

SW 331 Birds and the Environment: Introduction to Ornithology – Summer 2009

Instructor: Kurt Leslie

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Location/Time: Generally the class will meet early morning on Saturdays except for the first class and one Friday evening. Times and locations will vary depending upon the type of birds, location, and day of the year. See the tentative class schedule

Quarter Hours: 4

Field investigations, discussion and critical thinking will center on the four main sections below:

1. Mechanics of bird watching
2. Migration/Nesting
3. Behavior/Senses
4. Human population growth and its effects/ Biodiversity.

Expected Outcomes:

1. To understand the role that bird species have in an ecosystem as well as their role in the biodiversity of the planet.
2. Think critically about the human role past and present.
3. Make inferences concerning the impact of humans on the earth.
4. Be able to observe, identify, and explore connections or lack of, in various ecosystems in the field

Competencies Offered: S-I-A, S-2-A, S-3-C, S-4

Required Text: Can be purchased from most bookstores or borrowed from most libraries. **Birds of Eastern and Central North America, Houghton Mifflin, Fifth Edition, Roger Tory Peterson**

Required Equipment: **Good working binoculars** (I will have some loaners) a notebook or blank journal for field notes, journals.

Student Evaluation:

1. Attendance in both class and field
2. Informed participation in class discussions and activities
3. Class journal
4. Oral Presentation

1. Attendance and Participation in both class and field

Attendance is mandatory in both class and field. All absences must be made up! This course is field intensive and relies on an understanding and appreciation of the content through experience. Participation in class is important for discussion of assigned readings and other class activities

2. Field Investigations

Field investigations reinforce the understanding of concepts and their connections.

In other words, experience the classroom outdoors. For this class “Field Investigations” is defined as; observing, experiencing, questioning, making connections, measuring, and recording. Each lab experience is related to class competencies therefore attendance and participation are vital to learning. Dress for varied weather conditions.

Tentative Field Studies Locations:

Cook County Forest Preserves

Bartels Grasslands

Lake Calumet Watershed

Lake Renwick

Indiana Dunes

3. Journal

A weekly journal entry will be required. One entry per week. Entries should be approximately two pages typed. Entries will reflect your understanding of class discussion, readings and field investigations. Your informed opinion and interpretation are vital to class discussions as well as the journal. Journal entries must relate to chosen competences. Length; Minimum 2 pages

Must cover the following four areas:

Summary/Review: Overview of a topic covered in class. Choose one

Reflection: Your reaction/reflection, feelings, opinion, argument concerning the topic.

Questions: List 2 questions you have pertaining to the topic .

Research: Answer one of the questions in detail. Remember your adding additional information concerning the topic. **Include sources.**

4. Individual/Team Presentation

Present an oral report based on your competence(s). Individuals/Teams should choose a field experience(s) that has influenced and changed their understanding of natural phenomena and relate it to a specific competence. Presentations should be 7-10 minutes in length.

Tentative Class Schedule:

Any changes to the following schedule will be announced. Expect to go out on all field investigations.

Week 1: Class Session, Saturday, June 20, 9:00 – 12:30 pm. Meet at South Campus in Oak Forest. Course overview. Introduce fellow species, migration and birds as sensitive indicators of the environment. Bird lab/activity. Define the term species and the connection between all species. Prepare for the next field session i.e. maps, logistics, software, carpool, clothing, etc. Bring binoculars, Peterson guide, and notebook. Presentation: Bird collision monitors.

Week 2: Field Session, Saturday, June 27 7:00-11:30 am, Lake Renwick Heron Rookery, Romeoville. Will County. Nesting wading birds. Bring Binoculars, Peterson guide, notebook. This location is scheduled early to view newly hatched offspring.

Week 3 Field Session, Saturday, July 4, 7:00-11:30am, Lake Calumet Watershed located in Hegewisch/East side Chicago. We will observe, identify, and make connections in relation to a habitat destruction and habitat restoration. Guest speaker: local environmentalist. Bring binoculars, Peterson guide, and notebook.

Week 4: Field Session, Saturday, July 11 7:00-11:30am Bartel Grasslands, Richton Park. Grassland species. Bluebird Nest Box Monitoring, Richton Park. Bring binoculars, Peterson guide, and notebook. Breeding Grassland Birds

Week 5: Field Session, Saturday, July 18 7:00-11:30 am
Meet at Cook County Forest Preserve McGinnis Slough in Orland Park
Waterfowl/Shorebirds. Wild Birds Unlimited Store, Palos Park; Introduction to backyard birding. Bring binoculars, Peterson guide, and notebook.

Week 6: Field Session, Saturday, July 25, 7:00-11:30am Channahon State Park. Bring binoculars, Peterson guide, and notebook.

Week 7: Field Session: Saturday August 1, 7:00-11:30am TBA Indiana Dunes