

[Rainforest Discovery Center, Panama](#)

This cool visit should be on top of the list of every nature lover who visits Panama. Not everywhere you can discover the rain forest that close to the city like in Panama and for birdwatchers its a must see place. The attached images show a few impressions from there and a few of the beautiful hummingbirds and other exotic bird species you find around the area. Besides the birds you might also see some Howler Monkeys, Capuchin Monkeys, Sloths or some Agouti and or Coati in the area.

A word about the weather: In the rainy season from April till the end of the Year, make sure to take a rain poncho along, it can pour down in an instant without much warning, if there is a lightning storm going on stay at the rangers house. Now that being said I personally like the rain season best as the forest is very saturated with green colors and not as dry as in the January to May dry season. Also use adequate foot wear as it may be a bit swampy in some areas.

From the The Panama Rainforest Discovery Center brochure: Visitor Center: 140 square meters of open structure with terrace, 2 bathrooms and a small gift shop. There is parking for 8 cars and car access by 600 meters of dirt road from Pipeline Road. Hiking trails extend from the center to the forest. The center is energy self-sufficient with solar panels and a rain water collection system from the roof for bathrooms. 70% of construction materials come from old houses in the Canal area. The gift shop offers bottled water, sodas, snacks and souvenirs for sale.

Tower: 100 feet observation tower with a 200 meter walkway from the visitor center. Spiral stairs and 4 rest platforms every 25 feet. This painted steel tower has been specially designed by the Panamanian architect Patrick Dillon and was constructed entirely by hand.

Forest trails: There is a 1.1 kilometer circuit of forest trails. These trails are from mild to a moderate difficulty level, made of gravel and 1.2 meter wide. There are 2 rest areas along the trails, one small wood deck on the Calamito Lake shore for aquatic wildlife observation, and another wood deck in the forest with benches.

The Panama Rainforest Discovery Center is located 1.6 km from the Pipeline Road entrance. After arriving at Gamboa town at the end of Gaillard Highway, drive 3 more km following the signs for Panama Rainforest Discovery Center. The Panama Rainforest Discovery Center is open daily from 6 a.m. to 4 p.m. except Christmas and New Year days. For more info and prices see the [The Panama Rainforest Discovery Center website here](#). Now a word about the fees they charge I may seem a bit expensive at first sight, but remember they have limited visitor numbers to the area and they do need to maintain allot of infrastructure and for the knowledgeable guides on site. So better spend a few bucks here then all of it at the mall. ☐

If you are not familiar with the area best find a guide or stay at the Gamboa Rainforest resort from where they have guided tours in the area. Never wander of the roadways or marked hike paths into the jungle as you can get lost easily and some poisonous snakes are in the area as well. Also plan in a stop over on the road coming from Panama at the Summit Garden Zoo where you can see the Harpy Eagle and some other inhabitants of Panamas rain forests.



Violet-bellied
Hummingbird



White-necked Jacobin
Hummingbird



Baby Hummingbird



Lake at the rainforest
discovery center



The Panama Rainforest
Discovery Center



Violaceous trogon Pipeline
Road Panama



Slaty-tailed-trogon Pipeline
Road Panama



Rain Forest Jungle Scene



Howler Monkeys