

Brazil Otter Sanctuary and Conservation

Gain hands on conservation experience as you help to care for and protect Brazil's Neotropical Otter.

Officially known as the Federative Republic of Brazil (República Federativa do Brasil) is the largest sovereign state in Latin America. A federal republic, Brazil is the world's fifth-largest country, by both geographical area and total population and it is the largest Portuguese-speaking country in the world, and the only one in the Americas. Brazil's Amazon River basin includes a vast tropical rainforest, home to diverse wildlife, a variety of ecological systems, and extensive natural resources spanning numerous protected habitats. This unique environmental heritage makes Brazil one of 17 megadiverse countries, and is the subject of significant global interest and debate regarding deforestation and environmental protection of its flora and fauna.

The project is located on Ilha de Santa Catarina, just off the southern coast of Brazil. The capital is the city of Florianópolis, and it is connected to the mainland by two bridges. There are several beach resorts on the island that attract many visitors which can be a major threat to local neotropical otter (*Lontra longicaudis*) populations. The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) states that the neo-tropical otter is 'data deficient' and has been subject to little study. The IUCN currently classifies it as a 'near-threatened' species, though they state that there is emerging data that would justify changing the otter's conservation status to 'threatened'.

Project Highlights

- Assist in the conservation of neotropical otters
- Care for neotropical otters in the sanctuary
- Contribute to important data-collection
- Enjoy the beaches in your free time

FAST FACTS

Location	Santa Catarina Island, Brazil
Activities	Gain hands on fieldwork experience Help to prevent the decimation of local otter populations Undertake behavioural studies
Transport	Airport pickup
Accommodation	Shared volunteer house

What does the project do?

The study area is an important site for otter reproduction and a great deal of research is undertaken by our local partners with basic field work focusing on mapping otter burrows, studying their general ecology and relationships with their ecosystems and also breeding habits. More advanced research techniques are also used, such as DNA analysis and application of radiotelemetry. Currently there is an important research project that studies the sounds otters emit and how they communicate with one another. Other studies include burrow interaction, otter parasites, biochemistry and of the behavior in captivity.

These several different projects compliment each other and aim to contribute to filling in the gaps in knowledge about how to conserve the species and its habitat. The otter is a very sensitive animal whose survival is directly linked to the preservation and conservation of water and ecological corridors. Alongside studying wild otters the project site is also home to a breeding sanctuary. The sanctuary often cares for orphaned otters which volunteers may help to feed and clean. The centre carries out environmental enrichment for these orphans and may carry out behavioural research on these individuals.

What will I be doing?

Your role will vary and will depend very much on current research and breeding centre objectives and priorities. One of your main roles will be helping to feed the otters in the Breeding Sanctuary in the morning and evening. You may also help to carry out behavioural studies on the captive otters and collect this data. Fieldwork may be carried out by kayaking or trekking. With the assistance of field staff you may help to analyse the otter's frequency at shelters, monitor nests and assess food habits. Due to their shy nature, it can be very difficult to spot wild otters and much of the work is done through registering signs of their presence and behaviour.

What happens when I arrive?

On arrival into Florianópolis International airport you will be met by a local member of staff and taken to the project site.

Where will I be staying?

You will be staying in shared volunteer accommodation at the project site. The accommodation includes clean, comfortable rooms, kitchen facilities and a communal space. There are Western style toilets and showers with gas heating. Laundry facilities and internet connection are available.

What will I be eating?

On this project you will be responsible for your own meals. This is a great element of travelling away from home and provides a good opportunity to get to know other volunteers and explore the local foods. You are able to buy your own groceries at nearby markets (5- 10 minutes walk) to cook in the fully equipped, communal kitchen. For those who prefer, there are many nearby restaurants that offer local cuisine, seafood or buffets at reasonable prices.

COSTS

1 week	US\$ 695
2 weeks	US\$ 895
3 weeks	US\$ 1,145
4 weeks	US\$ 1,395

DEPARTURE DATES

This project runs weekly and start days are flexible. It is only available between April and October 2018.

DURATION

Minimum 1 week

WHAT'S INCLUDED

Before you go

- Pre-departure support
- Travel advice
- Documentation
- Kit advice
- Discounted medical kit
- Free Frontier T-shirt (UK only)

In-country

- Airport pickup
- Accommodation
- Local orientation
- 24 hour in-country support
- International HQ emergency support & back-up

AIRPORT INFORMATION

Nearest airport(s): Florianopolis (SC) (FLN)

CONTACT INFORMATION

Call us on 020 7613 2422 (UK) / 1 949 336 8178 (US)

Mail us on info@frontier.ac.uk

Check out our social media here:

Project details were correct at the time this document was generated. Price, dates and other details are subject to change. Please see our website for current details for this project.