

CANADIAN ORGANIZATION FOR TROPICAL EDUCATION AND RAINFOREST CONSERVATION (COTERC)

Position: Community Conservation

Number of Placements: 1

Location: Tortuguero, Costa Rica

Website: <http://coterc.org>

Field/Subject Area:

Open to all York students who meet the eligibility criteria

Position Description:

The Community Conservation intern will develop, in partnership with station staff and San Francisco village educational committee, conservation education programs to be delivered to local community. The intern will also assist with other ongoing Caño Palma Biological Station (CPBS) monitoring programs.

Specific tasks will include:

- Preparing and conducting environmental education activities at the local elementary school;
- Preparing and/or conducting science experiments with students, teaching the scientific process, and assisting students to learn in a hands-on manner in the COTERC library and education center;
- Aiding in developing manual/modules for teaching conservation/education/science in the classroom setting and in our library/resource center;
- Assisting with volunteer/intern orientation to the community;
- Assisting in the development and delivery of Conservation club activities, including fieldtrips, with local students, with the objective of developing positive attitudes and respect for local eco-systems.

Expected work hours: Work days will vary depending on involvement with research activities, with a minimum of 4 hours a day working in the library. We work a typical Costa Rican 6 day week

Preferred start date: Anytime in May

Qualifications/skills required:

- Excellent communication skills in both English and Spanish
- Ability to work independently
- Good listening skills
- Flexibility
- Excellent work ethic
- Some teaching experience or training (preferably with children aged 7-15)
- Maturity

Complete all tasks assigned, which includes but is not limited to the responsibilities outlined above.

Language requirements:

Fluent English; advanced Spanish

Please note:

York interns pay a rate of \$255 US per week which includes accommodation and food. There are no banks in Tortuguero and so traveler's cheques are not accepted. All payments to the station must be in U.S. dollars. When arranging U.S. cash for your trip, be sure to ask your bank for clean crisp bills. Any bills with tears or writing on them will be rejected. If you are nervous about carrying money, arrangements can be made to pay the amount at the COTERC office. There will be a \$15.00 transfer charge to do this.

Highlights of Organization/background information:

The Canadian Organization for Tropical Education and Rainforest Conservation (COTERC) is a registered Canadian and Costa Rican Charity that was formed in 1991. COTERC operates Cano Palma Biological Station, which is located north of Tortuguero in the Limon Province on the northeast Caribbean coast of Costa Rica.

The chief mandates of the organization are to provide leadership in conservation, education and research for the preservation of tropical rainforests. The goal is to extend efforts in Neotropical conservation to extend beyond the stations 40 hectares.

The mission of the Canadian Organization for Tropical Education and Rainforest Conservation is to provide leadership in education, research, conservation and the educated use of natural resources in the tropics.

Several projects are underway at the station, they include:

- The “Save an Acre” program, a fund expressly for the purchase of conservation through land purchase.
- Educational programs and support to local schools and universities in Costa Rica, Canada and abroad.
- A volunteer program which provides biology students and other interested parties an opportunity to live in a Neotropical rainforest and participate in the station's daily operations. Volunteers learn about biological studies and conservation efforts in the tropics. They also get personally involved in working on many aspects of conservation.
- This includes an ongoing inventory of the flora and fauna of the Tortuguero region, monitoring program for resident and migrating birds and shorebirds, large mammals, herpetology, plant phenology and sea turtles, and daily collection of meteorological data. They may also be involved in tours of the station by some of the areas tourists with visitors are given an interpretive lecture by volunteers and staff to help explain the local ecosystem and some of the conservation issues.

Cano Palma Biological Station is a small outpost on Cano Palma in the Barra Del Colorado Wildlife Refuge. The station is situated in lowland flooded tropical wet forest and receives between six and seven meters of rain annually. It is considered one of the most bio diverse areas of Costa Rica. Cano Palma functions as a biological field station located in the rainforest. All visitors to Cano Palma arrive by boat. There are no roads in this area and all travel is done along a system of rivers and canals. Living facilities are clean and comfortable but basic. Volunteers, researchers and students share a dormitory which can house 30 people.