

COURSE SYLLABUS*

BIO 584 – Ornithology

Spring Semester, 2008

Instructor: Dr. Diane Neudorf
Lee Drain Bldg. 115C
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Web page: http://www.shsu.edu/~bio_dln/
Office hours: Tues./Thurs. 9:30-10:30 AM, Mon. 1:00-3:00 PM or by appointment

Location & time: Mon. and Wed. **8:00 to 11:00/10:00 AM, LDB 115
**some labs may start earlier, normally Wednesday will be lab/field day

Evaluation:

3 Lecture Exams:	90 pts
Midterm Lab Exam:	20 pts
Final Lab Exam:	30 pts
Field Quizzes	10 pts.
Study skin	10 pts.
2 Presentations on world orders	20 pts
Paper discussion on current topic	10 pts
Participation	10 pts

Grading Scheme: A=180-200, B=160–179, C=140-159, D=120-139, F <120

Books & Supplies: Handbook of Bird Biology 2nd Edition by Podulka et al.
Birds of North America by Ken Kaufman (or equivalent field guide)
CD set: Stokes Field Guide to Bird Songs
Good quality binoculars (7 x 35 or 8 x 40 recommended)

Attendance: In accordance with University Policy, regular attendance is required. Regular attendance will be considered part of the participation grade.

Missed Exams: Make-up exams will be offered only to students with written verification of illness, family emergency, religious event or required participation in an organized college event. In the latter two cases please notify me within the first 15 days of the semester.

Americans with Disabilities Act: SHSU adheres to all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. If you have a disability that may affect adversely your work in this class, then I encourage you to register with the SHSU Counseling Center and to talk with me about how I can best help you. All disclosures of disabilities will be kept strictly confidential. NOTE: no accommodation can be made until you register with the Counseling Center.

Classroom rules: Cellular phones and pagers must be turned off during class time. Rude or disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. Inappropriate behavior in the classroom shall result in, minimally, a directive to leave class or being reported to the Dean of Students for disciplinary action in accordance with university policy. Visitors to the classroom will be permitted only with prior approval by me and if they do not present a disruption to the class.

A note on Academic Dishonesty: Academic dishonesty includes cheating, collusion and plagiarism. It is a serious offense that at the very least will result in a failing grade on the assignment in question. Examples include: (1) Receiving or providing unauthorized assistance on an exam; (2) Using notes or other forms of unauthorized materials during an exam; (3) Submitting an assignment as one's own work that has been written in whole or in part by another; (4) Failing to properly indicate sources of borrowed words or ideas. For more information refer to "Code of Student Conduct and Discipline" in your SHSU student guidelines handbook.

Course Description and Objectives:

This class will give you both a theoretical and practical background to Ornithology, the scientific study of birds. After successfully completing the lecture portion of this course students should be able to understand and discuss the following:

- 1) the anatomical and physiological characteristics that separate birds from other animals
- 2) hypotheses on the origin of birds and flight
- 3) how birds communicate with one another both vocally and visually
- 4) the breeding biology and ecology of birds
- 5) the annual cycle of birds and the biology of migration and navigation
- 6) conservation issues involving both tropical and temperate bird species.

By the end of the laboratory/field portion of this course students will know how to:

- 1) Identify common species found in east Texas and the Gulf Coast by sight and sound
- 2) Recognize and identify orders of birds of the world
- 3) Capture, handle, and measure birds in the field
- 4) Prepare museum study skins
- 5) Identify morphological and anatomical features of birds

Field Trips:

Field trips will focus on bird identification. You will have an opportunity to observe birds in the their natural habitats, and to see how birds are captured using mist nets. Field trips will take place during lab or on weekends. Field trips are a compulsory part of the course and attendance counts toward your participation grade. Destinations will be dependent on weather conditions and bird activity. Please be advised that dates and location of trips are tentative.

Weekend Field Trips:

Rockport Whooping Crane Trip: Jan. 25-26, 2008

High Island Trip: Saturday in April according to weather etc.

Other possibilities: Galveston, Brazos Bend State Park, Jesse Jones Park, Houston Zoo

* Please note that the course syllabus is tentative. Topics covered, exam dates, assignments and grading scheme are subject to change at my discretion.

Lecture Topics:

Origins and Evolution
Speciation and Biogeography
Feathers and Flight
Bird Brains and Senses
Breeding Biology
Communication
Physiology
Foraging and Ecology
Migration, Navigation, and Annual Cycles
Conservation

Lecture Exams:

Feb. 25 – Exam 1
Mar. 31 – Exam 2
Finals Week – Exam 3

Tentative Lab Schedule

Jan. 16	Course Introduction
Jan. 23	External Morphology (Chapt. 3 in lab manual)
Jan. 25-26	Rockport Trip
Jan. 30	Field
Feb. 6	Feathers and skeleton (Chapt. 4 and 5 in lab manual)
Feb. 13	Review of species seen on trips
Feb. 20	Midterm Lab Exam
Feb. 27	Muscular, digestive and urogenital systems (Chapt. (6-8 & 10 in lab manual)
Mar. 5	Study skin preparation I (Chapt. 12 in lab manual)
Mar. 12	Spring Break
Mar. 19	Study skin preparation II
Mar. 26	Warbler Review
Mar. 27	Special Thursday Night Lecture: Dr. Bridget Stutchbury, Details TBA
Apr. 2	Field
Apr. 9	Field
Apr. 16	Field
Apr. 23	Review
Apr. 30	Final Lab Exam