

A misty forest landscape with tall trees and a small animal in the foreground. The scene is captured during the "blue hour" of dawn or dusk, with soft, diffused light filtering through the dense canopy. In the lower-left foreground, a small white animal, possibly a capybara, is visible grazing on the forest floor. The background shows rolling hills and more trees shrouded in a light mist, creating a sense of depth and tranquility. The overall color palette is dominated by cool blues, greys, and muted greens, with a touch of warm light on the horizon.

# Volunteer-Life in an Ecolodge

An experience report  
of a 10 week stay at the  
Selva Bananito Lodge  
25<sup>th</sup> of February - 6<sup>th</sup> of May



# This is a summary of my 10 week stay at the lodge



Jan  
(19)



Lena Marie  
(20)



Basti  
(30)

and



Ralph  
(me, 61)

Jan was already there when I arrived. He stood there for 11 weeks, Lena came 2 weeks later than me and stood for 3 week and another 2 weeks later Basti came and stood for 4 weeks. The last 3 weeks I was the only volunteer left.



# We had several duties during our stay.



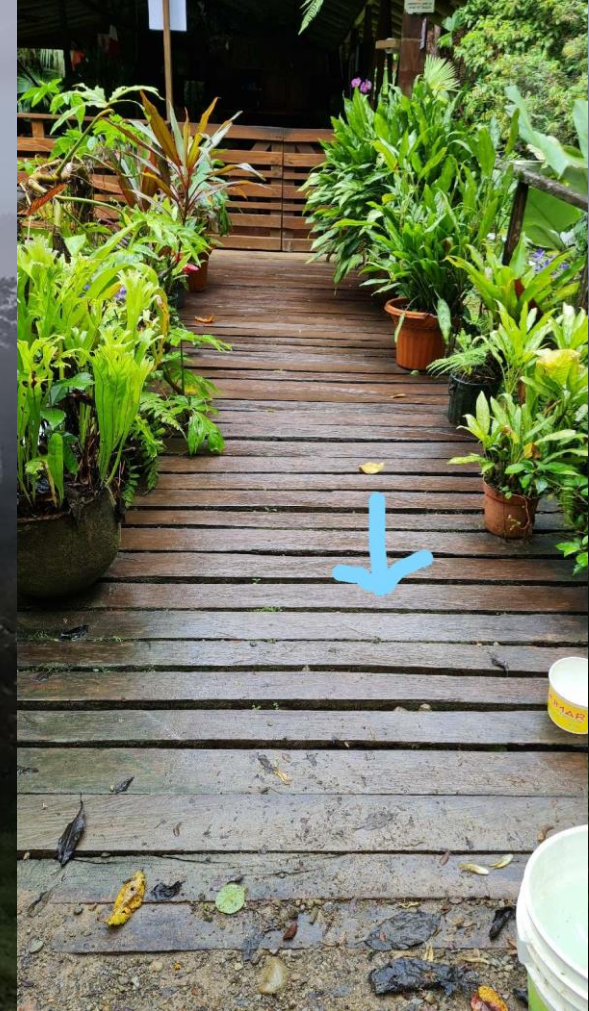
Remove weed  
from new  
planted trees



Water the new  
planted trees  
when it's to dry



Cleaning the ways in the  
lodge



and the entrance to the Rancho



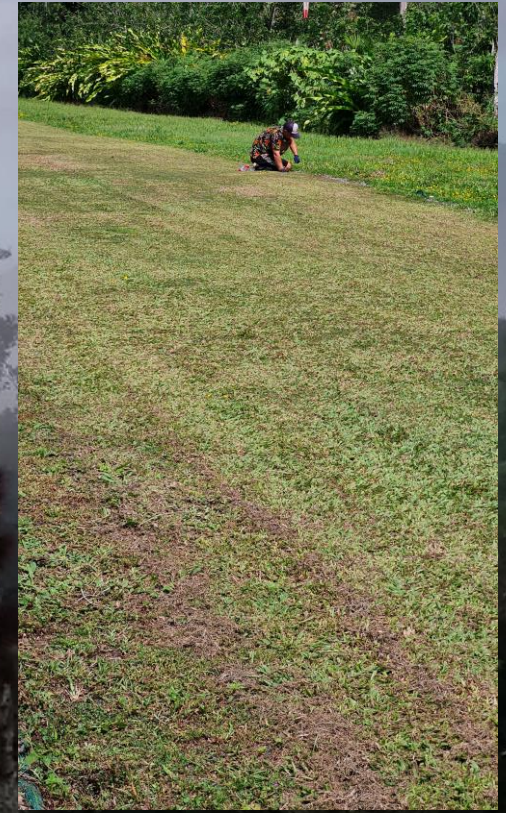
# ... still cleaning



... the fence



... the channels



... and freeing the  
marking lines from  
weed

... of the landing strip. The owner of the lodge is offering sightseeing flights over the rainforest with Gyrocopters



# Caring for the Trails in the rainforest



Preparing a rest area on a trail



Creating new trails around interesting object in the rainforest



Cleaning the trails and keeping them free of leaves, vines and old wood

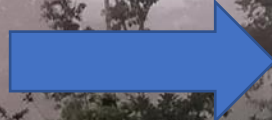


# Planting trees





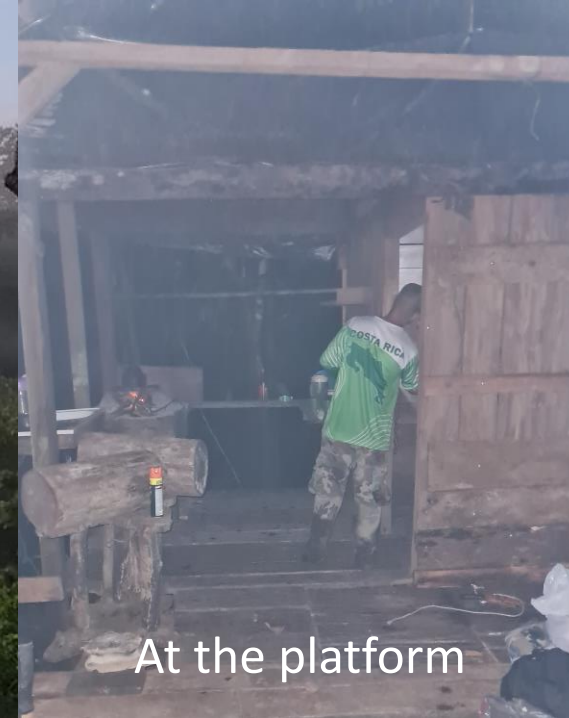
# Barbed wire fence dismantling



Since all the barbed wire fences mostly are replaced by electrical fences the old fences must be removed.



# Accompany inspection tours



This was an inspection for looking for poachers. It was very tough. It had 18 km the first day and a lot of steep slopes and gradients. The night we stood at a platform in the rainforest.



# Accompany inspection tours



An inspection to check the cameras which monitors the animals in the rainforest especially Jaguars



# Accompany inspection tours



An inspection along the rivers which are the border of the reserve. All inspections included collecting of trash 😊



In addition, we accompanied tourists on their trails into the rainforest and on their riding tours.



# Maintenance



We build a new  
channel to avoid the  
pasture of the horses  
to become a swamp.





# Maintenance



At the farer platform a new toilet should be installed. Therefore, we transported a 15 kg toilet 7 km into the rainforest including all accessories, tools and the tubes for water and wastewater.



# Maintenance



Painting new signs for the street and the gate



# And very important: Enjoy “Pura Vida”



Leisure time: An afternoon  
at the river with fishing





# And very important: Enjoy “Pura Vida”



We discovered a natural pool in a river and called it „Playa Bananito Sur ☺“



And very important: Enjoy “Pura Vida”



After the inspection of the cameras, we made a side trip to a waterfall



And very important: Enjoy “Pura Vida”



Bonfire in dryed river



And very important: Enjoy “Pura Vida”



Lena and Ralph flying  
(Thanks to Jürgen)



The 10 weeks were an exciting and great time. Although there is no internet (almost 😊), at the river with luck you might have up to 2 bars with Kolbi) I enjoyed my stay very much. It was nice to work together with the local team. Even though my Spanish was not very good, we understood each other somehow. With 4 volunteers it was a great time, especially since we became very good friends. We made two trips during our stay to Cahuita using our free days. But staying alone in the lodge is also an incredible experience. There's a lot of time for inner reflection and the rainforest with its never dying sound is a great environment.

Like me you will make the experience to see a lot of animals. Sometimes it's hard to take a photo, but your mind will always remember what you saw. It's an incredible nature. You will become familiar with a lot of animals even in your room. Geckos, Spiders, Frogs, Snakes and Scorpions are always around and of course many birds, totally different in color and behavior. Furthermore, with a little luck you'll see, Night Monkeys (Kinkajous), Agutis, Racoons, Howler Monkeys, tbc....

The work at the lodge is not too hard, but you should be fit. Some works were really challenging for me and the other. I would recommend bringing working gloves and be aware that you must work in rain boots. They have many sizes at the lodge, but if you have big or very small feet you should bring your own. A flashlight is a must. There are no lights in the lodge and to avoid snake attacks in the night (at 6 p.m. it's dark) you need to have one.

The food is pretty good. Although you will have rice and beans almost three times a day it is added with other food like noodles, eggs, cheese, salad, other vegetables and more. Everything is very tasty and you will like it.

Thank you to the team, you were great. I'll remember this time as one of the best in my life.

Pura Vida