



February 2023

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Dear Parents / Carers

Operation Wallacea Expedition 17th – 30th July 2024

You may be aware that every other year we have offered an opportunity for our Year 11, 12 and 13 students to participate in an expedition organised by Operation Wallacea.

Operation Wallacea is a research organisation, supported by a number of leading universities, who undertake research projects in various parts of the world. Whilst primarily science-based, these projects also have geographical, social and economic aspects. Our students will be given the opportunity to participate in two projects: one based in the rain forest in the interior of the country, and the other based on the coast. Participating in these projects will give the students real scientific and environmental experience which can be used to support university applications. These expeditions are undoubtedly a fantastic experience for our students and are a valuable addition to their CVs.

We are in the early stages of planning for the next expedition which will run in July 2024 to Honduras, and will last for two weeks.

Our students were introduced to the trip in tutor time this week so we would now like to invite you and your son/daughter to an Information Session. This will be held on **Wednesday 1st March 2023 at 6.00pm** in the Sixth Form Atrium.

A representative of Operation Wallacea will give a short presentation about the expedition and there will be time after the presentation for questions.

As an initial overview, our students will spend their first week in the cloud forests of the Cusuco National Park helping to survey one of the world's rarest and most endangered forest types. While here, they will complete a Neotropical Forest Ecology course, jungle skills training and have the chance to head up into the treetops with Canopy Access Ltd. They will also collect data across a wide range of taxonomic groups to support Opwall's report for the Honduras Forestry Department, who hope to use the data to sell Carbon Natural Forest Credits and protect such an irreplaceable ecosystem.

The second week will be spent either on Utila or Roatan (islands on the Bay Island chain) where time will be spent learning to dive or snorkelling on the reefs and learning more about Caribbean reef ecology.

To get further details about this expedition, including research focuses, accommodation, an example itinerary for our students and a kit list, please visit <https://www.opwall.com/expeditions/school-expedition/honduras/>.

If, after the presentation, your son/daughter is keen to be part of this fantastic trip please use this link <https://forms.gle/qwSzhxyhQVh1GLLs6> to register their interest by **Friday 10th March 2023**.

Once we have a clearer idea of numbers, we will be in a position to confirm the trip cost and will require a deposit to secure their place. The estimated cost for the trip will be in the region of £3000 - £3500, which students are encouraged to fundraise the majority for themselves over the next year. A fundraising meeting led by someone from Operation Wallacea will be held for the students in the coming weeks. I will write again to all those that have registered their interest after the presentation meeting.

This expedition offers a unique opportunity for our students to not only contribute to real life environmental data collection and gain an understanding of a different career in science, but also offers significant transferable skills to be considered when applying for further education or jobs when they leave school.

We hope to see you at the meeting.

Kind Regards

Emma Pilgrim
Vicky Rice
Expedition Co-ordinators
Edgbarrow School