



Square Of Life

Studies in Local and Global Environments

**FINAL REPORT OF SAN FRANCISCO BILINGÜE FIRST GRADE
ALAJUELA, COSTA RICA
APRIL, 2003**

INTRODUCTION

We are three first grade students at San Francisco Bilingüe in Alajuela, Costa Rica.

We are located in Costa Rica, in the province of Alajuela, which is the second largest province of Costa Rica. We belong to the district of Barrio San José, a concentrated rural area, pretty close to the center of the city.



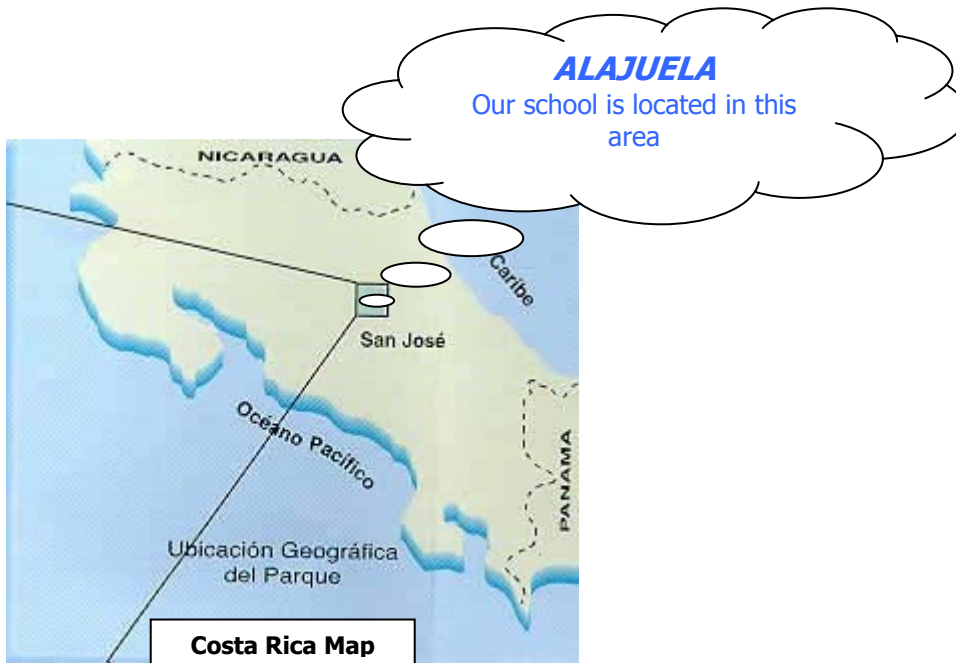
Geography

Rugged highlands are found throughout most of our country, they range from approximately 1,000 to 2,000 meters (3,000 to 6,000 feet above sea level). The Cordillera de Guanacaste, Cordillera Central, and Cordillera de Talamanca are the principal mountain ranges extending the length of the country. There are several active volcanoes (Volcán Arenal, Volcán Irazú, Volcán Rincón de la Vieja and Volcán Turrialba) and the country's highest mountain (Cerro Chirripó) which reaches a height of 3,819 m/12,530 ft. The country has a relatively long coastline in both the Atlantic and Pacific oceans.

Climate

Costa Rica's year round climate is pleasant with naturally occurring breezes cooling down most of the coastal areas. Temperatures in the highlands and the mountains, where we are located, are warm by day and brisk at night giving an "eternal spring" feeling. The average annual temperatures range from 31.7°C (89°F) on the coast to 16.7°C (62°F) inland. The rainy, or green, season lasts from May to December with noticeably drier days during the rest of the year. So we just have two seasons. Our project was carried out during the rainy season. That's why everything looks very green.

Costa Rica gathers exceptional characteristics: biodiversity, variety of climates and ecosystems. Also it is recognized like destination of sun and beach, of ecoturistic activities and of tourism of adventure during all year. Provides, also, of products that differentiate from other destinations like the observation of butterflies, 850 species of registered birds and tortoises (baulas and green). Costa Rica possesses, also, near the 6% of the biodiversity of the planet and their natural wealth is guarded for the National System of Conservation Areas that covers 25% of the national territory.



Our names are Lizú, Valeria and Francesca (we are girls). We wrote down some hypothesis of what we expected to find in our squares with our teacher´s help, Mrs. Ilka López.

Lizú: Flowers, Ants, Soil, Rock, Grass

Valeria: Big and small ants, water, flowers, grass

Francesca: Ants, flowers, grass and birds

First Observation

We found two big and small ants farms with red and brown ants. There was green grass, several brown leaves from the trees and a lot of black seeds. Also, small gray rocks, a ladybug. There were two trees. One is a tall (about 10 to 12 meters height) and thin tree. It has a lot of bunches or clusters of yellow flowers that enlightens all the yard. Below there is a picture of the flowers. The other one is a mandarin orange tree.



This is the flower of the tree named "Caña Fístula" in Spanish, scientific name is "cassia fistula". It can be used for health treatment in kids and elder people.

Last observation

Now that the rain began, the anthills moved changing the trail, and move toward the small anthill. Also in the mandarin orange tree appeared a honey comb.

We want to say thank you to the Engineer Jorge Cruz who helped us identifying the plants and animals we found.

Our school is located nearer the Equator, on a tropical climate. Plants and insects and soil condition are very different because of that. We began the observation on the summer or dry season, and ended in the raining season, which just began.

We learned to respect nature when we are out exploring and digging and also playing. We learned to observe. Each time we went out, we saw something new, even if it was there before. We learned to be more careful observing things.

Since we are a lot of miles south, and close to Equator, our climate is different and nature is also different.

We read the Argentina and Iowa final reports and in those places the children found a lot of animals and things that we did not find, like fungus and spiders. In Argentina kids found too much garbage in their square of life and we were surprise about it.

We also learned a lot about a lot of schools located so far from us. Thank you to all of you and to Carol.