Ryan’s Majors: Biology, Environmental Studies

Program: Ceiba Tropical Conservation Semester: Galapagos, Andes and Amazon, Spring

Academic Life: We had three classroom courses taught by two American professors who were the best I have had in college. The professors did an amazing job creating a fun atmosphere while teaching you A LOT. At times work piles up because you travel a lot (for class excursions) so you must get a lot done in the week you have in Quito after returning from a trip. We also had a conservation internship of your choosing for the final month of the program which is really fun and a great experience. In addition, you take a month long Spanish intensive class at the beginning of the semester to help prepare for the language barrier.

Most Memorable Moments: Easily the cruise through the Galápagos Islands. You swim with sea lions, sea turtles, stingrays, and so much more! You get to eat incredible food on the boat and snorkel normally two times a day.

Cultural Difference: In Ecuador everything is slowed down and more laid back. They are never in a rush to go anywhere. They do work on their own time which is great but takes getting used to.

Ryan’s Fieldwork: I had a reforestation internship on the coast of Ecuador in a dry tropical forest reserve. I looked at the effects of reforestation on vegetation structure and bird communities. It was a lot of work but also fun to see how everything turned out. I ended up writing a research-like paper and presentation which is not the norm for these internships.

Ryan Kilian
Ryan at Cayambe-Coca National Park near Quito, Ecuador.

“My host family made me feel right at home from the first night!”