education and conservation are at the heart of all EPI courses. Explore how our Educational Framework strengthens our mission and how our courses align with science teaching standards.

Ecology Project International is dedicated to creating travel experiences that engage, inspire, and educate youth in conservation science throughout the Americas. Our mission to create the next generation of conservation leaders inspired us to develop an Educational Framework from which to build our lessons and courses.

Our Educational Framework's elemental concept is to raise "environmental literacy," as defined by the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), and the North American Association of Environmental Education (NAAEE). So, what is environmental literacy?

Environmental literacy is the ability to fuse an understanding of earth's complex ecosystems with an understanding of society's effects upon those ecosystems – and as a result, to actualize a conservation mindset. Environmental literacy has four key elements, each of which EPI brings to life in our courses:

Competencies Skills that students need to evaluate environmental issues, like critical thinking and data analysis

Knowledge Knowledge and understanding of the complex processes of the environment and society's impacts upon them

Dispositions Interest, sensitivity, and intention to act for sustainable use of natural resources

Behavior Individual and collective action toward addressing environmental challenges

EPI's curricula capture the best practices available to educators in order to build environmental literacy. Each lesson is taught with these powerful practices in mind:

THE FIVE E'S & INQUIRY-BASED LEARNING

Engage, Explore, Explain, Elaborate, and Evaluate. We use the Five E's to unearth students' previous connections to our topics and engage students to come up with questions they are driven to answer. It's the opposite of a stand-and-lecture class, as it puts the focus on the student, not the teacher – where it should be.

OUTDOOR & EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

Simply put, this means "learning from experience." Would you rather learn how to identify a scarlet macaw from a bird book, or by actually spotting a scarlet macaw in the rainforest? What does that experience offer that a book cannot? Context, behavior, ecology – so much more.

SERVICE LEARNING & CITIZEN SCIENCE

Modern research shows that we are more likely to care about what we are learning if it is shown to be meaningful and relevant to us – of course! By contributing data to local scientific projects, students not only grow their understanding of the scientific process but become empowered to be part of it. And by including service learning in our programs, we help students become invested and give back to the places, people, and ecosystems that we are visiting.

For the larger education picture, EPI's curriculum is aligned with one of the key frameworks in progressive science education – the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS)*.

NEXT GENERATION SCIENCE STANDARDS (NGSS)

Many states have already adopted the NGSS in their schools, recognizing the value of 3-D learning, or learning in three dimensions. Core Ideas (subject matter), Crosscutting Concepts (the underlying principles that connect core concepts to each other), and Science and Engineering Practices weave together to form the NGSS' performance expectations. EPI's immersive, student-centered educational experiences allow all our courses to work consistently in all three dimensions, deepening student understanding of content, and providing rich opportunities for application of science knowledge.



*NGSS is a registered trademark of Achieve. Neither Achieve nor the lead states and partners that developed the NGSS were involved in the production of this product and do not endorse it.

LOOKING FOR
SCHOLARSHIPS?

ENROLL BY JUNE 15TH & GET A
\$1,500 GROUP SCHOLARSHIP!



EPI STUDENTS HONE THEIR DATA COLLECTION SKILLS USING CUTTING EDGE TECHNOLOGY AND TRIED AND TRUE FIELD-BASED METHODOLOGIES.

SCIENCE AND SEA TURTLES

How a Hatchery is Helping an Endangered Species.

Conservation History of the Leatherback Sea Turtle

EPI's Pacuare Reserve safeguards the most important nesting beach in Costa Rica for the endangered leatherback sea turtle, or *baula*. Twenty years ago, local Costa Rican EPI students first began monitoring the baulas that emerged from the sea and protecting the precious eggs and hatchlings that they left behind.

Illegal harvest and human predation were their most immediate threat, so EPI staff and local students provided community education on the sea turtles. Through those efforts, as well as nighttime monitoring, Pacuare Reserve staff and EPI students reduced the rate of illegal harvests from 98% to less than 2%.

Despite this success, however, researchers saw leatherback hatching success dwindle to only 23% due to factors they are still working to understand.

Creating the Hatchery

Nests left on the beach are exposed to predation, trash, flies, increasing beach erosion, and elevated sand temperatures, all potentially contributing to low hatching rates. So in 2018, Pacuare Reserve's Conservation and Research Coordinator, Claudio Quesada, developed a new method to improve hatching success—the annual creation of a hatchery.

Each January, just before the nesting females begin to arrive, Quesada selects two sites along Pacuare's beach presumed to be safe from erosion and saltwater inundation. Then, the digging begins.

Each hatchery is approximately 1,550 square feet and requires the work of dozens of volunteers to complete. Staff and volunteers dig up and sift the sand down to a meter deep in order to remove any organic materials. If left in place to decompose, it could pose a threat to the temperature-sensitive turtle embryos. In the final stages, teams sterilize the sand and erect a mesh cover to provide shade.

During the nightly beach censuses, researchers will determine if a new sea turtle nest is in a threatened location. If it is, students and researchers will carefully relocate it to the hatchery. During the 60-70 day incubation period, nest temperature is remotely recorded and relayed to the Pacuare Research Station at 2-hour intervals.

How Our Hatchery Helps Leatherbacks

Quesada is careful to point out that hatcheries are conservation tools to be used only when the conservation situation requires it. Last year, Quesada determined that hatchery success rate was 76%—more than three times higher than nests left on the beach.

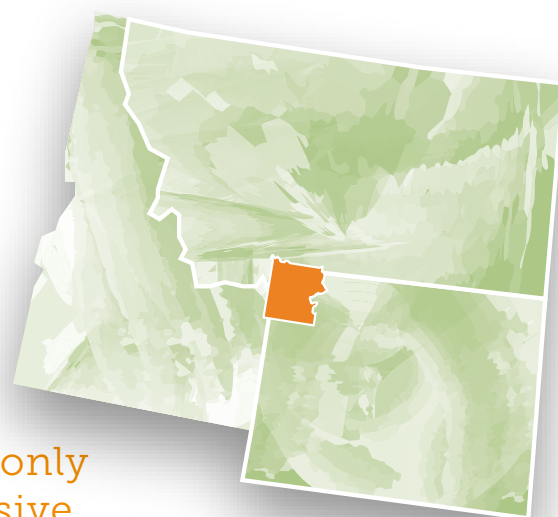
As a result of our hatcheries at Pacuare Reserve, researchers and volunteers released more than 22,275 sea turtle hatchlings in 2020. In 15-20 years, we hope to see some of these tiny baulas returning to nest on Pacuare's shores—thanks to the diligent efforts of EPI's Pacuare Reserve staff, researchers, students, and other volunteers like you.



HATCHERIES LIKE THIS ONE AT COSTA RICA'S PACUARE RESERVE MAY BE THE ANSWER TO SAVING THE ENDANGERED LEATHERBACK SEA TURTLE.

YELLOWSTONE • WINTER

9 days | January - April | Tuition: \$2,395



Winter is a quiet season in the park but only from a human perspective. For the massive wildlife population, it's a time for survival, migration, and renewal.

AT 3,500 SQUARE MILES, Yellowstone National Park is larger than Delaware and Rhode Island combined. In the winter, many iconic Yellowstone species like bison and pronghorn don't hibernate. Instead, these ungulates congregate in large groups in the thinner snow of the valleys, and at this time of year, there are few visitors to crowd either them or you.

OUR COURSE OPENS in Gardiner, Montana, the northern gateway to the Park. We'll return here nightly to our cozy private lodge, following days filled with stunning wildlife encounters. Inside the park, National Park biologist teams need our assistance with wildlife research projects. On snowshoes or on foot, we'll learn wildlife tracking techniques, from the ancient (identifying tracks by sight) to the modern (telemetry and GPS collaring). These skills will help us locate the park's ungulate herds—bison, elk, mule deer, bighorn sheep, and pronghorn—so we can collect samples and record data.

NO VISIT TO YELLOWSTONE is complete without two things: wolves and hot springs. In addition to our primary ungulate research, we'll meet with wolf researchers and set up spotting scopes in the famed Lamar Valley. And we'll finish the course with a steamy soak in a developed thermal spring, surrounded by the snow-capped mountains of the Paradise Valley.



It was truly a once in a lifetime experience (for now). This course opened me up to possible futures that I'd never thought about prior, like becoming a wildlife biologist. The leaders and group made this trip especially incredible. I was able to see the effect that my little life can have on the environment and the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem.

- TYLER, 2019 YELLOWSTONE PARTICIPANT



COLDER WEATHER AND SNOW FALL DRIVE YELLOWSTONE'S UNGULATE POPULATIONS INTO THE VALLEYS MAKING WINTER AN EXCELLENT TIME OF YEAR FOR WILDLIFE VIEWING.

YELLOWSTONE • WILDLIFE

9 days | May - September | Tuition: \$2,195



Everyone has heard something about Yellowstone, but few have the opportunity to learn firsthand about its sweeping history, wild creatures, and ongoing management controversies.

WOLVES WERE HUNTED OUT OF THE PARK and its surroundings for 70 years, but in 1995, after a twenty-year campaign, Park biologists returned fourteen wolves to the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem. Today, hundreds of wolves once again roam the landscape, shaping it in ways both subtle and profound. The presence of wolves transforms flora and fauna populations and beckons throngs of tourists eager to glimpse the species.

BISON ALSO HAVE A PROFOUND IMPACT on the landscape, shaping the plant growth in Yellowstone's grasslands and valleys. Along with National Park biologists, we'll examine bison movement patterns and their effect on the Park's other mammal species. We'll also wade through wetlands in the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem to collect data on amphibians, indicator species here as elsewhere, gaining insight into the interconnected and changing nature of the ecosystem.

YOU WILL BE IMMERSSED in all that makes Yellowstone unique. Shapeshifting, rainbow-hued thermal springs, stately bison herds, golden grasslands, hissing geysers, and immense skies. To celebrate the end of the course, we'll embark on a rafting trip down the storied Yellowstone River.

EPI STUDENTS LEARN HOW TO USE TELEMETRY EQUIPMENT TO TRACK UNGULATES IN YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK.



BAJA MEXICO • MARINE SCIENCE

7 days | October - May | Tuition: \$2,895 | Airfare included



From Jacques Cousteau to John Steinbeck, the Gulf of California has enticed the great adventurers. Explore the rich waters of the “world’s aquarium” with EPI.

THE GULF OF CALIFORNIA is home to more than 900 species of fish, a third of the world’s marine mammal species, and thousands upon thousands of colorful invertebrates. It’s the ideal laboratory for the study of marine science. From our bases in the coastal town of La Paz and the remote Espiritu Santo Island, we’ll venture into the gulf to study the incredible diversity of life.

SNORKEL WITH WHALE SHARKS, weigh and measure green sea turtles, swim with sea lions, or collect data on the crown of thorns, a wild, coral eating invertebrate that’s threatening the Gulf’s biodiversity. EPI’s Baja Marine Science program provides countless opportunities for wildlife interaction and hands-on field research with marine biologists throughout the region.

THE TOWN OF LA PAZ, balanced between the desert and the sea, is a bastion for sustainability. With EPI Mexico’s local Eco Club, the Californios Verdes, we’ll learn about student-led conservation efforts and participate in service learning projects like beach clean ups and coral reef restoration



EXTEND YOUR STAY

Want to spend more time exploring the magic of Espiritu Santo Island? Contact us to learn how you can lengthen your island itinerary.

WHALE SHARKS, SEA LIONS, AND SEA TURTLES ALL AWAIT YOU IN BAJA.



NEW BAJA MEXICO • WHALES

9 days | January - March | Tuition: \$3,295 | Airfare included



The Gulf of California is a haven for marine mammals— from tiny porpoises to the enormous blue whale—and you can watch them, study them, and research them with EPI.

CLIMB ABOARD A SMALL RESEARCH BOAT with marine biologists from our site in Cabo Pulmo to study one of the most agile whale species in the world, the humpback. Our group will observe and identify individuals, collect behavior data, assist in collecting skin samples, and record acoustic calls. The data you collect will help with the establishment of a new humpback whale reserve in the Gulf of California.

THE PROGRESSIVE, ARTISTIC CITY OF LA PAZ and EPI Mexico's Eco Club, the Californios Verdes, will host our group for a cultural exchange experience, where we'll learn about extensive local sustainability initiatives and help with a community beach clean-up.

CROSS THE SLENDER BAJA PENINSULA TO THE PACIFIC and the remote fishing village of Puerto Chale. We'll head out by boat with researchers in search of grey whales. We'll also explore the challenges that this small coastal community faces—from tourism development to overfishing—and the strategies that they employ to remain resilient.

DISCOVER THE CONNECTIONS BETWEEN THE EARTH'S LARGEST INHABITANTS AND THEIR MARINE ENVIRONMENTS.



BELIZE

9 days | January - July | Spring Tuition: \$3,995 | Winter/Summer Tuition: \$3,895 | Airfare included



Monitoring 2019

Observer: No. 164 Date: 2
 Location: Transect #: 2
 Site No./Name: Transect Distance from Shore:
 Start Time: 11:51

METADATA

Substrate (mud, sand, shell, coral, rock)				Algae (P or A)	Epiphytic Growth (P or A)	Comments/Photo
Sand %	Shell %	Coral %	Rock %			
		5				

From the Maya temples of the highlands to the swaying seagrass beds of the Caribbean, Belize is a country of profound beauty.

“My perspective on environmental stewardship and international mindedness has changed so drastically after seeing its effects firsthand, and hearing the stories of everyone we met along the way. Those nine days were truly the best and most memorable of my entire lifetime.”

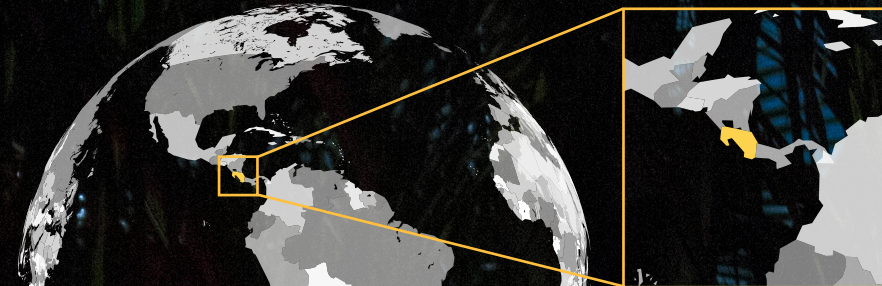
-ALECIA, 2019 BELIZE PARTICIPANT

FALL INTO THE GENTLE RHYTHMS OF SOUTHERN BELIZE. By boat, we'll glide onto the placid waters of the Port Honduras Marine Reserve to gather data on manatees—graceful but vulnerable creatures in need of continued protection. On land, we'll practice our observation skills by surveying endangered yellow-headed parrots in Payne's Creek National Park.

WE'LL SNORKEL IN FLOWING SEAGRASS BEDS, the feeding and breeding grounds for hundreds of species, to monitor this critical marine ecosystem. Join us in protecting the area against rising tides of environmental degradation from climate change to plastics pollution.

BELIZE'S RAINFOREST reveals another facet of this exceptional country—thriving Maya culture and communities that play a key role in rainforest conservation. We'll close our time together by immersing ourselves in ancient traditions at a Maya cultural center—learning how to make tortillas and chocolate.

PARTICIPANTS ARE LITERALLY SUBMERGED IN THEIR STUDY OF BELIZE'S INCREDIBLE MARINE DIVERSITY.



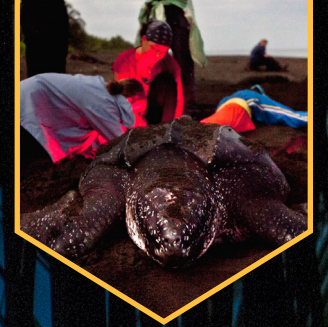
COSTA RICA

9 days

March - July

Spring Tuition: \$3,595
Summer/Winter Tuition: \$3,295

Airfare included



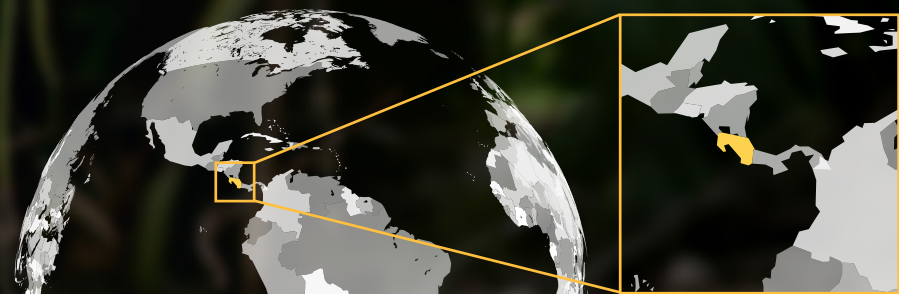
On a moonlit beach, waiting for a creature with a 100-million-year history to emerge from the pitch-black sea, it's easy to forget what epoch we're in.

FOR EPI, IT ALL BEGAN HERE WITH A GIANT SEA TURTLE. The leatherback sea turtle has traveled the earth's oceans for 100 million years. Specialized adaptations, like its leathery carapace, have allowed it to survive for eons. But even the leatherback is now imperiled, due to a host of new threats—from illegal harvesting to habitat loss and beachfront development.

WE WILL BE AT THE CENTER of leatherback conservation efforts. We'll spend much of our time at EPI's Pacuare Reserve, conducting nesting leatherback censuses each night. Along with our night censuses, we'll work to restore and improve nesting habitat. During hatchling season (beginning in May), we'll witness scores of tiny hatchlings making their perilous way from nest to ocean.

IMAGINE STUDYING TROPICAL ECOLOGY at a research facility deep in the rainforest, full of strikingly-colored birds and unusual mammals. Depending on the researchers' schedules, we may participate in primate ecology or Lepidopteran (butterfly) research. We'll also explore the wild diversity of the rainforest at night by going on a guided walk under the canopy, and we'll celebrate it all with a whitewater rafting trip.

LEATHERBACK NESTING OCCURS AT NIGHT AND SO DOES OUR RESEARCH—NOTHING BUT THE STARS AND MOON TO LIGHT THE WAY.



COSTA RICA • THE OSA

9 days

January - August

Spring Tuition: \$3,895
Winter/Summer Tuition: \$3,695

Airfare Included



The Osa Peninsula is a wild jewel in a country already known for its biodiversity.

SEA TURTLES, SLOTHS, SQUIRREL MONKEYS, AND JAGUARS are just a few of the creatures that call the lush oasis of the Osa home. Protected from development by its remoteness, the Osa Peninsula is a biodiversity hotspot and a center for ecological research. We'll fly into Puerto Jimenez and spend our first days in a forest reserve, exploring rainforest ecology in the brilliant green understory.

ON THE COAST OF GOLFO DULCE, we'll dive into sea turtle ecology with a catch-and-release project lead by local scientists. We'll assist in netting and capturing green and olive ridley sea turtles that are feeding in the area, taking important biometric data, and then gently releasing them.

OUR LAST CONSERVATION ACTIVITY IN THE OSA will help fortify these incredible ecosystems by planting mangroves with a local conservation group. Before we leave, we'll catch an exhilarating firsthand glimpse of life in the trees through a canopy tour and zipline.

LOCAL FISHERMEN HELPED CONSERVATION GROUPS DESIGN A TURTLE-SAFE NET FOR CAPTURE & RELEASE STUDIES

PHOTO BY SIEMINSKI PHOTOGRAPHY



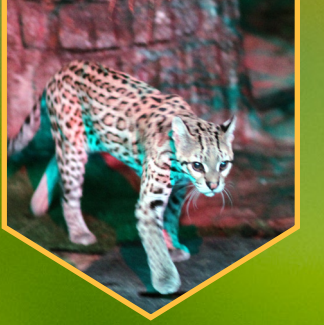
COSTA RICA • FELINES & PRIMATES

9 days

January - February &
July - October

Tuition: \$3,295

Airfare included



The rainforest of EPI's Pacuare Reserve is home to more than 300 species of animals, including unique primates and some of the highest concentrations of felines in Costa Rica.

EPI'S PACUARE RESERVE STRETCHES across 2,000 acres of rainforest and nearly three miles of Caribbean coastline. Inside, there is much to explore—from the sandy intertidal zone beloved of nesting sea turtles to the deepest and wildest reaches of rainforest, where spider monkeys and jaguars secret away.

PRIMATES HAVE COMPLEX SOCIAL SYSTEMS and our research focus will be the tribal structures of howler, spider, and white-faced capuchin monkeys. We'll walk the reserve trails seeking troops of primates to observe and document while taking time to examine the rich multitude of other species along the way.

CAPTURE THE BEHAVIORS OF JAGUARS and other felines through a system of camera traps. We'll work with researchers from Panthera Costa Rica and Coastal Jaguar Conservation to determine new locations for camera traps and collect camera footage for clues about feline migrations. On the last day, the beaches of Cahuita beckon us for some snorkeling in the teal Caribbean Sea.



PLAYFUL WHITE-FACED CAPUCHINS LIVE IN COMPLEX SOCIAL GROUPS. YOU'LL STUDY THE ROLE THAT HABITAT AND RESOURCES PLAY IN PRIMATE FAMILY DYNAMICS.



GALAPAGOS ISLANDS

12 days

February - July

Spring Tuition: \$5,695
Summer/Winter Tuition: \$5,545

Airfare included



Have you ever heard a giant tortoise breathe? Crossed paths with a marine iguana? If you are going to make the once-in-a-lifetime trip to these far away islands, EPI's unique partnership with the Galapagos National Park will make it unforgettable.

AS WE TOUCH DOWN on the black volcanic expanse of Baltra Island, the Galapagos Islands may at first look uninhabitable. But within moments, a land iguana will muscle its way across the tarmac, and you'll have your first glimpse of the sheer abundance of life in these famous islands. Each contains a unique combination of soils, wind, and topography that lay the groundwork for vast diversity of biological expression.

THE HIGHLANDS OF SANTA CRUZ ISLAND are where we'll begin our journey. Just twenty miles from the desolate flats of Baltra, we'll enter a cloud forest of daisy trees and giant tortoises. Our unique partnership with Galapagos National Park gives us exclusive access to researchers, and we'll assist them in locating giant tortoises and collecting data on their habitat uses. We'll also give back by spending one morning removing invasive plant species—helping to maintain the natural balance of the incomparable Galapagos Islands.


A BOAT RIDE ACROSS A PACIFIC CHANNEL takes us to the Island of Isabela, the largest in the archipelago. The lava flows on Isabela are younger than on other islands, resulting in different habitat and ecosystems. Here, we may see penguins, Darwin's finches, and Galapagos hawks. We'll visit the National Park's tortoise breeding center and snorkel the waters of the Galapagos Marine Reserve.

EPI GROUPS HELP LOCATE AND MONITOR CRITICALLY ENDANGERED POPULATIONS OF GALAPAGOS GIANT TORTOISES.



HAWAII

9 days | June - August | Tuition: \$2,795 | Airfare not included



Surrounded by open ocean, Hawaii is our planet's most isolated island chain, with a set of native flora and fauna that surpasses even the Galapagos Islands.

HAWAII PLAYS HOST to 9 million tourists each year. The impacts of that volume, positive and negative, are felt widely by islanders. With EPI, you'll work alongside them to study the exceptional diversity of this corner of the Pacific and to conserve Maui's natural habitats.

FROM THE MOUNTAIN TO THE SEA; from the ridge to the reef. In Hawaiian, it's *mauka to makai*. This land management concept organized traditional Hawaiian society, and it organizes our course. Haleakalā rises 10,000 feet above the Pacific; it plays a critical role in both Hawaiian mythology and in creating the micro-climates that make Maui so diverse. We'll make a journey there, then descend from the mountains through climatic zones into native rainforest. Our work takes us across old lava flows and to a prime example of traditional aquaculture, constructed nearly a millennium ago to raise taro and fish.

Stakeholders from the local community engage with us every step of the way. Reaching the shore, we'll collect data on invasive species in some of Hawaii's last remaining native rainforest, explore the beaches and reefs, and collect data on herbivorous reef fish for community-led conservation efforts.

ON MAUI, and throughout these islands, there exists a concept of *kuleana* - personal responsibility and the privilege of taking care of the land and one's community. From taro farmers to reef protectors, we'll experience many examples of this connection to place and look for ways to take that conservation mindset back to our own communities.

EXPLORE THE RICH CONNECTIONS BETWEEN HAWAII'S CULTURE AND LANDSCAPES.



SO, WHY ÉPI?

Still on the fence about an EPI program? We have more to share with you! Read on for information on scholarships, teacher and chaperone incentives, and our ultimate goal of environmental literacy.

Teachers travel free.

Sure, it's not a free iPad, but we prefer a different kind of connection: one with scientists, nature, and local cultures. That's why when you bring six students, one teacher-chaperone travels for free. With twelve, make it two chaperones (even with the ease that EPI builds in, you'll appreciate that extra set of hands).

We focus on inquiry.

Every EPI course is built around our students asking and answering the questions that interest them. This is our framework and our belief: when students take ownership of their own education, the results are life-changing.

Our goal: environmental literacy.

We want students to demonstrate the knowledge, dispositions, competencies, and behaviors necessary to actively engage, individually or as a group, in the task of addressing environmental challenges.

Field experiences are the key to achieving that goal.

When have you felt most connected to the natural world? Step back into that feeling with an EPI field program, and watch the ripple effects reach your students and beyond. EPI experiences lead to inspiration and classroom impacts for students and teachers alike.

Service learning enhances the field experience.

Our programs incorporate service projects as a key component of the field experience. Students carry a sense of accomplishment home with them after they've helped restore tropical forests, removed invasive plants, or improved endangered wildlife habitat.

Online resources add value and save you time.

Our staff knows and appreciates the time-sensitive realities of life as a classroom teacher. We've streamlined our planning, paperwork, and payment processes, and we've made all our pre-course resources and additional curriculum pieces for your classroom available online.

Chance of making a difference: 100%.

EPI's student-conducted research directly benefits endangered species and threatened ecosystems. You'll be contributing to a body of knowledge that helps scientists, policy-makers, and the public make informed decisions to positively impact the world.

We'll back it up with data. Read more and access additional resources at
ecologyproject.org/about/expeditionary-learning

SCHOLARSHIPS FINANCIAL AID FUNDRAISING

Our goal is to offer programs to each and every student and teacher who hopes to participate. Here's how we can help:

Financial aid. Awards are offered to enrolled participants who apply for financial aid each spring and fall. Eligible students may receive between \$300-\$600.

In-house fundraising platform. Every student receives access to their own crowdfunding platform hosted by EPI.

Scholarships. Thanks to funding from alumni and supporting foundations, a number of scholarships are available each year for groups and individual students.



Off-season travel grants. Groups with flexibility to travel outside our typical field season are eligible for travel grants of up to \$8,000.

Awards for alumni leaders. Students who return from their EPI program with a desire to help solve an environmental problem in their own community are eligible to apply for EPI's Alumni Leadership Award. Students can win up to \$1,500 to turn their ideas into reality.



For more information on scholarships, grants, & aid, visit www.ecologyproject.org/scholarships



The experience has reconnected me to nature, a part of me that I don't remember having forgotten or lost.

- ZURISADIA, LOCAL MEXICO PARTICIPANT



BEYOND STUDENT TRAVEL

EPI'S LOCAL STUDENTS, COMMUNITIES, AND ALUMNI

Ecology Project International is passionate about empowering conservation leadership in the places where we operate. Last year, more than 5,000 students participated in our field-based programs, and 83% were students and alumni who lived near or adjacent to the program sites. Like many children in urban areas of the United States, youth in other countries have often never explored the wilds near their communities, nor understood their impact on them.

From Yellowstone to the Galapagos Islands, EPI engages these "local students" in immersive science and conservation programs at a deeply subsidized rate. Our financial ability to work with students and educators in these often underserved communities depends on the generous support of grantors and donors, but also on tuition dollars from visiting student groups from the United States. That's our model for effecting substantive environmental change. Local education and engagement are key.

After participating in our field programs, our local EPI students often get involved in other conservation opportunities: ongoing community science research, internships, community events like river and beach clean-ups, science fairs, leadership workshops, and field trips. Many of these activities are offered through EPI Eco Clubs, and alumni often drive the projects with support from EPI staff.

Recently, one of EPI's most active eco clubs, the Californios Verdes, spent more than 4,000 hours leading environmental education and service activities in Baja. One of their major campaigns was contributing to the "Deplastificate Alliance," through which the Californios Verdes launched an intensive public education campaign about single-use plastics in Baja California Sur.

Eco Club members raised funds, spoke at regional events about the impacts of single-use plastics, surveyed supermarket patrons about their bag use and educated the community about the proposal for a ban on polystyrene, plastic straws, and single-use plastic bags. The efforts of these students and others culminated in the widespread support of the ban, and in August of 2019, Governor Carlos Mendoza Davis announced a law that banned plastic grocery bags across the entire state of Baja California Sur.

All youth grow and learn from immersive field science experiences, but EPI realizes that environments and species may benefit most from continued local student education and empowerment. It makes for lasting change. When you choose to travel with EPI, you make that change a reality.



A UNIQUE PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN EPI AND THE GALAPAGOS NATIONAL PARK MAKE THESE HANDS-ON DATA COLLECTION EXPERIENCES POSSIBLE.

NEXT STEPS TOWARD 2022

Get in Touch With Us

This catalog is just the beginning. We have research outlines, detailed brochures, and all the logistical information you could ever want (and more) just an email or a phone call away. Now's your chance! **800-721-8784** - info@ecologyproject.org

Select Site & Dates

A dedicated Field Experience Coordinator will help you choose the right time and program location depending on your interests, school schedule, and our field site availability. Our Field Experience Coordinators are well-traveled, wonderfully helpful, and they'll be with you for every step in the process.

Spread the Word

Share the opportunity with your students. We have posters, videos, pre-departure curriculum pieces, and many other outreach materials available, and we can provide suggestions for after-school and parent meetings. Enrollment is easy through our website, and if six or more of your students enroll before our June 15 deadline, **group scholarship funds are available to first-time schools.**

MORE PATHS TO THE FIELD

Professional development programs for educators.

Teacher Fellowships

EPI's Teacher Fellowship Program launched in 2013, with 13 exceptional science teachers. We've now worked with more than 300 inspiring educators for this unique professional development experience. Participating Fellows receive more than 40 hours of instructional time on curriculum development, research methodology, and field science, all while actively participating in EPI research projects at our remarkable program sites.

Dates to Remember

June 15th: EPI's Fellowship dates and locations announced
July 1st - September 1st: Fellowship application period open
October: Fellows selected

Join the interest list at ecologyproject.org/teacher-fellowships

Training in the NGSS?

EPI runs 9-day professional development courses focused on developing teachers' ability to create and deliver authentic science lessons aligned with the Next Generation Science Standards. You'll learn strategies for helping your students conduct independent scientific research and for further integrating the NGSS into your lesson planning. By working alongside researchers at our field sites, you'll develop the skills to be both a better science teacher and a better scientist. Learn more at ecologyproject.org/ngss

PROGRAM INDEX

PROGRAM	LENGTH	FIELD SEASON	TUITION SPRING	TUITION MAIN SEASON	AIRFARE INCLUDED?	PROGRAM PARTNERS
Yellowstone Winter Ecology Program	9 days	January-April	\$2,395	\$2,395		
Yellowstone Wildlife Ecology Program	9 days	May-September	-	\$2,195		
Costa Rica Sea Turtle Ecology Program	9 days	March-July	\$3,595	\$3,495		
Costa Rica Sea Turtle Ecology Program	12 days	March-July	\$4,095	\$3,945		
Costa Rica Felines & Primates Program	9 days	January-February & July-October	-	\$3,295		
Costa Rica Osa Ecology Program	9 days	January-August	\$3,895	\$3,695		
Baja Marine Science Program	7 days	October-May	\$2,895	\$2,895		
Baja Whale Ecology Program	9 days	January- March	-	\$3,295		
Belize Marine Ecology Program	9 days	January-July	\$3,995	\$3,895		
Belize Marine Ecology Program	12 days	October-May	\$4,995	\$4,895		
Galapagos Island Ecology Program	9 days	February-July	\$5,295	\$5,195		
Galapagos Island Ecology Program	12 days	February-July	\$5,695	\$5,595		
Galapagos Island Ecology Program	15 days	February-July	\$6,395	\$6,195		
Hawaii Island Ecology Program	9 days	June - August	-	\$2,795		

EPI PARTNERS WITH SCIENCE RESEARCH ORGANIZATIONS KNOWN FOR RIGOROUS RESEARCH

Long term datasets, like the ones EPI and our partners steward, are rare and difficult to maintain but crucial to understanding environmental change. Data collected by EPI students provides valuable information that benefits studies of biodiversity, climate change, and vulnerable species, and the process allows young people to contribute meaningfully to conservation research.

To learn more about our partners visit: ecologyproject.org/partners

HOPING FOR A CUSTOM ITINERARY?

We're here to make sure you have the experience of a lifetime. If that means an itinerary of a different length than what we've listed here, we're happy to help customize an itinerary that works for you. Get in touch with one of our Field Experience Coordinators to begin planning today.

info@ecologyproject.org

FIRST TIME WITH EPI? ASK ABOUT OUR EARLY ENROLLMENT SCHOLARSHIPS!

Thanks to the International Community Foundation, we're able to offer scholarships to first-time groups that enroll before our deadline.

Contact us to learn more. info@ecologyproject.org



ECOLOGY PROJECT
INTERNATIONAL
315 S. 4th Street E.
Missoula, MT 59801



A different kind of
REMOTE LEARNING



www.ecologyproject.org • 406.721.8784 • info@ecologyproject.org