

QUITO, ECUADOR

COLLEEN SCHMIT

Program: Ceiba Tropical Conservation Semester, Spring

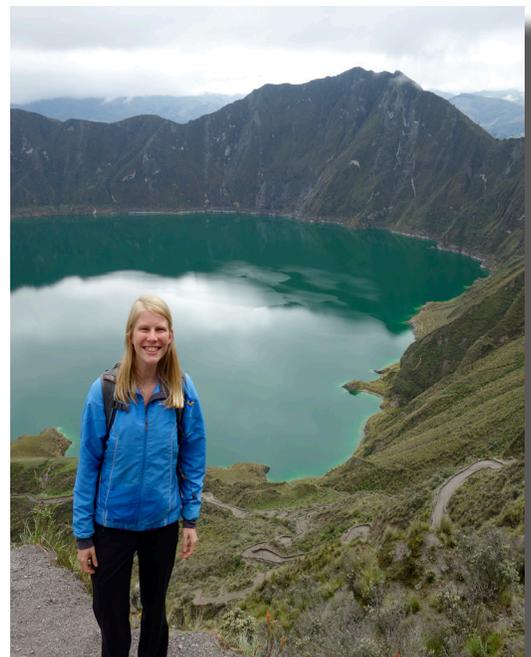
Colleen's Majors: Conservation Biology; Spanish

Academic Life: Our courses involved lectures, field activities, and research projects in many regions of Ecuador including the Amazon Rainforest, coast, Galapagos Islands, cloud forest, and mountains. The program concluded with a three-week conservation internship. All the students in our program were from the United States.

On Fieldwork Abroad: We conducted fieldwork while living at the Tiputini Biodiversity Station in the Amazon Rainforest. My group investigated leaf-cutter ants and the correlations between the body mass of the ants, the mass of the leaf fragment, and the distance of the source trees from the colony. Doing fieldwork abroad can guide you in what you might want to do as a career. Developing our own research projects, collecting data in the field, analyzing the data, and presenting our findings was a great way to gain experience with ecological research.

Why Consider This Program: I would highly recommend studying abroad in Ecuador on this program! We learned an incredible amount about the diverse ecosystems. Ecuador is an incredible country full of beautiful scenery, kind people, and high biodiversity of animals and plants. If you enjoy spending time in nature and/or if your major is related to Biology, Environmental Science, etc., you should definitely do this program!

Tips for Future Participants: Be ready for the best semester of your life! Be prepared to do a lot of work at times. It is a busy semester with traveling to different ecosystems to learn about them in-person, and do hands-on activities in all of those places. Make an effort to use Spanish as much as possible. The courses are taught in English, but living with host families and traveling during Spring Break were great ways to use a lot of Spanish.



We hiked and kayaked at Quilotoa, which had beautiful views of the mountains.

“I am interested in a career in conservation, and I learned a lot about how conservation can work in Ecuador.”

