

Thank you for your interest in our program. Itapoa in Puerto Quito is a small reserve of around 12 hectares ( +/- 30 acres) of tropical rain forest, that contains a part of primary forest, secondary forest, tropical crops, a botanical garden, we have electricity, running water, shower, kitchen to cook by yourself, refrigerator, no phone. The nearest town is 2 Km. away (5 min by car or a 20 min. walk) and it has all the basic services, such as, phones, internet, doctors, pharmacies, markets with all kinds of fresh food. The largest town where you could find banks is 45 min. away by bus and the closest major city is Santo Domingo one hour and a half away. It is, also, 4 hours away from the capital Quito. As you can imagine, by being a tropical area you can expect insects together with a unique biodiversity.

About the program:

The duties in the reserve, include the daily checking of fences and their maintenance, gardening , clearing off weeds, planting, pruning, keeping the nursery, tracking mammals and birds and keeping a record of the encounters, or foot prints, etc.. We help our neighbors reintroduce native plants in their lands and form biological corridors and at the same time we are forming new patches of forest where this one was cleared cut years ago. Volunteers are, also, required to help in the maintenance of the house and with visitors whenever we have them.

We collect seeds for our program, we germinate the seeds, put them in bags until they are ready to be transplanted in the field. Later we take the plants to the areas to be planted and take care of them until they are big enough to survive by themselves. The collection of seeds is done in our forest in Puerto Quito or deep in the jungle where we have 100 hectares of primary forest in the Canande range. We hike to this place once a month to collect the seeds, get information about the biodiversity and give maintenance to the shack that we have built a shelter.

Volunteers are not charged but a five dollar fee has to be paid weekly for gas, electricity and other expenses in the house of Puerto Quito, They buy their own food and cook by themselves or together with the other volunteers. For the jungle trips there is a fee of 70 dollars for 3 or 4 days in the jungle that help us pay for the food, transportation, horses, etc...

Our goal is to reintroduce as many native trees as possible around Puerto Quito. And buy as much jungle as possible in Canande area. There are always fruits from the gardens, coffee and chocolate for the volunteers. The time for volunteering is not important, we love continuity, but if you have to leave earlier, we do not have a problem. You do not need to be trained to show your love for nature and whatever you will need to learn, experiencing right on the field is the best, but it is important to get involved and love it.