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WALKS

A two hours guided natural history walk is offered every day, twice a day, at 7:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. You can also ask for our morning bird watching tour and our nocturnal wildlife watching tour, with prior reservation. If you want a personalized experience you can also ask for private hikes, according to availability, at our reservations department.



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Organización para Estudios Tropicales



Las Cruces Biological Station and Wilson Botanical Garden



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Youtube



Waze



Twitter

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MEALS

We serve family-style food. Vegetarian meals are a daily option and we are prepared for food restrictions. We also handle the take-away mode.

Ask about our rates on reservations.

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Las Cruces began in 1962 as a botanical center, a nursery and an experimental farm created by Robert and Catherine Wilson, a couple of florists from Florida, USA. It was acquired by the Organization for Tropical Studies (OTS) in 1973; since then, it has developed tropical research in fields such as conservation-oriented biology and restoration. In 1987, OTS dedicated the Botanical Garden to Mr. Wilson for his contribution to horticulture.

The station is located at 1200 MASL in the Cruces row, South Pacific of Costa Rica; due to this, the temperatures are often cool, varying from 21-26 °C during the day, and 15-21 °C at night. The average rainfall is close to 4000 mm per year, with September and October being the rainiest months. The dry season extends from December to March and the rainy season from April to November.

Las Cruces is one of the three biological stations that the OTS administers in Costa Rica. It serves as the main center of the region dedicated to education, research and environmental education. In addition, the station offers visitors a unique opportunity to experience the tropical ecosystem, and to learn in a place where scientists and students from different countries attend to research and study.

The Robert and Catherine Wilson Botanical Garden has an internationally renowned collection, composed of tropical plants from around the world. More than 1,000 genus in more than 200 plant families constitute a unique collection. Araceae, bromeliads, ferns, zingiberaceae, heliconias, marantas and palms are well represented within the 10 hectares of the garden.



FACILITIES

- 12 rooms with private bathroom and balcony
- Dining room
- Gift shop
- Laundry service
- Parking
- Free WiFi
- Garden and forest trails
- Library



FLORA AND FAUNA

There is a great diversity of animals both in Las Cruces and in the nearby areas. More than 410 species of resident and migratory birds (about half of Costa Rican birds) can be found in here. They are common in different environments such as forest, open areas, and lagoons; only in the garden you can observe about 250 species throughout the year. More than 100 species of mammals have also been registered, and of those, more than 50% are bats. Some of the most seen mammals are the agoutis, the white-faced monkeys or capuchins, tolomucos (tayras), martillas (kinkajous), raccoons, and squirrels. The station protects three species of mammals that are threatened with extinction in other regions. Of course, it also has a great diversity of insects, particularly butterflies and moths.

It is estimated that in the 365 hectares covered by the station, there are about 2000 species of native plants, which are being documented in a florula. The Luis Diego Gómez Herbarium is documenting the native flora of the Coto Brus Valley, which includes lowland and mid-altitude rainforest, cloud forest and dry forest.

The Wilson Botanical Garden covers an area of 10 hectares and was designed so that visitors had easy access to all the collections. This is why there are about 5 km of trails that expose more than 3000 species of cultivated plants, 60% of which come from all the tropical zones of the world, and the remaining 40% are native to Costa Rica.

There are also collections of heliconias, bromeliads, orchids, anthuriums, arborescent ferns, gingers, bijaguas (*calathea lutea*), cactus and other succulents, cycas, lilies, fruit species and medicinal plants. These species are being documented in a database that contains images and general information.