

Tropical Internships in Biological Research & Sustainable Agriculture in the Rainforest of Ecuador

Third Millennium Alliance (TMA) was founded in 2007 with the purchase of 100 acres and the establishment of the Jama-Coaque Reserve (JCR) in the province of Manabí, Ecuador, between the cities of Jama and Pedernales.

The reserve lies 4km inland from the Pacific Ocean. Now encompassing over 1,300 acres, the Jama-Coaque Reserve actively protects one of the last remaining fragments of Pacific Equatorial Forest, which is considered to be one of the most threatened tropical forests in the world. Our organization has been running a hands-on, field-based internship program in the fields of Biological Field Research and Sustainable Agriculture since 2008, with more than 200 young and enthusiastic students from around the globe.

Internship Opportunities:

Interns that participate in our program take on high-impact and dynamic research projects within the fields of Biological Field Research (Flora & Fauna) and Sustainable Agriculture (Permaculture & Agroforestry) in the Jama-Coaque Reserve, Ecuador. Interns must select one of the two internship tracks mentioned above when applying, but cross-pollination between the two different paths is encouraged for individuals looking to broadly experience each topic. Above all, a positive attitude, desire to learn, and a strong sense of adventure are the foundations of our internship. Working alongside our experienced staff, community members, and fellow interns from across the globe ensures an unforgettable tropical learning experience.

Below is a list of some of the projects we will be tackling during the upcoming 2017 sessions. Some of these projects are new and others have been ongoing for multiple seasons or years. When applying please inform us if you would like to participate in our Biological Field Research path or our Sustainable Agriculture path.

Biological Field Research:

TMA's current flagship research project investigates hummingbird-plant pollination/interaction networks across elevational and forest gradients. Interns will assist TMA staff in a variety of forest settings, working with both birds and vegetation in tropical dry forests, humid rainforests, and cloud forests.

Daily duties may include hummingbird trapping, camera trapping, vegetation sampling, plant collection/identification, pollen analysis, group discussions of scientific literature, creation of species aging/sexing guides, and data entry/analysis.

Interns will build various skillsets depending on timing of their session and the current phase of the project. These skills may include GPS navigation, hummingbird trapping, mist-netting, camera-trapping protocols and analysis, bird handling and banding, identification of birds by sight and sound, aging and sexing of birds, vegetation sampling, plant collection and identification, pollen identification, and data entry/maintenance.

Please note this project requires extensive hiking. Applicants should be willing and able to hike for ~2 hours on steep terrain in humid and muddy conditions several times per week.

Previous projects have included camera-trapping of terrestrial and arboreal mammals, censuses of threatened primate species, seed bank and germination studies, and herpetofauna monitoring. Interested and motivated applicants may have the opportunity to continue work on some of these projects.

Sustainable Agriculture (Permaculture & Agroforestry):

- Production Zone Intensive – Focused on increasing food production, crop zonification & rotation, plant propagation, care/maintenance, and integrated pest management.
- Agroforestry – Maintenance and use of mixed-use forest. Development of cleaning and harvest system, use of products, and analysis of agroforestry systems in comparison to the widespread use of slash and burn agriculture.
- Reforestation – Plant native trees on 40 hectares of pasture land, initiate a bamboo reforestation program along riparian areas, and manage a growing nursery of native plant species.
- Green Building – Learn to use natural, recycled and sustainable building materials. Assist with construction projects of all forms as we continue to grow into the future.

In addition to our standard internships, we also offer a variety of seasonal workshops and certification courses. We offer a Permaculture Design Certification (PDC) course four times a year, including a special traveling PDC each summer that visits three unique farms across Ecuador.

Additional workshop opportunities will be announced on our website as they are scheduled, so please stay tuned here: www.tmalliance.org

2017 Internship Schedule:

A complete program description with the 2017 schedule and prices can be found on our website: www.tmalliance.org/internships. Here you can also find the application form, contact details, as well as other media, such as photos, video, and answers to Frequently Asked Questions.

We are currently accepting applications for the following sessions:

Taste of the Tropics Internship (4 week program):

- October 16-November 10: Application deadline September 16
- November 13-December 8: Application deadline October 13

Academic Internship (8 week program):

- October 16-December 8: Application deadline September 16

2018 Internship dates TBD; please email us at info@tmalliance.org if you are interested in interning in 2018.

* Accreditation— For students looking to get academic credit for our internship program, please discuss the options available with your advisor or internship office. TMA does not currently have the ability to independently provide academic credit, but we are happy to work with your university to ensure all requirements are met by our program. Our staff is happy to provide an evaluation of performance and complete any paperwork required by the university.

We look forward to working with you!

Jama-Coaque Field Research Team
Third Millennium Alliance
Quito, Ecuador
Email: info@tmalliance.org
Web: www.tmalliance.org