

La Selva Packing List

Jimmy O'Donnell, June 2012

TRAVEL:

- Passport
- Cash: I think \$150 lasted me the entire trip
- I always bring printed copies of:
 - Full itinerary
 - Letter of invitation/acceptance if applicable
 - Bank statement
 - Insurance
 - Hotel reservation for the first night, including phone and address

CLOTHES

- Crummy field T shirts (3-5)
- Crummy field long sleeve shirts (3)
- Crummy lightweight field long pants (1)
- Crummy lightweight field shorts (2)
- Underwear (plenty to make it between laundry days)
- Wool socks (4-5)
- Sturdy but comfy boots- I was very happy with my leather goretex Vasque boots. If you plan to tromp through streams, buy or borrow a pair of rubber boots in Costa Rica (La Selva had some up to euro-size 42 or so).
- Bag (backpack/fannypack) that will get sweaty and wet every day in the forest
- Crummy baseball hat- I did not bring this but wished I had. Everyone there seems to be a big fan of bandanas; I'm not, partially because they don't fit my big head. This will absorb sweat and deflect rain, debris, and sun.
- Flip flops are highly discouraged for wear anywhere around the station; I can't resist wearing flops in the tropics, but use at your own risk
- Sturdy poncho to carry in your fieldwork bag
- A small umbrella would be nice if you have the space in your bag
- A pair of old running shoes for wearing around the station (I wore flops and only wore my old running shoes once to go for a run on a morning off)
- Boxers/shorts/shirt to be kept clean for sleeping
- One decent travel outfit for coming and going. I get through customs and immigration faster when I look respectable.
- One outfit (could be your travel garb) to wear in case you go out for dinner or something

TOILETRIES

- There was a liquid soap dispenser in the shower; I like bar soap. Even if you are a high-maintenance light-packer, you can buy soap and shampoo in town.
- Gold-Bond powder on your feet at the end of the day is fantastic
- Sunscreen: I burn easily, but honestly would not bring more than a tiny tube of sunscreen next time. Not only was I down on the forest floor with no sun, I was wearing collared long sleeved shirts.
- Mosquito repellent (I'd rather have DEET on my skin than dengue in my body)
- Nail Clippers
- Toothpaste
- Toothbrush
- Floss
- Deodorant

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- Razor
- Bandages
- Moleskin if you're prone to blisters
- Small roll of duct tape and/or an ace bandage
- Antiseptic ointment
- Q-tips
- Medication (might include: antibiotic, antihistamine, pain/fever, cold/flu, Pepto, Immodium, Emergen-C; though some of these are likely readily available)

OTHER

- Travel mug! The mugs there are tiny, and a travel mug would have been perfect for lectures, sorting, and data analysis.
- Water bottle: I like to travel with a reused 1-liter selzter bottle because it is lightweight, I don't worry about losing it, and carbonated beverage bottles are typically thicker than others. However, there is an ice machine at La Selva, and a wide mouthed Nalgene would have been glorious.
- Sunglasses
- LED headlamp (brighter is better!)
- Wristwatch (I'd happily be a spokesman for \$25 Timex Ironman watches)
- Notebook for classes
- Small Rite-in-the-Rain notebook for field data (I didn't use mine)
- Pens and pencils
- Binoculars if you're into birds
- Hand lens and dissection kit (if you're into that)
- ID guides (if you're into that)
- Books and/or reprints
- Plastic grocery/shopping bags for packing wet boots, dirty clothes, etc
- Ziplocs (large and small)
- If you're taking a class, one of those big plastic folder/binder/envelop thingies would have been handy for carrying notes and handouts
- *Sheets and towels are provided

ELECTRONICS

(I believe power is 110V, socket style is just like the USA)

It is damp everywhere! One of my computer's RAM cards died while I was there, and I wouldn't be surprised if the humidity was to blame. Consider bringing a watertight bag with Dri-Rite that will fit all of your electronics when not in use. You could also store them in an air-conditioned room, but I didn't have access to one of these that was also kept locked. Some people also swear by surge protectors, I did without.

- Earbuds (double as earplugs in case of snoring/talking roommates)
- Music player/cell +charger
- Computer +charger
- An extra phone battery is key for international travel- sorry iPhoners.
- USB drive and/or external hard drive
- Camera +charger +card reader/cable
- Batteries of applicable size