IPBio
Reserva Betary

FREE WILDLIFE BRAZIL

Table of Contents

MUST READ:

I. About IPBio

II. FreeWildlifeBrazil Celine

III. The Atlantic Forest

IV. Volunteer with IPBio

V. Volunteer at IPBio & Celine

VI. Living at IPBio

VII. Details about Volunteering
- Requirements
- Visa and Vaccinations
- Costs

VIII. How to Get Here

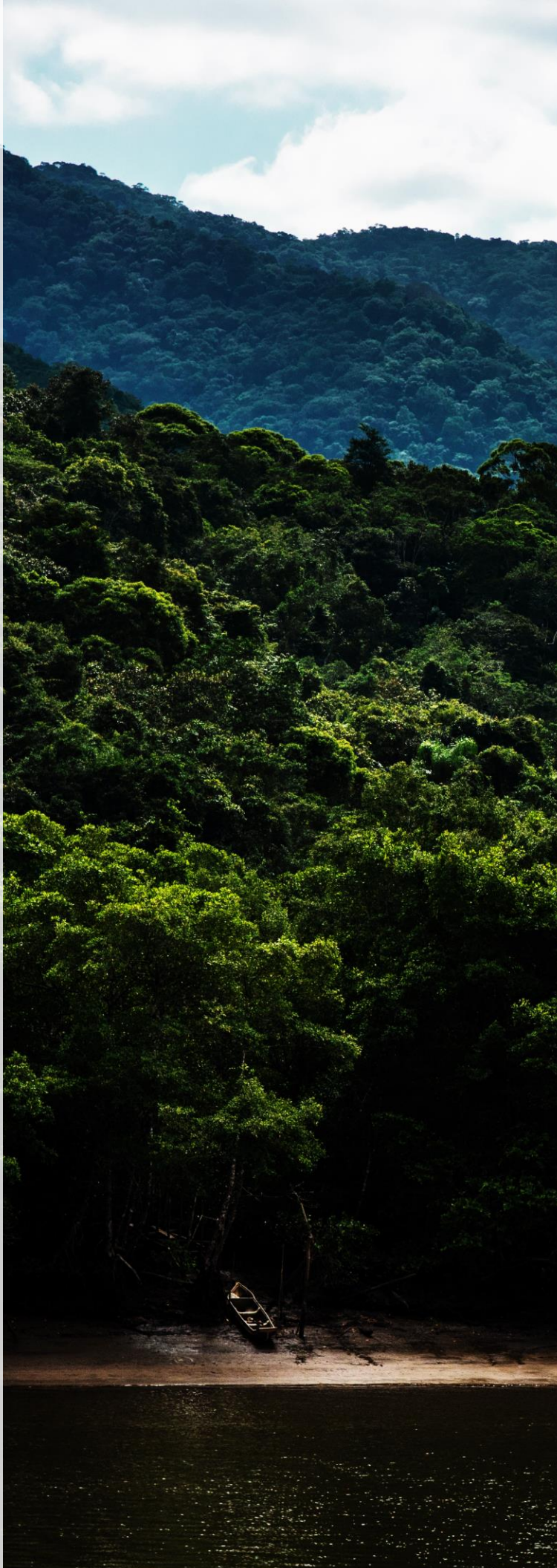
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

IX. Weekend Activities

X. Info on Past Volunteers

XI. Our Facilities

XII. Timeline



About IPBio

The Biodiversity Research Institute, where research meets conservation.

IPBio is a non-governmental, non-profit organization that develops and supports projects in environmental education and scientific research on biodiversity, ecology as well as on the behavior of species of fauna and flora of Brazilian ecosystems.

IPBio was founded by Sergio Pompeia, agronomist and botanist, who desired to create a bridge between scientific research and the general population so that society could make informed decisions about environmental issues.

As a result, IPBio goals always combine research with education. Our infrastructure was designed to conduct academic studies while simultaneously allowing visitors on the reserve to visualize and learn about our native species. Our research always strives to have educational applications, such as the production of eBooks, so that our projects not only pertain to the scientific world but encourage citizens to understand and care about nature.

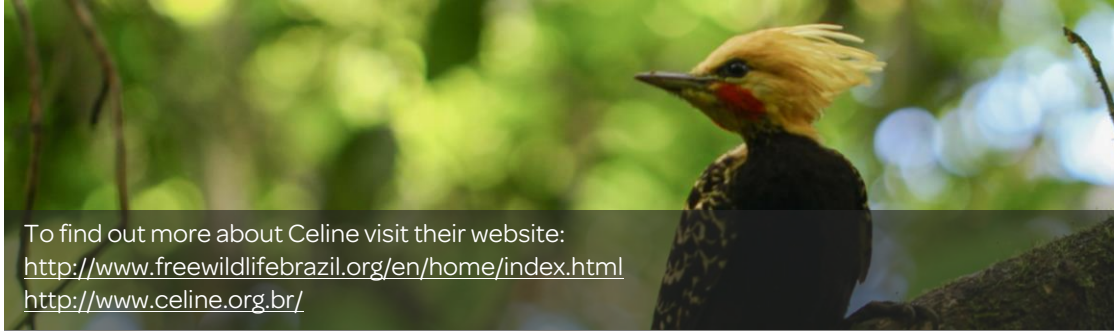
IPBio research projects are primarily focused on long term data collection in the field. Our projects are either conceptualized internally for practical goals or through partnerships with academic institutions.

In addition, IPBio's mission is to encourage conservation, management and sustainable use of natural resources; and promote the development of eco-tourism and cultural projects.

IPBio is located on the Betary Reserve, a 60 hectare preserved area, in the municipality of Iporanga which is situated in the Ribeira Valley. The region is home to the largest surviving contiguous area of Atlantic Forest.

In 2009, the reserve received accreditation as an advanced outpost of The Atlantic Forest Biosphere Reserve by UNESCO

FREE WILDLIFE BRAZIL



To find out more about Celine visit their website:
http://www.freewildlifebrazil.org/en/home/index.html
http://www.celine.org.br/

IPBio partnered with FreeWildlifeBrazil Celine, a non-profit which recently opened dedicated to the release of native birds. Also located on the Betary Reserve, Celine works in association with IPBio to run their volunteer program which aims to preserve and protect wildlife.

Celine is a new release center, inaugurated in 2018, which was founded by the couple Martine Schmid-Fiorini and Pedro Schmid, who worried about the fate of the wild animals removed from their habitat due the illegal trade. In an improvised installation at their residence in Iporanga, they began to care for wild animals, enabling their return to nature. Their activities attracted attention and gained recognition in the region by the local population, as well as by environmental authorities. Thus, familiar with the necessary care and the requirements for the release of wild animals, they founded the Celine Association.

The Release Center, with a management area of 4 hectares, is situated on the Betary Reserve in the municipality of Iporanga. Celine focuses on the release of native birds and will monitor their progress after reintroduction.

Please remember we are a release center and not a zoo or rehabilitation center. The birds we receive are in their last stage and are ready to return into their natural environment which means that they must have little to no contact with humans and are only at the center for a short period to acclimatize after their stressful journey to the center and then almost immediately released. Therefore, often there are no animals at our center as it depends on the environmental authorities to bring us animals that need to be released which is not a common occurrence.

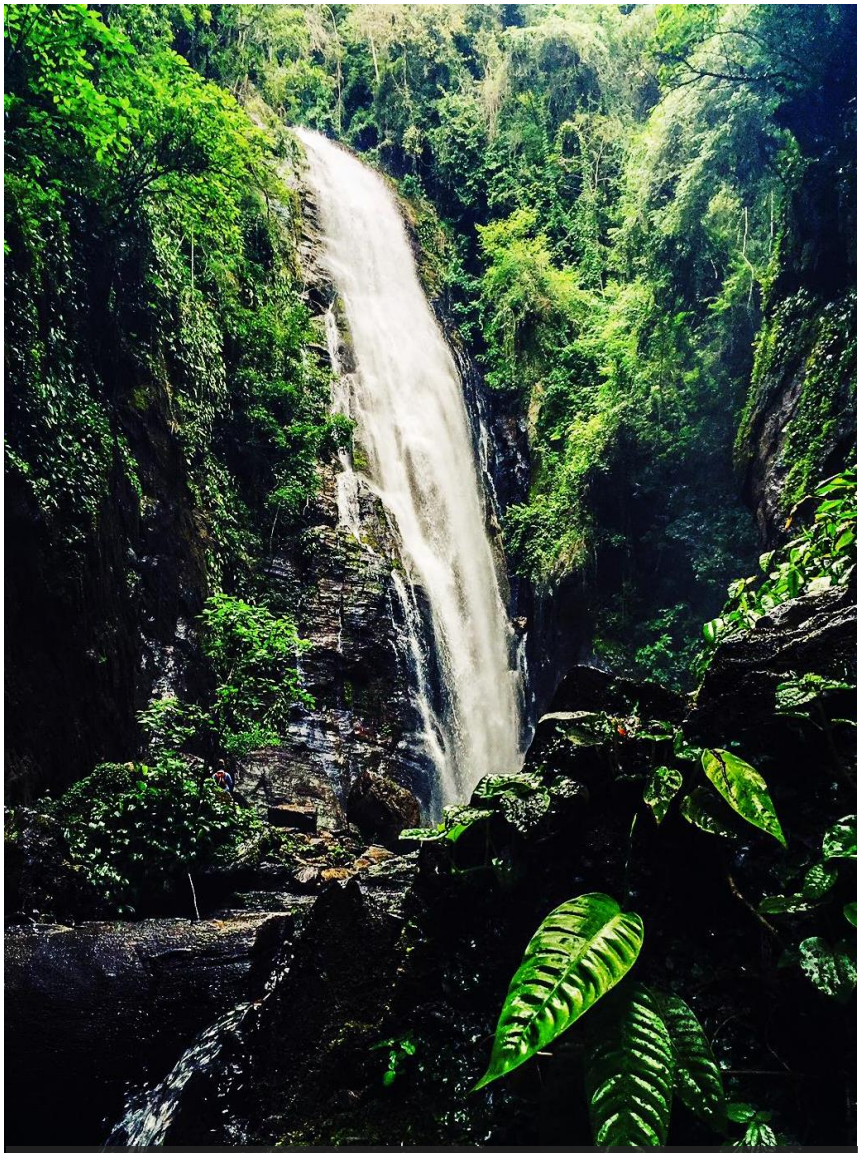
All of the general information in this volunteer package also applies to those wishing to apply to volunteer at Celine.

As a result, we do not provide roles related to animal care or veterinary services. However, Celine requires research to be conducted in the area that provides information critical to the process of release. As a result, Celine partnered with IPBio in order to set up research projects on topics of interest to the release center. The tree inventory looks at fruiting periods to understand the abundance and diversity of fruit available for birds in nature and the fish inventory seeks to understand food abundance for aquatic birds. In addition, the bird inventory is a government requirement as in order to receive a bird we must prove we have found the species locally.

The Oncilla Story

The vets of Celine found a baby Oncilla, *Leopardus tigrinus*, who had been hit by a car. After its rehabilitation, they contacted IPBio in order to release the oncilla on the reserve. This was the beginning of the IPBio and Celine partnership.

The Atlantic Forest is a "Global Biodiversity Hotspot" however only 7% of the forest remains making its conservation all the more important.



The Atlantic Forest

PETAR, our state park, is home to a wide range of flora and fauna. In addition, it boasts a variety of well-maintained trails that volunteers can utilize to explore dense primary forest, caves, waterfalls and much more.

The Atlantic Forest stretches from the northeastern to the southern regions of Brazil and northern Argentina and southeastern Paraguay. Five hundred years ago, the Atlantic Forest of Brazil covered approximately 330 million acres, but today only 7% remains. In the Ribeira Valley, our region of the Atlantic Forest, we are at the footsteps of 21% of the 7% that is left, it being largest contiguous section of the Atlantic Forest. Despite the forests diminished state it still ranks as a global conservation priority.

Although it is now just a small fraction of the size of the Amazon rainforest, the Atlantic Forest still harbors a range of biological diversity similar to that of the Amazon. The Atlantic Forest harbors around 2,200 species of birds, mammals, reptiles and amphibians – 5% of the vertebrates on Earth. This includes nearly 200 bird species found nowhere else. The Betary Reserve is located next to one of the most famous Brazilian State Parks named PETAR. The region is called the Cave Capital as it known for containing over 300 spectacular caves, some of which are accessible to tourists. Moreover, our region has the highest concentration of bioluminescent mushrooms in the world.

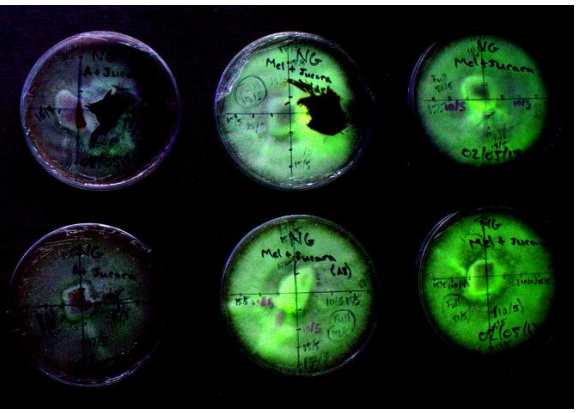
UNESCO labelled the region a "World Heritage Site" as a result of its natural richness. In addition, the region has been of great interest to anthropologists, archeologists as well as paleontologists as remains of 4,000 year old arrowheads have been discovered in addition to bones of megafauna such as the famous mega sloth *Eremotherium spillmann.*

The Volunteer Program

"My time here has been truly transformative. The relationships that I have made, the science I have done and the awareness of the natural world that I have gained will stay with me forever."

Jesse Garrett-Larsen, US Volunteer

Volunteer with IPBio



Bioluminescent Mushroom Research:

There are approximately 105 species of bioluminescent mushrooms in the world and Iporanga holds 26 species making it the region with the highest concentration of bioluminescent mushrooms in the world. IPBio wishes to develop a protocol that allows us to grow them in the lab under controlled conditions. Our cultivation program conducts experiments on: substrate compositions, sterilization method, inoculation method, and fruiting techniques to optimize the process of cultivation. IPBio also maintains a culture bank, searches for new species and more.

Amphibian Research:

IPBio conducts research on amphibian ethology, embryology and chytrid fungus that attacks frogs. Volunteers accompany the development of tadpoles and frogs in captivity in the lab. This role is not always active as it is project based so depends on if research projects are coming to an end or new ones are starting. Moreover, even when active, the amount of work hours the role will occupy can vary substantially depending on the needs at the time. Therefore, amphibian researcher applicants are also applying for the eco-volunteer role and depending on the needs at the time they may work fully as an eco-volunteer or be placed into running amphibian projects.

Bioacoustics Research:

IPBio received a grant from Wildlife Acoustics whereby they donated 2 bioacoustics recorders and software to analyze the data. IPBio is attempting to understand peak activity times for different species throughout the 24 hours in a day. This study will be conducted over the years to develop monthly/seasonal peak activity period for species. In addition, IPBio wishes to create a “sound bank” of all the species on the reserve.

Volunteer Coordinator Assistant:

IPBio currently has 2 full-time staff members dedicated to the management of the volunteer program, however, with the increase in capacity we are looking for a Volunteer Coordinator Assistants who can support the Volunteer Manager in organizing the daily tasks of volunteers. The volunteer coordinator must be able to learn about the various projects quickly and have leadership qualities. The volunteer coordinator is in a position our authority and thus must accept the responsibility that comes with this role.

Volunteering with IPBio & Celine

Photographers/Movie Producers:

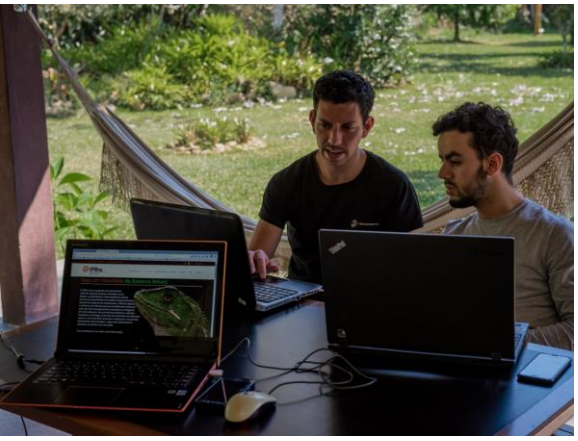
We use cameras for research on wildlife and as a result our biologists developed a passion for photography and filmmaking. Our interest in the interplay of photography, research and education lead to the creation of OBBIO – Observatory for Biodiversity, which captures footage aimed at producing eBooks, documentaries, and educational videos. We have even sold footage to Discovery Channel. We rely on volunteers to come with their own equipment and to already have experience in photography/video–editing, this is not a training program. As photography is a creative endeavor and nature is spontaneous, photographers will focus on getting holistic photos about our projects. As a result, photographers and videographers often accompany eco-volunteers in their field research activities to capture footage and be out in the field where most the wildlife is as well as help in our research projects.

Reserve Maintenance, Construction and Gardening:

We always need help maintaining the grounds, trails, animal enclosures, vegetable patch and microclimate greenhouse so if you are interested in getting your hands dirty then we always have a job for you. We have many gardens so planting flowers and tree as well as watering them and keeping their patches weed-free is essential. Moreover, as we release birds on the reserve, we must ensure there is an ample fruit supply so we must collect seeds and enhance the forest by planting more trees strategically. This role requires volunteers who are willing to conduct heavy physical activity and can work independently. The role is joint with the eco-volunteer role as it can get boring doing only manual labor so we will provide you a list of gardening tasks so you can work on this at your own pace as well as participate in our research activities.

Artists/Painters/Muralists:

IPBio recently constructed a new volunteer house and we wish to give each room a native animal's name, such as the "Jaguar Room" or the "Hammer Frog Room". Along with the name which would be drawn on the door, we would like to put a painting of the animal and then inside each room to have a mural on the wall. This would not only make each room more welcoming but would also facilitate the organization of each room. When a new volunteer arrive it would be as easy as saying "You are in the Hummingbird room!". These volunteer can also participate in research activities with the eco-volunteers.



Communications:

Help raise awareness about the Research and Release Center and its projects. Support our communications by: improving our website and social media; creating informative videos; setting up material to inform students and universities about courses we offer; writing grants and fundraising; seeking partners for our Institution. IPBio does not have staff members with expertise in communications so we expect volunteer who apply for this role to have experience in the area, work relatively independently and propose plans to help raise awareness rather than rely on our directions as we do not have a marketing team. These volunteer can also participate in research activities with the eco-volunteers.

Eco-Volunteer

The Eco-Volunteer/Biodiversity Research Assistant role is a joint role between IPBio and Celine which contains a range of activities which are conducted in a group. The majority of these tasks are related to long term field research activities where repetitive data collection is required to understand trends over long periods. This role is for volunteers who like to be outside and enjoy physical activity. Most projects go on all year long so you will participate in most these activities unless weather conditions are unfavorable and new projects may be added. Tasks of an eco-volunteer are:

a) **Tree Inventory:** we mark and measure tree species to study the biodiversity in different areas of the reserve to assess forest well-being. In the process we can understand the distribution of fruit tree species which is particularly important for Celine. Why? Imagine you are releasing a parrot which only eats a certain fruit and it only grows between June and July. Therefore, you should only release this parrot during these months to ensure it has available food which will increase the chances of a successful release. Moreover, these birds are tagged and monitored after their reintroduction to the wild to ensure they are adapting well and therefore identifying fruit trees in the area will increase the likelihood of finding the bird to monitor their progress.

b) **Garden Day:** as a group we help out in the gardening, construction or maintenance of the reserves grounds. Weeding in the greenhouse; clearing the trails of branches and leaves; removing exotic plants; planting seedlings for reforestation. This is hard but rewarding work!

c) **Mushroom Inventory:** we search for new species of mushrooms in order to identify them, photograph them and collect their spore prints which are like a mushrooms finger print. In addition, we do searches at night to find bioluminescent mushrooms which light up the floor in an avatar-like fashion.

d) **Bird Inventory:** active search for birds to understand presence, abundance, distribution and seasonality of native species.

e) **Habitat Monitoring:** we study four ponds on the reserve ranging from natural to artificial ponds to understand the impact of exotic plants on pond health. We collect and analyze data of water quality as well as aquatic bugs, fish and tadpoles as bio-indicators.

f) **Mammal Monitoring via Cameratraps:** we have cameras filming 24/7 in the forest but all his data needs to be sorted. Volunteers are tasked with watching the footage, organizing the photos of mammals and identifying the species. We can then understand diversity, distribution and seasonality of these species.

g) **Fish Inventory:** we aim to identify species and understand their micro-habitats (pool, riffle and run) as well as collect data on the river.

h) **Bird Mediated Seed Dispersal Project:** we aim to understand what seeds are dispersed by birds to help inform best practices of release for Celine and reforestation efforts. We collect and sort seeds, identify bird species that visit the bird feeder which is filmed and check fruiting periods of those species.

i) **Insect Inventory:** understand the diversity and distribution of insects on the reserve.

j) **Creative Projects:** such as creating beautiful birdhouses, paper mache art for the volunteer house and more

As you can imagine, in the rainforest it rains quite a lot. If every time it rained, we stopped working we would never get any work done so often we need to keep going. However, sometimes it is too much! As this is a field research role which requires being outdoors a lot, if it becomes impossible to continue activities due to weather conditions, volunteers will be let off work early.

Living at IPBio

Volunteers will stay at the Darwin Guest House, situated on the reserve itself, which accommodates up to 12 people in 8 rooms. Two rooms are collective rooms and 6 rooms are single rooms. All rooms have air conditioning or a fan, closet space and electricity outlets. Individual rooms have a desk with a chair. The house has 3 bathrooms with hot showers, a washing machine and has a fully equipped kitchen where volunteers can cook. A cleaning lady provides basic cleaning services for public areas and will provide fresh bed linen once a week. However, it is also the volunteer's responsibility to maintain and clean the house; we take this very seriously. Volunteers work from 9am to 3pm during week days with an hour lunch break.

Shops are located in the town of Iporanga 6km away from the reserve, which you can walk to or get a taxi, where there are various shops with all you will need. There is a small organic herb patch you can use and the gardener distributes vegetables when they are ripe.

"Staying at the reserve was an incredible experience, truly a small paradise! It provides you the comfort of home, yet the sounds of frogs at night or howler monkeys in the morning from just outside your window remind you that you are surrounded by the majestic rainforest. The infrastructure at the reserve exceeded my expectations tenfold: I never expected to have air conditioning or a desk in my room! There were hammocks to relax on; a large outdoor dining area where all the volunteers would meet up for dinner and a deck were we could swim after work. On weekends we would have BBQ's, visit the stunning caves or waterfalls in the vicinity, relax on tubes as you float down the river and I even went to visit Cananeia where I saw hundreds of dolphins. This trip has certainly left a lasting impression on me!"

Antonio Gomes,
Volunteer from the UK

Details About Volunteering

Requirements

I. You must be over 18 years of age
II. You must be able to speak English at a intermediate or high level
III. Your minimum stay must be 2 weeks (however, those who apply for longer stays have a higher chance of being selected for the program)

IPBio does not ask for any formal requirements from volunteers as the roles are too varied to demand specific educational qualifications or work experience. However, we have limited space at the reserve and we must consider the needs of the Institute so we will not be able to accommodate all volunteers that apply therefore we require volunteers to submit their CV and conduct a short interview before selection.

Application Process

The steps are simple:

I. Email us at contato@ipbio.org.br with your CV /resume and a short email expressing your interests.
II. We will respond to your email with our "Interest in IPBio" form and the volunteer package.
III. Once we have read your application, we will get back to you to organize a Skype call.
IV. If we accept your placement at IPBio, we will then wait until your payment is made to confirm your position.
V. The last step is for you to send us a copy of your travel and medical insurance (preferably a month before your arrival).

Costs

Volunteers at IPBio are required to pay 650 reais per week (please check up-to-date exchange rate in your currency). This fee covers the volunteer's accommodation, internet access and project costs for the specific dates agreed upon.

Volunteers are also responsible for paying for any extra costs such as travel costs, visa costs etc. A volunteer only confirms their placement once their payment is made. Once a volunteer makes their payment there is no refund if they decide to cancel for whatever reason. We will provide you with specific payment options by email.

The currency in Brazil is the Real. There is an ATM machine in Iporanga which accepts Visa Credit/Debit cards. ATMs give a better exchange rate than Exchange Houses. Check with your bank to see if your cards will work in Brazil, and tell your credit card company that you will be traveling overseas. Exchange some money prior to arriving in Brazil. The amount of money you want to bring is really up to you.

Volunteers are responsible for purchasing products for the house such as garbage bags, cleaning products and toilet supplies. Volunteers are also responsible for buying their own food and cooking for themselves.

On average a volunteer spends 450-1000 reais a month on total although of course this varies on your lifestyle choices. This covers living costs such as food, drinks, transportation and house supplies. On the high end of 1000 reais you would be going out for dinner regularly and doing various weekend activities but this is up to each volunteer hence we put a price range. Dinner out (without drinks) ranges from 15 to 30 reais. Cost of tours (including a guide, equipment and entrance fee costs around 110 to 140 reais depending on how many volunteers go.

Travel and Medical Insurance

IPBio requires volunteer to have health and travel insurance. **It is the volunteers' responsibility to ensure they get proper insurance coverage and understand their policy if they need to make a claim. Remember this is for you!** Though IPBio takes all possible steps to ensure the safety of visitors, we are in an area with a lot of wildlife and therefore there are associated risks. On arrival, volunteers will sign a liability waiver. IPBio does not have a medical expert on staff so in case of an emergency, volunteers will be directed immediately to the nearest emergency post in the center of our town which is 6km away into the hands of medical experts. For any serious accident that occurs the volunteer is directed to a fully equipped hospital in Pariquera-Açu about 110 km away.

Visas

You are responsible for checking your own nations visa requirements and for organizing your own visa. All volunteers who wish to stay under 6 months should **apply for a tourist visa** and not a volunteer visa. The visa law is clear that it is legal to participate in volunteer activities on a tourist visa as long as the volunteers does not overstay the period of the tourism visa.

Volunteer visas are complicated to get, take at least 6 months to process, cost much more, are very bureaucratic, sometimes aren't even accepted and are simply unnecessary if you are staying under 3 or 6 months (depending on your country, the limit is different). We will consider volunteer visas for applicants who wish to stay over 6 months but for any shorter period it is easier to simply say you are coming for tourism.

You should check what the visa restrictions are for your entry into Brazil with the consulate. All the information we provide is to give you a general idea but you are fully responsible for checking this information yourself. IPBio will not provide refunds if you later realize you can no longer stay as long as planned because you didn't check.

Visas are no longer required for Australia, Japan, Canada and United States. These visitor pass will be issued on arrival are valid for 90 days, with a possible extension for another 90 days. Many European countries do not require visas but are also issued with a visitor's pass on arrival **BUT NOT ALL**– some are valid for only 90 days and some have the possibility of extension. If you are from a European country that has adopted the Schengen protocol you will not currently be able to renew your visa beyond 90 days. The UK is not a Schengen protocol country. For volunteers coming from other nations, please check your countries tourist visa regulations.
For visa or visitor pass renewals, in the case you wish to stay longer than 90 days, you will need to head to the nearest federal police headquarter or in some cases you can leave the country and then return. This has to occur before your initial 90 days are over or else you will receive a fine. The renewal is extended for an extra 90 days.

If immigration asks for an address on arrival then use our Reserves address: Unidade Reserva Betary, Estrada Iporanga – Apiaí, Km 6, Iporanga -SP – Brasil

Vaccinations

Please ensure you have all the necessary vaccinations prior to your arrival in Brazil, which are the following:

I. Hepatitis A & B
II. Tetanus
III. Typhoid
IV. Diphtheria
V. Polio
VI. Yellow Fever
VII. Rabies

It is fully the volunteers' responsibility to check updated requirements and ensure they are met. Vaccinations are a personal responsibility, so much so that even the Brazilian government does not check on arrival. They are not IPBio requirements, they are simply recommendations by the Brazilian government to visitors. The list on the IPBio package are the same recommendations that the government provides and it is up to every volunteer to do how they see fit. This is for your own safety so we extremely recommend getting them all!

Make sure to get your vaccinations well in advance of your date of arrival as some vaccinations take time to take effect! Yellow fever shots must be taken 10 days in advance at least and many other shots can even take months to take full effect as they require multiple vaccinations. Please consult a medical expert.

Dengue and malaria are not officially requirements for our region (but if you plan to travel to the Amazon they are required) as we have much lower rates than the city of Sao Paulo but it is your choice.

Language

We require our volunteers to speak English at an intermediate to high level as the program is run in English. Obviously speaking Portuguese (or even Spanish) will allow greater interaction with the local community and certain member of the team. However, we have a local teacher, who speaks English, which can offer Portuguese lessons at the reserve to volunteers who would like to develop their language skills at a cost of 100 reais an hour. The class is for a maximum of 2 people and the cost can be split between volunteers. Please check in advance if she will be available.

What to Bring

*These are suggestions but bring whatever you would like to have with you for your stay

I. **Clothing**: walking shoes; boots (waterproof is a good idea); shoes to relax in; sweaters/jackets (it can get cold between May and September); waterproof coat; swim wear; various long and short sleeves t-shirts; long pants and shorts (shorts during work hours must go down to the knee). Dark colored clothes are recommended as volunteers can get dirty during work or weekend activities and they also dry faster. Check monthly weather conditions: https://en.climate-data.org/location/313402/

II. **Equipment**: a phone with roaming and internet access in Brazil is required (so you can communicate with the coordinator during your travels - we don't recommend getting a Brazilian sim card as you need to register it with a Brazilian Tax ID which you don't have); a laptop is required (if you don't bring a laptop you may be excluded from certain projects); a towel is required; adaptor; mosquito repellent; sunscreen; camera; a towel is required; flashlight and a water bottle. You do not need to bring bedding, blankets or pillows as we provide these items.

III. **Entertainment**: books and movies on your computer or on an external hard drive.

IV. **Documents / Money:** credit card; some cash on you in Brazilian currency 'reais' for your trip and shopping when you arrive; passport; visa; proof of vaccinations; medical and travel insurance printed out.

Safety

I. **Sao Paulo:** like any big city, in Sao Paulo you have to be cautious. Use common sense and do not flash cash or electronics around; do not wear expensive jewelry and do not walk alone at night or in unsafe areas.

II. **Wildlife:** we are in the middle of well-preserved forest so we are lucky enough to be in the midst of abundant wildlife. Obviously, the wildlife comes with certain precautions we must take. We have snakes and spiders, some of which are venomous. Simple steps such as always wearing shoes and emptying them out before use will significantly reduce the chance of a bite. But don't worry because, firstly, it is very uncommon to even see a snake. Second, since the Institute opened no one has ever been bitten by anything venomous on the reserve. Lastly, there is anti-venom in the emergency post in Iporanga.

III. **Common Sense:** Always keep your wits about you and err on the side of caution. For example, our rivers have strong current in certain areas so do not swim in these locations. Moreover, there are rocks so diving is forbidden.

Sign up for IPBio's Omprakash Course

Want to prepare yourself for volunteering at IPBio? Want to learn about the theory behind our conservation projects? Want to gain university credit for your experience? Sign up to our customized EdGE course on Omprakash. Click button to apply:

omprakash

It is required that you bring a laptop and a pair of hiking boots – we recommend you invest in boots with good ankle support as the terrain around the reserve has many hills.

How to Get Here

Overview (our suggested route): fly to São Paulo the day before you plan to be at IPBio (preferably arriving in Sao Paulo on Sunday) -> stay a night in the Red Monkey Hostel -> catch the mid-day bus from Sao Paulo to Apiai (preferably on Monday) -> we will pre-book you a taxi from Apiai directly to the Betary Reserve. IF YOU DO NOT PLAN TO FOLLOW THIS SUGGESTION PLEASE MAKE THIS CLEAR TO IPBIO.

*Before you even come, the volunteer coordinator will make sure you plan to take the suggested route and if you agree then they will already pre-book a taxi for you to collect you in Apiai to bring you to the reserve (however, this means you cannot change your plans last minute as if not the driver will still expect to be paid).

We are situated in the state of Sao Paulo so you should get a flight into Sao Paulo. Most flights arrive into Guarulhos International Airport - however, if you have a layover you might arrive at a different airport in Sao Paulo. If you are somewhere else in Brazil before you come to IPBio you should still head to Sao Paulo first.

We suggest you get an uber to a hostel to stay the night in Sao Paulo first to rest, and then go to the bus terminal the following morning. We recommend you stay at a hostel near the terminal. An example of a good hostel is the Red Monkey Hostel – Barra Funda but there are many to pick from. Call in advance or book online to ensure there is availability.

If you do plan to travel straight to the bus stop in the morning right after your flight then make sure your flight arrives early enough as you will still need to get your luggage, go through security and customs and then travel to the bus terminal which can take 20minutes to 1hour and 20minutes or more depending of São Paulo traffic. Get a uber/taxi/shuttle bus from 'Terminal Rodoviário Barra Funda'. Uber can often be cheaper than the bus. But once again we recommend you stay a night first.

From Terminal Rodoviário Barra Funda you should get a bus to Apiaí with the bus company either called Transpe or Expresso Joia. Find the ticket offices at the terminal where you can purchase your ticket (about 120 reais).

It is important to get to Barra Funda with lots of extra time to spare as it is big terminal and you can get lost as well as you need time to buy your ticket.

The bus takes between 6 and 7 hours. The mid-day bus arrives in Apiaí at around 18.00, make sure you ONLY get off the bus when you get to the Apiai station (photos below).

In Apiai you will be met by the driver we booked for you. Our coordinator will have sent you his whatsapp number and a photo of the driver so you can recognize the person although it is a small town so it won't be hard to find them. Price vary but it is usually between 130 reais and 150 reais. The taxi driver will take you to a supermarket so you can buy food for dinner for the night your arrive as well as breakfast and lunch for the next day (while we do our presentations) and then that afternoon the coordinator will take you to do a bigger shopping in Iporanga.

There is a taxi stand just outside the Apiai bus station, HOWEVER, if you take our suggested route, we will have already booked you a taxi with a specific trusted driver so it is important not to take another driver or change your plans last minute. If you do not follow our suggested route then you can use the taxi stand outside but we cannot promise there will always be taxis available.

You will see a "Reserva Betary" sign on the road just as you get to the reserve, there is also a bus stop with a poster of photographs of wildlife from out education course. The driver will take you down a small hill to the parking area.

You (or the driver) can send the coordinator a message to let us know you have arrived and the coordinator will pick you up at the parking and help you carry your bags to the reserve.

If for some reason you can't get in touch then simply cross the bridge and take a left and head up the hill. This shouldn't take longer than 5 minutes to walk (unless your bag is ridiculously heavy!). Then you will be at the research center and you will find a staff member.

As you will arrive in the afternoon on your first day we will simply settle you into your room. The day after at 9am we will give you a formal introduction and tour and then take you shopping in Iporanga.

Bus Schedule

*DO NOT HITCH HIKE AT ALL, not only are you in a foreign country and don't know your way around but if you don't arrive on time the staff will panic and think you have got lost. Please respect that fact and keep us updated.
*Please double check the bus schedule hasn't changed on the transpen or expresso joia

TAXI STAND OUTSIDE APIAI TERMINAL

Terminal Barra Funda (São Paulo) to Apiaí via a company called Transpen or Expresso Joia. This bus runs from Monday to Friday (although we do not accept volunteers arriving on a Friday as you will spend the weekend without our training and rule presentation). We prefer you arrive on a Monday to start a fresh new week but we will accept applicant who wish to arrive on Tues, Wednesday or Thursday also.

Barra Funda to Apiai: 12.00 → 18.00

APIAI STATION WITH PUBLIC PHONE

If you do not plan to follow our suggested route for some reason, there are a couple of things to keep in mind:

- We do not accept volunteer who want to arrive Friday, Saturday or Sunday
- You will need to research the new route yourself
- You still need to let us know your exact plans so we know when to expect you
- If you catch later buses that mean you only arrive after 5pm in Iporanga then keep in mind that the supermarket will be closed so prepare yourself have dinner and something for breakfast for the next day until we can take you shopping.
- If you plan to arrive after 5pm, no staff member will be there to meet you on your first day so I will leave instructions with other volunteers, like too look out for you and which room you are in, and we will see you the next day at 9am.

HOWEVER, WE STRONGLY RECOMMEND TO TAKE OUR SUGGESTED ROUTE!

LOOK OUT FOR OUR SIGN

It is recommended to have an international number with internet access. Please add the volunteer coordinator and send him a message before you leave for your trip so that you can keep in touch. Vitor, the Volunteer Coordinator Number: +5515996691627

We do not recommend buying a Brazilian sim card as you need a Brazilian tax number to register it for it to function.

In an emergency there is a public phone in Apiai bus station and you can call the Reserve for free (collect call) by calling: 90151535561470. If for some reason you can't contact us, ask an employee at the bus stop to let you call or head to the hotel in Apiai and ask them to use their internet to reach out to us.

For advice on how to get back, the volunteer coordinator can send the options on request although this can be planned directly with the coordinator once you arrive.

Also, check out our YouTube channel (https://www.youtube.com/user/obbioadm/playlists) as we have videos that give you travel tips in the volunteer video playlist and email us if you have questions.

Additional Information

Weekend Activities at IPBio

Caves: Iporanga is called "The Cave Capital of Brazil" with over 400 caves in the town. Below are just the highlights.

- **Casa da Pedra** is the world's largest cave entrance of 215 meters. The trip involves a 2-hour hike to the opening where there is a place to sit down to have a picnic and swim before hiking back.
- **Temimina Cave** has a large opening in the ceiling illuminating its oddly shaped diagonal garden. Then you enter a dark cave where, at the end, you find a natural shower hole.
- **Nucleo Santana** is a group of caves and is the most commonly visited as it has a wide range of different types from dry to wet caves and a diversity of formations.

Tubing/Boia Cross: is a sport where by you get on a big balloon and float down the river. There are various waterways you can do in Iporanga, some more radical and some in the big river which is very relaxing and can take up to 3 hours!

Quilombos: during the era of slavery many slaves would run away from the plantations and create settlements hidden in the forest. These communities live in relative isolation and you can visit their small towns. For some of the Quilombos the tours include travelling there by boat and having a traditional lunch at one of the families homes.

Cananeia: has various islands with dolphins swimming in between which are very easy to visualize and swim by. It is also known for its stunning beaches, awesome boat tours, great restaurants and the mangrove reserve where there are many crabs.

Waterfalls: Iporanga has many waterfalls. "Sem Fim" is a small waterfall walking distance from the reserve. "Vale das Ostras" has 12 large waterfalls in a row.

Social Events:

- **Dinners:** there are many nice restaurants were volunteers can have dinner, some more classy like Casarao and some with traditional Brazilian food. There is also a great fish restaurant. Often volunteers will eat out on the weekends.
- **Town Parties:** there are a couple of bars in town, some have pool tables and some have dancing areas. On holidays, there are usually town festivals on the streets.
- **BBQ:** it is very common to have a BBQ on the weekend which is often accompanied with the traditional Brazilian drink called Caipirinha.

Info on Past Volunteers

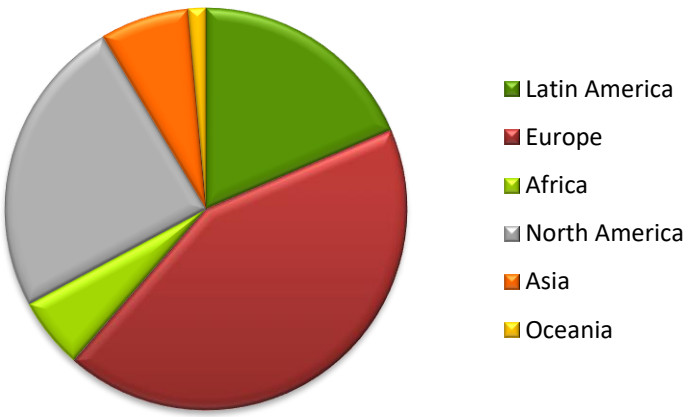
IPBio has received volunteers from all across the world and from various walks of life. Although IPBio is primarily a biological research institute, we don't only need biologists! The volunteer program has brought an influx of extremely skilled, passionate and diverse people who have supported and expanded our projects in unimaginable ways. So what types of people come to IPBio? Where are they from? How old are they? What are their professions?

IPBio has received over 150 volunteer from a wide range of different fields. For example, we have received; Italian fashion photographers; US biology undergraduates; Chilean forest engineers; Dutch video-editors; Brazilian veterinary students; French navy officers; Indian economists; Moroccan engineering interns; Turkish aquatic science masters' students; Ukrainian programmers; Peruvian lawyers; German chemists; Canadian professional biological researchers on sabbatical; British financial analysts; Chinese artists; Bulgarian tech-company owners; and the list goes on.

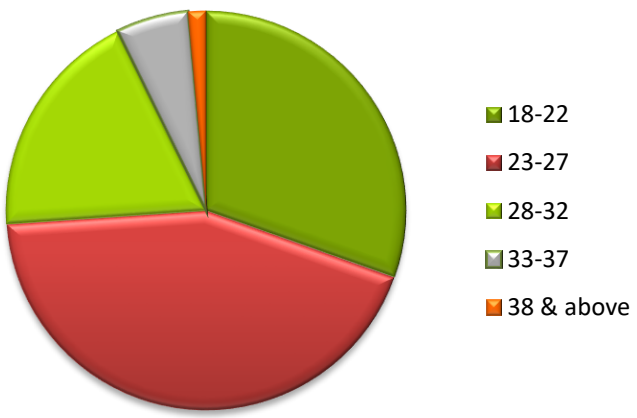
So far, IPBio has received volunteers from 37 different countries including: Australia; Austria; Algeria; Argentina; Belgium; Brazil; Bulgaria; Canada; Chile; China; Colombia; Cuba; France; Germany; Holland; India; Ireland; Israel; Italy; Latvia; Mexico; Morocco; Paraguay; Peru; Portugal; South Africa; Scotland; Singapore; Switzerland; Spain; Sweden; Turkey; England; Ukraine; US; Venezuela; Wales and probably more have been added to the list by now.

Our average age is 25 years old. The age ranges from 18 years old taking a gap year to 21-year-old university graduates to 35-year-old professionals to 60-year-old retirees. Below you shall see two pie charts related to "Geographic Distribution of Volunteers" and "Age Groups of Volunteers".

Geographic Distribution of Volunteer



Age Groups of Volunteer



Info on Past Volunteers

Meet some of our past volunteers and read their reviews of their experience at IPBio

Meet Grant Johnson...

Grant is a US volunteer who stayed for 6 months as our mushroom volunteer. His Bachelor of Science degree, lab experience in microbiological cosmetics and passion for all things mushroom related made him a perfect candidate for this role. Grant's stay at IPBio was so impactful that we invited him back and he is now staying for 2 years to run our mushroom program. Why you ask? Well simply put, he found 7 new species of bioluminescent mushrooms on the reserve taking us from 12 species to 19 out of the 100 species in the world. And as if that wasn't enough, he and a staff member discovered the first blue bioluminescent larva in the whole of Latin America!

> "I never would have imagined that this volunteer trip would so fundamentally change my path in life. I never thought I would live in Brazil! I never thought I would be able to follow a career in a topic I am so passionate about like mushrooms. However, after volunteering for 6 months at IPBio I knew I had to return and now I work for IPBio as the coordinator of the mushroom program and plan to stay at least 3 years!"

Meet Claudio Guevara...

Claudio is a Chilean forest engineer who set up the IPBio tree inventory project. His expertise in flora were put to use in developing the methodology we currently use for this program, however, he also participated in other activities outside of his technical field.

> "IPBio is a little paradise! IPBio is characterized by an excellent working environment and it is very comfortable to live in the Darwin house, surrounded by wildlife. Another factor that I loved was the multiple attractions of Iporanga valley, such as caves, waterfalls, forests, animals, communities and rivers. It was an incredible experience that certainly left a deep impression on me."

Meet Fedrico Pestilli...

Federico is an Italian-British volunteer who came to photograph wildlife. Federico is a professional photographer who has worked for brands such as Calvin Klein, Prada, H&M and has photographed celebrities such as David Beckham. He brought his skills from the fashion world and applied it to nature photography which resulted in some of the best shots of bioluminescent mushrooms ever taken.

> "The staff is incredibly helpful and knowledgeable, and guided me as much in my work as in my understanding of local culture."

Meet Marleen Duindam...

Marleen is a Dutch volunteer who came for 5 months as a research assistant and chose to return for 2 years to help coordinate the volunteer program. Marleen is an undergraduate in Applied Biology who came to conduct her internship at IPBio. She loved her placement so much that she decided to postpone her studies for 2 years to get real life experience in the field of biology. Marleen now coordinates the volunteers in all the field projects.

> "I loved my time so much at here that I decided to take a two year break from university to come back and help run the volunteer program at FreeWildlifeBrazil Celine and IPBio. If you don't trust my words, trust my actions. I love this place, that's why I keep coming back!"

Our Facilities

- Laboratory equipped with magnifying glasses and stereoscopic microscopes that capture digital images, laminar flow chambers, incubators, autoclaves, freezers and workbenches.
- Aquarium installed in an artificial lake of 500m^2 with five aquatic environments that can be observed though underground tunnels with windows.
- Greenhouse with amphibians and bromeliad that houses native flora, waterfalls and marsh environments.
- Dark room where one can observe the curious phenomenon of bioluminescence in fungi from the region.
- Classroom, which seats 50 people for lectures, technical courses and multimedia projections.
- Dining area that can accommodate groups up to 60 people or be used for exhibitions.
- Seven research trails through the forest where observations of native species are made.
- Six pitfall sites, each containing 5 pitfalls (used to collect amphibians, reptiles and small mammals), distributed around the reserve.
- OBBIO – The Observatory for Biodiversity is a network of video cameras that record the fauna and flora 24 hours a day, generating films and content for use in research and education.
- 3 Bushnell Camera Traps for photographing and filming mammal in HD – motion/temperature sensor, infrared, programming options, LED lights.
- 5 GoPro cameras with 2 subaquatic cases.
- 2 bioacoustics “Song Meter SM4” recorders from Wildlife Acoustics with software for data analysis.
- Database with over 5000 images taken in natural habitats of each species.
- Release Center with enclosures for the birds.

Timeline

2004

Aquisition of the Betary Reserve

Construction of the IPBio Research Center

2006

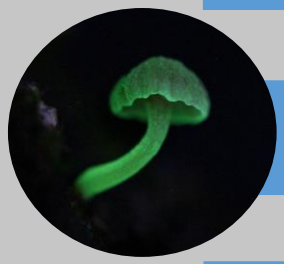
2009

Accreditation as "Advanced Outpost" by UNESCO

Partnership with UNICAMP for Amphibian Research

2010

2010



Partnership with USP for Bioluminescent Mushroom Project

Production of eBooks and sale of videos to Discovery Channel

2014

2015

Purchase of New Reserve in the Amazon

Creation of Volunteer Program

2016

2017

Construction of Celine Bird Release Center

Opening of Celine Bird Release Center

2018

CLICK TO WATCH YOUTUBE

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CLICK TO READ BLOG

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Youtube: https://www.youtube.com/user/obbioadm/playlists

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