

WFSC/ENTO 450: Research in Caribbean Conservation (2 credits) Summer, 2013

Location: Archbold Tropical Research and Education Center

Meeting Times: May 18 – June 09, 8:00 AM – 10:00 PM

SYLLABUS

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Prerequisites: Minimum GPA of 2.25, background in natural or social sciences disciplines; preferred background, ecology, systematics, behavior or natural resources coursework.

Objectives and Learning Outcomes: The primary objective of this portion of the course is to provide students with experience in and appreciation for diverse tropical habitats, and the problems associated with conserving these habitats. This is accomplished by having students design and conduct individual research projects on topics of their choice, generally with considerable input from the instructors on project design and feasibility. The final product is a scientific format research paper. Grading is based upon the ability to define project objectives, describe methodology, clearly present the results in both text and tables/figures, and synthesize the result in the context of relevant literature.

Textbook or Resource Material: Materials are contingent upon the research interests of the individual students. Relevant reserve readings will be made available during the class. We will have a small library and digital files of all relevant reading materials on Dominica.

Grading: Students will be graded on the quality and content of the individual project report submitted at the end of the stay in Dominica. Project reports are due as a pdf file and a Word document by June 08.

There is no required textbook; students will be expected to read the materials available in the library at the research as they pertain to their individual projects.

See attached Tentative Schedule for Dominica. This provides approximate times available for work on individual projects. Individual projects are designed by the students during the Spring semester (2013) and the nature of these projects varies widely depending on the interest of the student. As with group projects, individual projects may be quite diverse, as is indicated by titles of some of the prior individual projects given below. Field trips are designed to provide students with exposure to the diversity of environments in Dominica, and the conservation issues associated with protection of these environments.

Examples of individual project titles from the past 5 years (full list available upon request)

- A field guide to the crabs of Dominica
- A field guide to the prawns of Dominica
- A field guide to the ants of Dominica
- Characterization of flight activity of Molossidae at ATREC
- An analysis of the fisheries of Dominica
- Zonation in marine snails at Champagne Beach
- Moth taste deterrents and associated coloration and their effects on *Anolis* predation
- Frog density in the rainforest
- A field guide to the herpetofauna of Dominica
- Feeding times and aggressive behavior of Dominican hummingbirds
- Ant species diversity at different heights along the tree *Ficus insipida*
- Seed predation in legumes
- Territorial behavior in Dominican land crabs *Gecarcinus ruricola* and *Gecarcinus lateralis*
- Prawn diversity as a function of stream flow
- Vertical distribution of spiders in various rainforest habitats

- Use of medicinal plants in Dominica
- Does clearing and cultivating the steep terrain of ATRC affect soil fertility?
- The banana industry in Dominica
- Ecotourism as a determining factor of pollution and litter on Dominica
- Healthcare in Dominica
- Dominican beach profiles and wave energy
- Dominican schools: A Socio-historical survey

- **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Policy Statement**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact Disability Services, in Cain Hall, Room B118, or call 845-1637. For additional information visit <http://disability.tamu.edu>.

- **Academic Integrity Statement and Policy** (All syllabi should contain a section that states the Aggie Honor Code and refers the student to the Honor Council Rules and Procedures on the web: <http://aggiehonor.tamu.edu>.)

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