



**ECOLOGY PROJECT
INTERNATIONAL**



COSTA RICA SEA TURTLE ECOLOGY PROGRAM

In Search of Leatherbacks: You're walking along a dark sand beach at midnight. With a sky full of stars, all is silent as you look towards the rolling ocean. You're in search of the elusive, gigantic leatherback sea turtle and its hatchlings – and when you spot them, you'll help increase our understanding of and our ability to conserve this keystone species.

Your Field Work: EPI's program offers you an amazing opportunity to engage with Costa Rica's immense biodiversity, both on the coast and in the rainforest. While at our sea turtle reserve, you'll monitor the beach, guided by trained research assistants. The collected data – on turtle numbers, size, and location - will help you develop a field-based research project.

Cultural Exchange: After completing field work, you may visit a local high school, play soccer, or try local cuisine with Costa Rican students. It's a great opportunity to practice your Spanish and learn about local culture.

Once-in-a-Lifetime Experience: You'll dive into the rainforest at a tropical reserve, home of howler monkeys, sloths, toucans, iguanas, leafcutter ants, dart frogs, and a host of other species to learn about their natural history.

Length	Research Hours	Coursework	Focus
9 days	20+	30+ hours	sea turtle biology, rainforest ecology, conservation



Highlights



Protect leatherback sea turtles



Raft through lowland rainforests



Hike through biodiversity hotspots



COSTA RICA SEA TURTLE ECOLOGY PROGRAM



Sample Itinerary

Day 1: Arrive in Costa Rica

- Meet your instructor team
- Prepare for your adventure in a cozy hotel outside of San José or at the EPI campus

Days 2-5: Leatherback Sea Turtle Reserve

- Learn about sea turtle biology, rainforest ecology, and conservation issues
- Explore the amazing wildlife of lowland tropical ecosystems
- Collect data on nesting sea turtles during a nightly census
- Restore turtle nesting habitat on the beach

Days 5-7: From the Turtle Reserve to the Rainforest

- Travel northwest to a private rainforest reserve
- On the way, meet local students, learn about each other's cultures, and practice your Spanish
- Bird-watch, hike through the rainforest, and explore another facet of Costa Rica
- Observe amazing creatures on night hikes

Day 8: Adventure in the Rainforest

- Raft through spectacular rainforest rapids **or** zip line over the rainforest canopy (depending on season and weather conditions)

Day 9: Depart from San Jose International Airport

Program
Partners:



PACUARE RESERVE
ECOLOGY PROJECT INTERNATIONAL

