

Description: Maintain and improve the Reserve's Native Plant Garden.



Project Summary: The Lalo Loor Dry Forest Reserve's EcoCenter is surrounded by a native plant garden that demonstrates the diversity of plants found in Ecuador's coastal ecosystems, as well as plants with medicinal, cultural, or other uses (fibers, construction, etc.). The botanical garden is the starting point for any visit to the reserve, and it is of utmost importance that they be well-maintained, informative, up-to-date, and above all, captivating. Interns with an interest in plants and a love of gardening are needed to make improvements and updates, maintain the garden,

and, secondarily, work on visitor services including providing guided tours of the garden and reserve. This internship may be combined with other internships at the Lalo Loor Reserve – just ask!

What you'll do:

- Collect and plant native species in the garden, and label them with common and scientific name
- Maintain the native plants garden
- Develop and improve interpretative signage about coastal flora and ecosystems (e.g., the Chocó-Tumbes gradient)
- Visit schools to talk about the reserve to generate interest in the environmental education program
- Lead groups of students or visitors (esp. English speaking!) at the reserve.

What you'll learn:

- Techniques for communication of environmental concepts to lay audiences
- Identification of common native and medicinal plants of Ecuador
- Management of a nature center geared to education of the local public
- Principles of creating effective exhibits

What we seek: Enjoys plants and gardening; interest in medicinal plants; Spanish language ability; creative, artistic ability; patient, outgoing personality; enjoys working with others; knowledge or experience in tropical ecology/environmental education.