

DAY 22 – Monday 13th July

Today was a weird day 3 of the volunteers that have been here a long time left (Remi, Zoe and Mihialo). Two new Spanish girls arrived last night but we can't really communicate with them as they don't speak any English. Anyway, today's job was to put an electric fence around one of the farmer's rice fields on the reserve which was hard work. Firstly we had to remove the vegetation from the bank around the field, in doing so we found two nests, one of which had a hatching egg in it which was pretty awesome to watch!! We then put the canes in place, before attaching the wire we had to walk through the paddy making as much noise as possible to get remove all the swamp hens. You can see Amy in action below! Later we had a Spanish lesson with Chris as we have been so busy lately we have not had much time for one which was good.

DAY 23 – Tuesday 14th July

Today was the first day of the 'Young International Visitors of Terres de L'Ebre Program' designed for people like us who are volunteering in the delta to educate us on the surrounding area. First stop of the day was in Tortosa at the Chamber of Commerce where we were provided with breakfast and had a couple of talks. Next we visited Tortosa town hall and looked at the museum of gifts the previous UNESCO president received from countries around the world. Last stop in Tortosa was an amazing renaissance building (Reials Col.legis de Tortosa) where we learnt about the renaissance festival that takes place next weekend so hopefully we will be going to see what it's all about! We went to Amposta for a huge lunch consisting of tapas, melon and paella. After we went to Amposta's rice factory for a tour and some free rice followed by Amposta museum where we received a talk on the city and its culture as well as a tour around the museum. By the time we got home we were exhausted but it was a great day. Apparently it's the first time they have done anything like this so we were really lucky to be here when it happened.



DAY 24 – Wednesday 15th July



The program for today was even better than yesterday. We went further a field to Gandesa city where we were introduced to the Terra Alta landscape, the civil war backgrounds, the grape fields and wind mills. The views were awesome. After we went to the local wine headquarters where the wine making process was explained to us, we also had a wine tasting session. Amy and I have never done this before so it was quite exciting! We were

sent away with a free bottle of wine which was great! We travelled to Mora d'Ebre for lunch which was a traditional dish that the workers eat whilst in the rice paddies (half a loaf of bread stuffed with tomato, garlic, onion and sardines) which was interesting! After lunch we went to the castle which also had amazing views and we had a guided tour. Last stop was a 3 hour kayaking trip down the river Ebro. It was really good fun but very tiring. We got back so late we had to water the vegetable patch in the dark which was not so much fun due to the millions of mosquitoes!

DAY 25 – Thursday 16th July

An early start again today as the agricultural minister was paying the reserve a visit for the first time in 9 years so we had to clean the place up and make it look tidy. Amy and I were in charge of cleaning the observatory which was quite a big job as these sorts of places never get cleaned! Ignasi said she was very impressed after he had shown her around so that was a success, hopefully she will be giving SEO some funding so that will help. We had a Spanish lesson in the afternoon, I drove again. We learnt about how to say we are doing something which will be very handy, for example 'I am making a cake' or 'I am driving'. After we took a trip to the supermarket which was quite scary as I had to negotiate a couple of roundabouts, we survived though.

DAY 26 – Friday 17th July



Today was very hardcore as we had to do a lot of physical work whilst discovering muscles we never knew we had! Our task was to clear an area covered in American grass which is really hard to move as it's really long and tangled. This took about 2 hours, after we had to cultivate the soil in order to plant lots of small yellow Iris's. They will be left to grow for a while in this patch and will then be moved to the banks in the rice paddies when they are big enough. The yellow iris has long roots so it is great for holding the soil partitioning the rice fields together. It prevents American grass from growing whilst deterring the shield bug which causes problems for the rice. It also stops the American crayfish from burrowing through the banks which is another big problem so it is therefore important to grow lots of them. When the planting was complete we flooded the area with water from a nearby canal. We had another Spanish lesson in the afternoon, Gabi our teacher is lovely and we finished the lesson with tea and biscuits. Amy and I cooked supper for everyone in the evening (Tortia).

DAY 27 – Saturday 18th July

Today we had a bit of a lie in and then drove around the delta watering plants at different sites. It was good to see that trees and other plants such as Tamaracks that were planted previously have been doing well, the ones that were looking a bit sad were given lots of water. The watering took about 3 hours and then we came back for lunch. We were all pretty tired so spent most of the afternoon and evening having a siesta. Chris and I cooked a spicy spaghetti dish for supper, there were only 4 of us as a few people are away at the moment.

DAY 28 – Sunday 19th July



In the morning we went to a lagoon in the reserve that has gondola's so we split into groups of 3 and spent a couple of hours cruising around in the lagoon taking it in turns to try steering the boat. It was really good fun once you get the hang of it. After we returned to the house for lunch and in the afternoon Chris and I took Amy to the station as she is going to Barcelona tonight.

