

## David L Nieland

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**Subject:** Rainforest Ecology Course in Costa Rica and Nicaragua

As an field course instructor the Maderas Rainforest Conservancy ([maderasrfc.org](http://maderasrfc.org)), I would like to announce a Rainforest Ecology course that will be offered this summer, 4-28 June. We still have a few spots opened. Overall, the course is a project based, hands-on experience focused on fundamental aspects of tropical ecology. Although participating students are typically undergraduates, graduate students are always welcome. As part of the course, I try to help students develop a project within their interests either on-site through lectures and discussion, or through email correspondence prior to participating in the course. In past, students have conducted population or community ecology research involving insects, small mammals, reptiles, plants, birds, and monkeys, just to name a few. As this course is split across two countries, a basic experimental design for a project is inherently built into the course structure; we have a wet forest in Costa Rica and a dry forest in Nicaragua, so comparisons based on habitat are relatively easy. Additionally, projects focused on biodiversity are also typically easy to conduct. That being said, you are not required to follow this project structure -- I will do my best to help you develop a project that can be conducted during the available time and with available equipment. It is also possible to do a project at both locations that we can develop onsite or prior to the trip.

I have included other important trip information below. If you have any questions, please dont hesitate to contact me at [LBrandt@truman.edu](mailto:LBrandt@truman.edu).  
LaRoy Brandt

You have three options for this trip. The itineraries and costs are listed below:

Option 1) Complete Trip, cost \$2695 plus airfare\* and incidental costs\*

June 4 fly into San Jose, Costa Rica  
June 5 travel to field site  
June 6-14 LaSuerte Biological Field Station  
June 15 Travel to Nicaragua: El Castillo.  
June 16 overnight side trip, El Castillo.  
June 17 Travel to Granada/overnight.  
June 18 travel to Ometepe  
June 19-28 Ometepe Biological Field Station  
June 29 overnight in Granada  
June 30 Fly home

Option 2) Costa Rica Itinerary, cost \$2095 plus airfare\* and incidental costs\*

June 4 fly to San Jose, Costa Rica  
June 5 travel to field site  
June 6-14 LaSuerte Biological Field Station (lowland wet tropical forest)  
June 15 bus to Nicaragua, El Castillo  
June 16 boat trip, El Castillo.  
June 17 Travel to Granada/overnight.  
June 18 Fly home from Managua, NI

Option 3) Nicaragua Itinerary, cost \$1895 plus airfare\* and incidental costs\*

June 17 Fly to Managua, Nicaragua  
June 18 travel to Ometepe  
June 19-28 Ometepe Biological Field Station (dry tropical forest around the base of a volcano)  
June 29 overnight in Granada  
June 30 Fly home

\*airfare costs are usually between \$650 to \$850 if we buy them early, and I have seen tickets as low as \$500; if purchased late, they can be over \$1000

\*\* incidental costs: you are responsible for your own meals and bottled water when we are not at the field station. you are also responsible for your hotels when not on the field station. hotels/hostels are usually \$25 per night; you will need about \$150 for hotels for the complete trip, about \$100 for the Costa Rica itinerary, and about \$50 for the Nicaragua itinerary. We will also have an opportunity to climb the volcano at Ometepe which is usually about \$15 per person (this is a rigorous hike.)