



ECOLOGY PROJECT
INTERNATIONAL



PORT HONDURAS MARINE RESERVE:

Escape the crowds and head to Southern Belize and the crystalline waters of the Port Honduras Marine Reserve. A protected area established through local conservation efforts, the reserve is home to a wide array of marine species. The reef system, seagrass beds, and mangrove forests support one of the most productive fisheries in the Caribbean. With a resident dolphin pod and a subspecies of endangered West Indian Manatees, it's a stunning locale to study marine ecology.

YOUR FIELD WORK:

Under the guidance of EPI's instructor teams and local marine biologists, you'll learn how to monitor the reserve's manatee population and sea grass beds. By collecting this data, you'll help researchers understand the social structure, population dynamics and movement of manatees within the reserve and monitor sea grass meadows which are important habitat for manatees and many other species.

INTO THE JUNGLE:

After completing your fieldwork, your course heads inland to the Belizean rainforest, where the Cockscomb Basin National Wildlife Sanctuary awaits. You'll spend your time hiking to picturesque waterfalls surrounded by lush tropical forest and learning about the sanctuary's jaguar & large mammal monitoring projects. Your trip ends with a visit to a local Mayan cultural center for a lesson in handmade tortilla and chocolate-making.

BELIZE MARINE ECOLOGY

HIGHLIGHTS



**COLLECT DATA ON MANATEES
AND SEAGRASS**



**MONITOR ENDANGERED
YELLOWHEADED PARROTS**



EXPLORE THE BELIZEAN RAINFOREST



BELIZE MARINE ECOLOGY SAMPLE ITINERARY

Days 1-2: **ARRIVE IN BELIZE**

- Meet your instructor team
- Head south to the Toledo District for your first night on course

Days 3-4: **MARINE ECOLOGY**

- Head to Payne's Creek Field Station through meandering mangrove forests
- Dive into lessons on reef ecology and conservation issues in Belize from your private cabins among the coastal savannas
- Locate and survey manatees from research boats
- Snorkel in azure waters, explore coastal mangroves, and monitor seagrass beds
- Survey yellow-headed parrot roosts
- Explore the pine savannah and unique wildlife found in Payne's Creek National Park
- Clean up a secluded local beach and discuss how climate change affects Belize as well as your own community

Days 6-8: **RAINFOREST ECOLOGY & CULTURE**

- Head inland to a jaguar sanctuary deep in the rainforest
- Bird-watch and hike to a gorgeous waterfall
- Learn about the sanctuary's monitoring project on tapirs, peccary, jaguars, and other forest mammals
- Visit a Mayan cultural center and learn how to make tortillas and chocolate

Day 9: **DEPART FROM BELIZE CITY AIRPORT**



Length	Research & Service Hours	Coursework Hours	Focus
9 days	14	30	marine biology, rainforest ecology, conservation