

Mazar Wildlife Reserve (MWR)

General Information

The Mazar Wildlife Reserve (MWR) is a privately-owned ecological restoration and conservation initiative covering 1800 hectares of montane forest and páramo. It is located in the Nudo del Azuay, a mountainous region that includes the southern half of Sangay National Park and adjoining wild habitats. The MWR maintains two field camps for researchers and educators at Jalogus and La Libertad. In general, all wild habitats are available for scientific and education uses, but limitations are placed on research activities that carry a risk of compromising habitat integrity. The reserve is owned by Stuart White, a PhD in Geography and resident in the area since 1982.

The MWR is located on the South American continental divide in tropical montane cloud forest and páramo in the southeastern Andes of Ecuador. Its tropical montane cloud forest and páramo have high diversity, and contain numerous endangered, rare and/or endemic species. These include the spectacled bear, mountain tapir, puma, red-faced parrot, golden-plumed parakeet, Andean condor and crescent-faced antpitta, plus numerous other threatened species of birds, mammals and plants. The area also has a long history of human presence, and contains many pre-Columbian roads, terraces and ceremonial sites.

Conditions of Use

All users must:

1. Obtain a research permit issued by the Ministry of the Environment/Azogues Provincial Office. The Fundación Cordillera Tropical (FCT) can provide guidance in fulfilling this requirement. A copy of this permit must be filed with FCT.
2. Abide by the rules and standards of use detailed in the research permit.
3. Pay the usage fee, in accordance with the length of stay and use of MWR resources.

Fee Schedule / Payment

Note: These fees are assessed to assure that researchers receive adequate provision of basic services, and to cover costs generated by the use of the Mazar Wildlife Reserve.

\$24.00	Per Day Basic Usage Fee*
\$12.00	Per Day/Per Person Employment of Local Personnel, contracted through the MWR
\$12.00	Per Day/Per Animal Horse Usage Fee
\$15.00	Per Trip Road and Trail Maintenance Fee (applicable to all arrival and departure trips)
\$_.__	Voluntary additional contribution to the MWR Restoration and Conservation Fund

*Fee includes: (i) Rustic Housing at Jalogus and/or La Libertad camp(s); (ii) Individual beds each with blanket and pillow; (iii) Rustic kitchen and bath facilities, and propane gas; (iv) Logistical planning assistance provided by FCT; (v) Basic contribution to MWR Restoration and Conservation Fund.

NOTE: "Day" calculated from date of arrival through date of departure from the MWR.

Payment – 50% of the anticipated fee is due prior to arrival at the field camp. Final payment is due before leaving Ecuador and will be calculated on actual use.

Agreement for the Use of the Mazar Wildlife Reserve

1. I will use the field camp(s) only for research and/or educational purposes as proposed.
2. I agree to obtain the appropriate research permit(s) from the Ecuador Ministry of Environment. A copy of the permit(s) must be submitted to the FCT prior to field camp usage.
3. I agree to manage payment of all expenses associated with the research/educational project. If logistical assistance is needed, I will make arrangements with FCT representatives prior to arrival at the field camp.
4. I agree to provide a copy of the research results presented to the academic or funding authority and a copy of eventual publication(s).
5. I will conduct any activities at my/our own responsibility during the period when I use the field camp(s).
6. I will share housework, such as cleaning with the other users. I will respect research activities of the other users and be of assistance if possible.

7. I will bring back all our belongings at the end of the period. I will obtain permission from Stuart White, if I need to leave belongings at the field camp.
8. I agree to treat the local people and culture with sensitivity and abide by cultural norms.
9. I agree to indemnify and hold harmless Stuart White and the Fundación Cordillera Tropical including its officers, directors, employees, and agents, and their respective successors and assigns, against any loss, liability, damage, cause of action, cost, or expense of any nature whatsoever, including without limitation reasonable attorney's fees and other legal costs (whether or not suit is brought).

Rules for Use of the Mazar Wildlife Reserve

1. **APPROPRIATE USE:** The MWR may be used for research or educational purposes **only**. The MWR may not be used for any commercial purpose, including commercial photography, without prior written permission from Stuart White. As a matter of policy, collecting of any sort is not permitted on the MWR. Exceptions to this policy require appropriate collecting permits with approval from Stuart White and issued by the appropriate environmental authority.
2. **FIELD ETIQUETTE:** The MWR is shared by many users as well as the plant and animal inhabitants. Please observe common field etiquette:
 - a. Courtesy among all user groups is expected. We hope researchers will work together, coordinating logistics, schedules and use of camp resources, such as the kitchen. All user groups have equal access to camp facilities.
 - b. Respect other people's projects. If, for example, you see marking flags or other indications of studies, stay away and go around.
 - c. Habitats within the MWR are fragile, and all users should strive to reduce or avoid impacts. Please, for example, do not create trails, cut vegetation or otherwise modify vegetation. If your project requires an intervention or interventions (flags, equipment emplacement, soil pits, etc.), these must be specifically approved prior to initiating your project.
 - d. Remove all trash you generate, and where possible, try to leave the environment and facilities cleaner than you found them.
3. **FIRES AND SMOKING:** Smoking and open fires of any kind are prohibited on the MWR. The only exclusion to this policy is use of the fire pit at the Jalogus camp. Also, please be especially careful with candles in the grass cabins at Jalogus.
4. **DRIVING ON THE MWR:** Driving on the MWR and along its immediate access roads is to be minimized. All vehicles must stay on established roads within the MWR. Driving on or through native vegetation is prohibited.
5. **INDEMNIFICATION AND HOLD HARMLESS:** The authorized representative of any outside group using the MWR must agree to hold Stuart White and the Fundación Cordillera Tropical harmless from any claims, actions, suits, or other liability for property damage, injury, or death.

Request Permission to Use the Mazar Wildlife Reserve

The Fundación Cordillera Tropical, www.cordilleratropical.org, based in Cuenca, Ecuador, coordinates all scientific and educational uses of the MWR. A research permit may be required by the Ministry of Environment, and is the responsibility of the applicant.

To request permission to study on the MWR, email info@cordilleratropical.org to request the Mazar Wildlife Reserve Use Application/Agreement. You will be required to provide details such as the responsible party and a description of the research project. The application will be reviewed and a response is usually given within 15 working days.

Size

1800 ha (4448 acres)

Average Temperature Ranges

May to August: 4 to 26°C (39 to 79°F)

September to April: 7 to 22°C (44 to 72°F)

Elevation

2,800 m to 3,700 m (9,186 to 12,139 ft)

Average Precipitation

1,200 mm (47 in)

Accessibility / Road Conditions

To La Libertad - A paved road exists between Cuenca and Rivera/Zhoray, located on the Mazar Highway. After this point, there is a gravel road with many potholes leading to the turn-off to La Libertad. The road up to La Libertad is a dirt road and often requires 4wd for access. Camp access may be difficult during the wet season due to landslides blocking the Mazar Highway and muddy conditions on the La Libertad road spur.

To Jalogus - A paved road exists between Cuenca and the community of Chanin, located on the Mazar Highway. After this point, there is a gravel road with many potholes that is always passable leading to the town of Queseras. From Queseras, you will turn-off the main road toward Jalogus. This is a dirt road that requires 4wd at all times. FCT-approved drivers with 4wd experience are the only drivers allowed past Queseras. Unsafe road conditions may inhibit camp access and drivers have been instructed to use caution. At times, drivers may require researchers to walk into camp from a designated drop-off point due to unsafe road conditions. Access is most difficult during the wet season.

List of Approved Drivers

You are strongly encouraged to use FCT-approved drivers, and in some cases it is required. A list of approved drivers is available upon request.

Facilities

Living conditions will be comfortable, though relatively primitive. The camps are constructed in simple style and consist of a common area with a kitchen and meeting area, and dorm-style housing. The camps have simple beds and mattresses. Running water is piped in through a spring for the kitchens and bathrooms – but all water must be boiled before consumption. Both camps have gas-powered showers and sit-down toilets.

Personnel

No onsite assistance is available in the field camps. Local personnel may be contracted to assist with moving supplies, etc. See the MWR Application/Agreement for current rates. Questions should be directed to staff in the Fundación Cordillera Tropical office.

Emergency Contact Information

In case of emergency, please contact staff at the FCT. A list of phone numbers will be provided upon arrival.

Cooperation between User Groups

At times there may be more than one research group at the field camp. All users must exercise mature and prudent behavior at all times. Users are required to communicate with the other group(s) to arrange kitchen usage times, and share housework such as cleaning. All users should respect the research activities of the other users. Please refer to the Field Etiquette section of the Use Application / Agreement.

Health and Safety

The MWR is located hours from the closest medical facility and limited cellular service is available. Your health and safety during use of the MWR is of primary importance. Please consider potential hazards associated with each activity, and make every reasonable attempt to reduce risks.

Your full cooperation and common sense are required to assure your well-being and that of your group. Equally important is your cooperation with rules relating to field camp usage.

It is recommended that you purchase medical and evacuation insurance. There are many companies that provide this service - an example is International SOS Assistance Inc.

Appropriate Attire

The MWR terrain is mountainous and often muddy. Dress for safety and comfort by wearing hiking shoes, boots, or athletic shoes. Using sunscreen and/or a hat are highly recommended.

The weather is variable at this altitude so bring good raingear and warm clothing. Light shirts are good for working

or walking outside during the day, but you will need sweaters for rainy days, mornings, and evenings. It is suggested you bring fleece sweaters or polypropylene because they dry easily; the same synthetic advantage exists for pants. Jeans or Carhartts are great when it's sunny and dry. The tall páramo grass is always loaded with dew in the morning.

It must be stressed again that you should bring warm clothing and rain gear. It can be quite cold and damp so bring plenty of warm clothing, especially if you are someone that chills easily.

Clothing and Equipment Recommendations

The following list contains suggestions of items you will find useful during your stay at the field camps. The list is extensive so consider which items are applicable to you and don't forget other items particular to yourself.

Clothing

- T-shirts and long-sleeve shirts
- Quick dry pants and Field pants
- Good raincoat and rain pants
- Fleece jacket
- Mittens / gloves
- Winter hat
- Sunhat / baseball cap
- Long underwear tops and bottoms – consider bringing different weights

An important note regarding clothing in the field: a few pieces of cotton clothing are nice when in town, but cotton is not warm when wet or even damp. The risk of being wet can be constant so minimize bringing too much cotton, whether that is underwear, t-shirts, pants, or socks. Also, it may be colder than you expect. Bring plenty of layers of long underwear and fleece or wool sweaters.

Footwear

- Hiking / trekking socks
- Good leather hiking boots
- Sandals or Croc-like footwear
- Tennis shoes
- Rubber boots

Rubber boots can be purchased in Ecuador for \$7-10. However if you have feet larger than a men's size 12 you should purchase rubber boots in the US.

Toiletries

- Toothbrush / paste
- Sunscreen / lotion
- Shampoo / conditioner
- Brush / comb
- Soap
- Feminine hygiene

Most items are available in Ecuador but keep in mind that biodegradable/organic products are not easily available. Please bring items if you prefer a particular brand that may not be available in Ecuador.

Medical

- Pain reliever
- Medications for anti-diarrhea, allergy, cold
- Antihistamines
- Antibiotic ointment
- Antiseptic solution
- Vitamins
- Tweezers
- Band-Aids
- Contact lenses and solution

It is highly recommended that each group have a comprehensive first aid kit. This is not provided for you. Many common medications can be purchased locally.

Equipment

- Water bottle – consider one with a filter
- Flashlight / headlamp
- Camera / Batteries / Film
- Fanny pack / day pack
- Camp Towel
- Bandana
- Binoculars
- Lightweight gaiters
- Travel coffee mug
- Sleeping bag

- Pillow and pillowcase
- Backpack

- Crazy Creek-type camp chair
- Sunglasses

Money and Important Documents

- Passport
- Vaccination certificate
- Copies of important documents
- Credit / ATM cards

- Cash
- Driver's license / US identification
- Money belt / pouch
- Travel and medical insurance contact numbers

It is highly recommended that you leave a copy of your passport with someone at home and also bring one copy with you.

Alcohol and Drug Policy

Consumption of alcohol in the field camps is allowed in responsible moderation. Users who do consume alcohol shall be solely responsible and liable for any health risk, behavioral and/or physical repercussions associated with his/her consumption of alcohol. Illegal drug use will be handled on a 'no-tolerance' policy and involve immediate expulsion from the field camp.

Vaccinations and Illness Prevention

The Centers for Disease Control recommends a number of vaccines and preventative measures. Please discuss these vaccines and other disease prevention measures with your doctor. CDC information is available online at www.cdc.gov.

See your doctor at least 6-8 weeks before you leave for Ecuador to allow time for vaccines to become effective. Depending upon your personal medical history, other preventative treatments might be in order. Please discuss this possibility with your physician.

The field camps are located at an elevation high enough that malaria is not a problem. All drinking water must be treated prior to consumption. Recommended treatments include bringing the water to a rolling boil for five minutes, or using a water filter.

Travel Information and Visas

Make sure that you apply for a passport in time to receive it well before you leave. Applications can be obtained at U.S. post offices. If you already have a passport, it must be valid for at least the next six months.

Currently, you do not have to pre-apply for an Ecuadorian visa if you are a US citizen. This is also true for most, if not all, European countries. You will be issued a 90 day tourist visa when entering Ecuador. Please contact your local Ecuador Embassy for the most up-to-date information.

If you plan on remaining in the country for longer than 90 days, then you must apply for an extended visa. This process will take time so you will want to begin it well in advance of your arrival date. Please contact your local Ecuador Embassy to gain full instructions on this process.

Finances

Users are expected to manage payment of all expenses associated with the research/educational project.

Traveler's checks can be exchanged at various banks in Cuenca but this can be a long and frustrating process. ATM machines are available in Cuenca, and this is a more reliable way of getting money in Ecuador. Major credit cards (VISA and MasterCard) are accepted in larger stores. Bring small bills as it is difficult to spend anything larger than a \$20 in the city and even more difficult in the country. Smaller denominations are easiest to use.