

Our third day was spent in activities within the village.  
The day started with a traditional stick game.





The game is simple enough. Javier claps once to rotate the players to the left and claps twice to rotate them to the right. As you rotate you leave the stick in place. If you drop your stick, you are out of the game.



Javier



The game sticks were cut from the palm-like *Carludovica* plant. It has a number of uses including using the leaves as a roof cover.

It is best known as the Panama hat plant, which are actually made in Ecuador from *Carludovica* fibers.





Our guide for the morning  
was Marianna.

She explained how they  
grew and used the plants  
from the surrounding areas.





It turns out that one of the first plants Marianna demonstrates are uses for the *Carludovica* plant.





She talks about how to weave the leaves into a roof covering and then makes a small carrying basket.





She also collects an immature *Carludovica* leaf that will be used later today to teach the group a weaving technique.





Marianna's daughter came  
along to help.





Later in the day, the *Carludovica* leaf pieces were weaved into a headband elegantly displayed by Olivia.





There was in intercropped area with Plantain and Yuca (Cassava).





Yuca (cassava) is a dietary staple in Ecuador. It is easily recognized from its palmate (hand-like) leaf.

The edible portion is the below-ground tuberous root.





Marianna explained how they propagated yuca.





The tops of the yuca are cut and stacked for drying for a few days.





The shoots are cut to about one-foot long.





Then cut leaves are waved over the planting area to insure successful growth of the new crop.





The cut stems are then inserted into the ground horizontally.





The cuttings eventually root and produce new plants for the next harvest.





Kyle was our designated  
yuca puller.





The *Carludovica* leaf basket  
Marianna previously made now  
became the yuca transport.





And Olivia got to carry the yucca, which would be cooked for our lunch.





Marianna also showed us seeds from a *Canna* plant.





Canna seeds are used in making traditional jewelry.





The local people made jewelry to help support the village.

This piece is made from Canna seeds (black) and Job's tears (white).

Job's tears (*Coix lacryma-jobi*) come from a grass species that makes a unique white fruit that is not typical of most grass species.





Naturally, one of the afternoon activities was learning how to string jewelry.



Jamie

Olivia



Bracelet making appears to be an intense activity.

Kyle





Another of the crop plants  
was chocolate.





Marianna cutting a chocolate  
fruit to expose the seeds.  
The white seed covering is  
edible and tastes like chocolate.





Chocolate making starts  
with roasting the beans.





Removing the outer seed coat  
by rubbing the seeds between  
your hands.





Anticipation of the creamy chocolate after beans are put through the grinder.





Savannah interacting with a  
local young man.





Savannah also became friends  
with the local boa.





And of course, everyone  
wanted to be Matt's next  
girlfriend.





What would jungle field days be without a blow dart competition.





Kyle's form is good, but it's the white boots that makes him look like a local.







Olivia



Jamie



Savannah



Delia



Shari needed a little assistance.





The evening concluded with a bug walk. The highlight was when the biting ants got into everyone's boots and Javier allowed the ants to bite his hand.





Insects and spiders  
were definitely part  
of the jungle  
experience.





We met this colorful walking stick on the way to our common bathroom facilities.





The tarantulas liked to hang out in the dining area.

