

Conservation

High School Special Schedule Ecuador - Galapagos Islands

Welcome to our High School Special Conservation Project in the Galapagos! Are you ready for a once-in-a-lifetime experience working in and exploring this beautiful country?

Follow in Darwin's footsteps. Research unique wildlife, protect endangered species, contribute to reforestation efforts and more. With your team tackling fresh challenges each day, you'll get first-hand experience in the conservation field and contribute directly towards community development initiatives. Make an impact while you travel!

Volunteers have the chance to work hands-on with the world-famous giant tortoise, supporting the hard work of local conservation workers. They will experience the incredible biodiversity that inhabits this remote tropical archipelago and leave a positive impact on this special ecosystem.

Learn about the values and culture of the people that live on the island. The group will become immersed in a different way of living as they try new food and give back to the local community.

Additionally, you will have the chance to explore some of the most popular tourist sites across the islands.

ProjectsAbroad





- ### Highlights
- ▶ Care for the iconic Galapagos giant tortoise
 - ▶ Survey sea lions & other wildlife
 - ▶ Help maintain the Galapagos National Park
 - ▶ Explore this unique volcanic island terrain
 - ▶ Run workshops about the environment
 - ▶ Observe underwater species while snorkelling
 - ▶ Visit Santa Cruz & San Cristobal islands
 - ▶ 50 Volunteer Service Hours

Accommodation

Guesthouse

Transport

Bus, taxi and by foot

Meals

Breakfast will be served at the guesthouse each day. Depending on the days' activities, lunch will either be at a restaurant or at the accommodation. Dinner will be at the accommodation or restaurants.

Responsible Travel

We offset 100% of carbon emissions associated with your in-destination transport. We're committed to being fully climate-positive by 2024!

By volunteering with us you're helping reforestation efforts, protecting existing forests and providing employment to local communities around the world.

Day 1

Sunday

Arrival in San Cristobal

On arrival, a Projects Abroad staff member will be waiting to collect you from San Cristobal airport.

Students will then be taken by minibus to their accommodation. During the drive, you will see the incredible surroundings. Already, there's a good chance to spot sea lions, sea birds, and marine iguanas.

After you reach your accommodation, you will have time to get settled in and rest after the long journey.

You will then have an orientation tour around the main town on the island, see sea lions on the beach, and have a welcome dinner as a group.



Day 2

Monday

Morning:

The adventure begins! Students will tour the giant tortoise breeding centre at the Galapagos National Park and get to know the facilities available. They will cut Otoy plants using machetes in the morning while the day is still cool. The Otoy that they gather is the perfect lunch for the tortoises in the park.

They will get stuck into exciting activities around the park, such as:

- Feeding the tortoises
- Cleaning their enclosures
- Taking measurements
- Conducting population surveys
- Maintaining walkways
- Taking care of baby tortoises

The tasks students will take part in may vary due to the park's priorities at the time of their visit, or the weather. However, there will always be plenty to do!

Afternoon:

In the late afternoon, the group will explore Tijeretas and see wildlife up close.

Evening:

Relax with dinner at the accommodation

Day 3

Tuesday

Morning:

The group will head to Opuntia Bay for a beach clean-up. You'll record data about the amount of debris and plastics collected. As the Pacific Ocean tides move in and out on the coast of the Galapagos Islands, it carries in trash from other countries. This not only ruins these pristine beaches but also makes for a dangerous living environment for the many animal species living there. There will be time for a short paddle or swim afterwards too.

Afternoon:

Volunteers will assist with planting indigenous species which are grown in one of the park's nurseries.

Evening:

Walk around the town to see the sea lions and have ice cream

Day 4

Wednesday

Morning:

Continue work at the tortoise breeding centre. Feed and support the tortoises and help maintain their habitat.

Afternoon:

Have a rest from work for the afternoon. Join a workshop to learn about conservation activities and issues on the Galapagos Islands. Then relax by the beach.

Evening:

Join a traditional dance lesson and learn more about the island's culture.



Day 5

Thursday

Morning:

The group will support conservationists as they conduct surveys of Galapagos sea lions in the morning. Surveying numbers helps the national park to track the health of the population and identify if there are any issues with behaviour within the groups.

Afternoon:

Join Otoy plantation activities. Remove invasive plants, harvest otoy to feed tortoises and plant endemic plant species. With the removal of alien plant species such as guava, avocado, and raspberry plants. Alien plants are one of the greatest threats to the endemic species of the Islands. Eradicating these species is crucial to help indigenous plants thrive.

Evening:

Enjoy dinner with the rest of the group.

Day 6

Friday

Morning:

Continue work to remove invasive species and plant endemic species.

Afternoon:

Join an induction talk to explain your weekend activities. Plan what to pack for the weekend trip. Have a rest from work for the afternoon. Relax by the beach and see the diverse wildlife found along the coast.

Evening:

Go into town and enjoy pizza with the group.



Day 7

Saturday

Full Day:

Load onto a speedboat to Santa Cruz Island. Students will go underground and explore lava tunnels. Then visit El Chato Tortoise reserve. Here, there are plenty of opportunities to see wild giant tortoise in their natural habitat, roaming free.

In the afternoon the group will visit the famous Charles Darwin Research Station. This gives a unique insight into the history and research techniques of conservationists on the islands. The group will stay overnight on the island so they are ready to start exploring again in the morning!

Day 8

Sunday

Full Day:

On Sunday, the group will relax and swim at the stunning Tortuga Bay, famous for its black sea turtles and marine iguanas. You'll get the chance to shower at the hotel before lunch.

Afterwards, jump back onto the speedboat and return to San Cristobal Island.

Day 9

Monday

Morning:

Students will attend workshops where they will learn how to lead games and activities with local children. They will also attend a Spanish Language class.

Afternoon:

Lead activities with children and teenagers from the local community to teach about the environment and conservation efforts.

Evening:

Return to the accommodation for a delicious dinner before getting some rest.



Day 10

Tuesday

Morning:

The group will help to paint a mural in the town, depicting environmental issues and wildlife. This aims to help highlight environmental issues to local people and tourists.

Afternoon:

Learn about invasive animal species and community efforts to control populations. Volunteer at a dog shelter where stray dogs are cared for and given new homes.

Evening:

Dinner will be served at the accommodation.

Day 11

Wednesday

Morning:

Continue work at the tortoise breeding centre. Feed and support the tortoises and help maintain their habitat.

Afternoon:

Complete the mural in town depicting environmental issues and lessons.

Evening:

Dinner will be served at the accommodation.

Day 12

Thursday

Morning:

Support conservationists with further surveys of Galapagos sea lions.

Afternoon:

Join Otoy plantation activities. Remove invasive plants, harvest otoy to feed tortoises and plant endemic plant species.

Evening:

Dinner will be served at the accommodation.



Day 13

Friday

Morning:

Visit the Interpretation Centre to learn more about the history of the Galapagos Islands in their natural, human and conservation contexts.

Afternoon:

For the final afternoon of the trip, the group will visit Playa Mann beach. Here, students can go snorkeling to see the variety of marine life in the bay.

Evening:

The group will enjoy a farewell dinner. This is a chance to say goodbye and thank you to the local staff.

Day 14

Saturday
Departure

The group members will likely be departing at different times, therefore day 13 and 14 may not be the same for everyone. Your exact departure plan will be communicated with you directly by our local team.

You will have the continued support of Projects Abroad staff right until you are safely at the airport.

We wish you a safe journey home and we hope to see you again on one of our projects around the world!

Want to learn more?

We'd be happy to talk to you and and and answer any questions you may have. You can call or email our team, or use the 'live chat' feature on the Projects Abroad website.

General inquiries: info@projects-abroad.org

Social Media



@projectsabroadglobal



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Personal Achievements



- ▶ Completed a total of 50 service hours.
- ▶ Contributed to protecting the endemic vegetation of the Galapagos.
- ▶ Had hands on work caring for Giant Tortoises at San Cristobal.



Student Learning Outcomes

Intercultural Competence

Students will be immersed in different cultures, gaining an understanding of their role within our global community and developing a deeper cultural awareness.

Leadership Development

Students will be pushed out of their comfort zones, experiencing new challenges each day. They will build their confidence and resilience through team activities and new life experiences.

Healthy Active Living

Students will be encouraged to prioritise their self-care, enhancing their physical and mental well-being.

Empowerment

Students will be empowered to think for themselves, challenging the "status-quo" and cultivating transformative decision-making mindsets.

Global Citizenship

Students will be exposed to new perspectives, engage with real-world challenges and contribute to sustainable development initiatives.