



experience quest

Manu Amazon Conservation Project



Where? Manu Biosphere Reserve, Madre de Dios Region, Peruvian Amazon.

History: Experience Quest has been working in Manu since 2009 alongside the CREES Foundation, a Peruvian NGO which is working to bring social, economic and environmental harmony to the region through environmental and social research and community-led projects.

The Manu Biosphere Reserve has been created as a buffer zone around the ecologically important Manu National Park, one of the most biodiverse areas in South America. This zone is under intense pressure from all sides - an increased volume of tourist lodges, immigrant settlers, oil and logging companies and indigenous communities. CREES are working to safeguard the natural diversity in the region whilst working with local communities on sustainable development projects that create decent livelihoods in harmony with the natural environment. This is through the creation of sustainable agricultural and forestry practices, reforestation projects, construction of improved community infrastructure to encourage communities to stay settled in existing areas (and therefore not need to destroy other areas of forest) and surveys of existing wildlife.

Sustainability: CREES work in the Mascoitania Reserve at their own research centre, the Manu Learning Centre (MLC), year round. Scientific survey work and research is ongoing with long-term aims and objectives. Quest teams add much needed man-power to the work being done. Along with their time and energy, our teams also bring a financial commitment to Manu through volunteer donations to our UK registered charity Quest4Change. This goes directly to CREES in Peru and provides short and long term support to the work being done. This could include the future construction of schools, improved clinic facilities for nearby communities and resources for research at the MLC. This makes your and Quest's involvement in Manu a genuine and long term commitment. Quest4Change fundraises for the project year-round to ensure support is there when volunteer teams are not in the country.

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What will your students be doing? Reforesting areas of secondary rainforest, undertaking scientific flora and fauna surveys; e.g. monitoring the activity and number of Blue-Headed Macaws at a nearby clay lick, the results of which will be entered into CREES' ongoing scientific research and working alongside local communities to introduce sustainable agricultural practices.

Students will also be working on a construction project in a local community; be this building a school classroom or improving the medical facilities in the area. Improved facilities and increased knowledge of sustainable farming practices will allow these communities to remain in one place, rather than moving into untouched areas of forest. Students will have many opportunities to interact and get to know the communities they work with, gaining a unique insight into everyday life in the Amazon. Living and working in such a biodiverse part of the rainforest will give your students the chance to see a wide variety of indigenous creatures and understand first hand the threats and problems faced by both nature and people in the area.

Other activity options: As well as taking part in the project, there is the chance to explore the ancient city of Cusco and trek the Inca Trail to Machu Picchu; Trek in the Colca Canyon and visit the colonial city of Arequipa; Kayak on Lake Titicaca and visit indigenous island communities; Sandboard at the Huacachina Oasis; Trek and ice climb in the Cordillera Blanca near Huaraz, among many other exciting adventures.

