

Iracambi

"To make the conservation of the forest more attractive than its destruction"

Atlantic Rainforest Research and Conservation Center



The Iracambi Research Center is supported by Amigos de Iracambi, a non-profit organization that works to conserve the rainforest and to improve the life of the people in the forest zone.

Amigos conducts research, runs programs on environmental education and farmer outreach, and works in forest conservation and restoration. Our members are local community activists, small farmers, schoolchildren, international volunteers and researchers, and the general public.

The Iracambi Research & Conservation Center

Founded in 1999, the Iracambi Research and Conservation Center is an ideal location for researchers interested in biodiversity conservation and land management in the tropical rainforests.

The centre serves two main functions. It is the base for a variety of independently funded scientific research projects, and also works with local communities and local authorities on a program to arrest land degradation.

Iracambi researchers have access to 200 ha of Iracambi's own forest, adjacent to 13,200 ha of protected forest in the Serra do Brigadeiro State Park. This includes partially logged old growth forest, and succession forests in different stages of regeneration..



Where is Iracambi Research Center?

The Iracambi Research Center is situated on a working farm in the Atlantic Rainforest, in the southeast of the State of Minas Gerais, 320 km northeast of Rio de Janeiro and 300 km southeast of the state capital, Belo Horizonte. The center lies ten minutes from the farm office, twenty minutes from the local village.

What can I study?

Principal species found in the Center's forests are:

Piptadenia spp., *Cederella* spp., *Ocotea rigida*, *Machaerium villosum*, and *Dalbergia nigrans*. There is a resident population of masked titi monkeys, (*Callicebus personatus*) otter, (*Lutra longicauda*) capivara, (*Hydrochaeris hydrochaeris*) sloth, (*Bradypus variegatus*) and piping guan (*Penelope superciliaris*). Ocelots (*Felis pardalis*) and tufted ear marmosets (*Callithrix jacchus*) are occasionally seen and may also be resident. There are about 250 species of birds in the area, and resident populations of howler monkeys, (*Alouatta fusca*) and jaguar in the neighboring forests.



The Research Center is part of a developing local farming community and there is plenty of scope for social science research.

Medicinal Plants Project

The Medicinal Plants Project, established in December 1999 by Eleanor Gallia, a British herbalist, is conducting research into the use of plants in traditional medicine. By identifying suitable plants, their natural growing conditions, and the potential market for them, the project expects to develop an alternative source of income for local farmers whilst preserving the rainforest.

We have identified a number of plants used in traditional medicine that are indigenous to our forests. We are now researching the best production and harvesting practices for these plants that are consistent with the plant's natural habitats and help the conservation of the forest. We also study different ways of preparing the plant material for consumers.



Researching at Iracambi

Our prime concern is practical applied research on the process of land degradation, and the dynamics of biodiversity conservation with particular reference to forest edges and remnants.

The researchers provide vital information on such things as reforestation, land rehabilitation, habitat restoration and management of forest fragments, which helps guide policy-makers and forest communities towards using the forest in a more sustainable way.

The Center has defined priority areas into which the research should fit (in forest restoration, community engagement, land management and alternative income sources), and this information is available from the web site or directly from the Center.



How does it function?

The Center is open to anyone who wishes to do research on topics within our defined priority areas. To partners wishing to enter into a long-term agreement, we would offer priority use of the facilities for internships and the coordination and management of research projects.

Research proposals should be submitted to our Research Director, who will advise on how best to proceed.

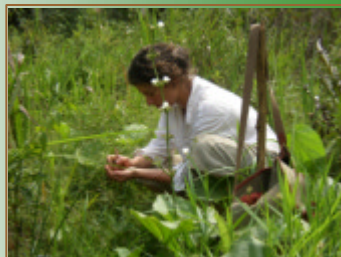


Iracambi Research Center can accommodate twenty researchers in three houses, with full board, access to phone, fax computer and email facilities. There is a field lab, a library, a tree and medicinal plant nursery, and a system of trails in the adjacent forest.

Why choose Iracambi?

Iracambi is the only private research station in the vicinity of the Sierra do Brigadeiro, one of the most threatened remnants of the Atlantic Rainforest in Minas Gerais.

- At Iracambi you have the **opportunity to do ground breaking original research** since little has been done in this area,
- **Excellent forest access**: in addition to Iracambi's own gold growth and sucession forests, we have edges, cleared lands, and swamp habitats, as well as being located next to 13,000 hectares of public protected forest land,
- **Community base**: an integral part of an isolated rural community where people can be obstinate, conservative, and suspicious as well as resourceful and resilient – a window onto the real world,
- **International staff** who speak your language (probably) know your system and can help you understand ours,
- **Living laboratory**: a real word situation, where decisions we make change peoples lives, a **working model** of ecosystem management,



Iracambi directors

Robin Le Breton is a natural resources consultant with 20 years experience, and his wife Binka Le Breton is a writer/lecturer on social and environmental issues. They are native English speakers familiar with the U. S. University system, and they also speak Portuguese, French and Spanish. They will assist you in liaison with local institutions and provide general guidance. The Research Director can help guide research if required.

Tap into our network

The Iracambi Rainforest Research Center has a technical collaboration agreement with one of Brazil's top scientific research universities, the Universidade Federal de Viçosa, which is only 1½ hours away from the Center. By prior arrangement Iracambi researchers can access the Viçosa library, research facilities, herbarium or obtain technical assistance.

Contact us

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