**Ecology and Management of Southeastern Wildlife**

**RNR 3018 (4 cr.): Spring 2020**

**Lecture: Tue/Thur 12:30–1:20, RNR 142 (the bigger one)**

**Lab: Tue/Thur 1:30–4:30, outside**

**INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Kevin Ringelman**

Office: 340 RNR

Office Hours: Open; take your chances I’m in the office or make

an appointment

Email: kringelman@agcenter.lsu.edu *(best method)*

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**COURSE DESCRIPTION AND GOALS**

RNR 3018 – Ecology and Management of Southeastern Wildlife is focused on identification, taxonomy, life history, and ecology of birds, mammals, reptiles, and amphibians commonly found in Louisiana. The goal of this course is to provide you with a primer in comparative vertebrate zoology and teach you the natural history of common wildlife, effectively serving as a “light” version of ornithology, mammalogy, and herpetology.

This class will provide you with a background in:

* Identification of common wildlife species by sight and sound
* Natural history and ecology of common wildlife species
* Field observational skills, sampling techniques, and formal field note-taking
* Comparative morphology as shaped by adaptive evolutionary processes
* Scientific research and writing

You cannot be a wildlife professional without knowing your wildlife.

**READINGS:**

* The Sibley Guide to Birds of Eastern North America (2nd edition). <https://www.amazon.com/Sibley-Guide-Birds-2nd/dp/030795790X>
* Boundy J. and J.L. Carr. 2017. Amphibians and Reptiles of Louisiana: An Identification and Reference Guide. <https://www.amazon.com/Amphibians-Reptiles-Louisiana-Identification-Reference/dp/0807165484>

**OTHER COURSE MATERIALS**

* If you do not have a pair of **binoculars** and **boots**, you need to acquire some; you **will** need them for class, and they are integral to your education and career in field biology, and you can’t share them easily. We have a few loaner binoculars.
* I recommend both the **Merlin** app for bird ID, and the **eBird** app for logging your bird observations. Both are free.
* Some very kind students who came before you designed a Quizlet for use with this class. You can access it here: [**https://quizlet.com/join/Bbsmu2cXb**](https://quizlet.com/join/Bbsmu2cXb). I neither created this nor monitor it for accuracy. If you want to make changes, username is **Kevin\_Ringelman** and password is **LSUwaterfowl**.

**GRADING:**

**A+ (97­.00–100); A (93.00–96.99); A- (90.00–92.99); B+ (87.00–89.99); B (83.00–86.99);**

**B- (80.00–82.99); C+ (77.00–79.99); C (73.00–76.99); C- (70.00–72.99); D+ (67.00-69.99);**

**D (63.00–66.99); D- (60.00–62.99); F (<60.00)**

Only two decimal places shown, but grades will not be rounded. I.e., 79.999999999999999 < 80

100 Midterm lecture exam

50 Midterm field exam

50 each 3 species accounts

100 Field observations

150 Final lecture exam

50 Final field exam

Lab exercises and homework as assigned (nothing huge)

150 Quizzes – some will be unannounced

720ish *(subject to change)*

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**Anyone who attempts to handle an alligator (without supervision) or venomous snake will instantly fail the course.**

**Late work:** Unexcusedlate assignments will lose 10% per day (weekends count).

**CLASSROOM RESPECT**

* This is an experience-based course, and you must come to class; **please email me if you are unable to attend class on any given day.**
* Class will begin on time, and field trips will depart on time. Do not be late.
* We will take several field trips in this class. It is paramount that you act in a respectful manner when we visit these places. Unprofessional conduct will be not be tolerated.
* We will go outside often to view wildlife. Stay together, and keep talking to a minimum to maximize the chances of seeing wildlife. Ask questions!

*\*\*\*\*\* Plagiarism will not be tolerated. \*\*\*\*\**

*Students that plagiarize will be reported to Student Affairs and Advocacy. It is your responsibility to understand what constitute plagiarism.*

**FIELD TRIPS AND FIELD OBSERVATIONS**

During each field trip, you will be required to log your species list and other observations in a field notebook and turn them in immediately after the trip.

**SPECIES ACCOUNT**

A species account is a detailed description of a species’ distribution, physical characteristics, natural/life history, and conservation/management status. There is an example posted on moodle, though your version will be shorter in length. You will be required to write **three** species accounts, one each for a bird, mammal, and reptile/amphibian.

Your species accounts should be >2 pages long, single-spaced Times New Roman font with 1” margins. Length requirement excludes headers, inter-paragraph spacing, pictures, range maps, and literature cited.

Your species account must include:

* Scientific name (common name) e.g., Zenaida asiatica (White-winged dove)
* Author's name…which is you
* Picture (meaning include a picture of your species on the front page)
* Distribution: A detailed, written account which outlines the distribution of the species. Inclusion of maps are appropriate and suggested.
* Identifying characteristics: Includes a detailed description of the physical appearance of the species, including information on size, length, height, color, individual markings, etc. Inclusion of sex and age differences may be appropriate, as well as other identifying traits (e.g., vocalizations).
* Natural history
  + Food habits
  + Habitat types used (focus on habitats it uses in Louisiana)
  + Reproduction (e.g., time of breeding, number of offspring, age at first reproduction, breeding site selection)
  + Behavioral information (e.g., courtship, migration, diurnal/nocturnal, coloniality/group size)
* Conservation and management status – estimates of population size, IUCN Red List status, state and federal protection, etc. If the species is actively being managed, describe those activities.

In-text citations and literature cited follows Journal of Wildlife Management guidelines. Additional guidelines are posted on moodle, but here is an example of a full citation:

Journal – general format

Miller, M. R. 1986. Molt chronology of northern pintails in California. Journal of Wildlife Management

50:57–64.

It will be tempting to plagiarize existing online species accounts. Do not do this. You are expected to track down primary sources and cite them in your species account.

**UNIVERSITY POLICY STATEMENTS**

**Attendance:** LSU policy statements 22 and 24 and Faculty Senate resolution 12-3 state that individual faculty determine excuse and unexcused absences, and that attendance can be graded by randomly taking attendance during 12 randomly selected lectures. Late attendance is subject to partial credit. An unexcused absence during any graded activity will result in a 0 for the activity. Excused absences and make-up opportunities will be granted for university-approved off-campus activities, religious holidays, professional development activities, job interviews, and severe illnesses. Please contact me before course activities if possible to schedule a make-up.

**Academic integrity:** Cheating and plagiarism will not be tolerated in any form; it damages the integrity of the student, the department, and university, and can far-reaching effects into the future (e.g. “I don’t hire RNR grads anymore because I had one who cheated his (her) way through and was an awful employee”). We use plagiarism detection software. Students violating the Academic Dishonesty policy of the LSU Code of Student Conduct will be referred to Student Advocacy & Accountability.

**Disability statement:** Louisiana State University is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for all persons with disabilities. The syllabus is available in alternate formats upon request. If you have a disability that may have some impact on your work in this class and for which you may require accommodations, please see a staff member in Disability Services (115 Johnston Hall) so that such accommodations can be considered. Students that receive accommodation letters, please meet with me to discuss the provisions of those accommodations as soon as possible.

**Credit expectations:** For each earned credit, students must spend a minimum of 1 hour per week in lecture class or 3 hours per week in lab, and a minimum of 2-3 hours per week of studying/homework outside of class. **That means, for this class, expect between 8-12 hours of homework and studying each week.**

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| Week 1 | 1/14 | NO CLASS | KEVIN GONE |
| 1/16 | Lecture: Introduction  Lab: Field guides, birding apps, campus walk |  |
| Week 2 | 1/21 | Lecture: Vertebrates  Lab: LSU Museum of Natural Science |  |
| 1/23 | Lecture: Introduction to birds  Lab: Dissections |  |
| Week 3 | 1/28 | Lecture: Galliformes–Anseriformes  Lab: Capitol Lakes (white, gray) | Assign bird species account |
| 1/30 | Lecture: Podicipediformes–Pelecaniformes  Lab: University Lakes/Sanctuary (silver, burgundy) |  |
| Week 4 | 2/4 | Lecture: Accipitriformes–Charadriiformes [Quiz 1]  Lab: LSU Aquaculture (white, gray) |  |
| 2/6 | Lecture: Charadriiformes–Caprimulgiformes  Lab: NO LAB | Bird species account due |
| TRIP TO ROCKEFELLER – Leave Friday 2/7 and return Saturday 2/8 (white, gray)  Leave no later than 2:30. Group dinner around 6:00 Yellow rail capture at night.  Birding at dawn. Alligators no later than 10:30. Meet Mark Shirely in Abbeville around 12:00. Campfire lunch, install wood duck boxes, rice management, etc. On campus before 5:30. | | | |
| Week 5 | 2/11 | Lecture: Whooping Cranes (Sammy King) [Quiz 2]  Lab: Burden Museum and Gardens (white, gray) |  |
| 2/13 | Lecture: Strigiformes–Falconiformes  Lab: Raptor rehab (white, gray) |  |
| Week 6 | 2/18 | Lecture: Passeriformes I  Lab: Bluebonnet Swamp (white, silver) |  |
| 2/20 | Lecture: Passeriformes II [Quiz 3]  Lab: LSU Aquaculture (white, silver) |  |
| Week 7 | 2/25 | NO CLASS – MARDI GRAS BREAK |  |
| 2/27 | Lecture: Review  Lab: Blackwater Conservation Park (white, gray) |  |
| Week 8 | 3/3 | Lecture: Lecture exam  Lab: Lab exam (white, gray) |  |
| 3/5 | Lecture: Introduction to mammals  Lab: Place cameras at LSU Aquaculture (white, gray) | Assign mammal account |
| Week 9 | 3/10 | Lecture: Deer through moles  Lab: LSU Museum of Natural Science |  |
| 3/12 | Lab only: Idlewild – home late (silver, red) |  |
| Week 10 | 3/17 | Lecture: Bats through squirrels (Catrina)  Pick up camera traps (white, gray) | KEVIN GONE |
| 3/19 | Lecture: Intro to herps [Quiz 4]  Lab: Bluebonnet nature center |  |
| Week 11 | 3/24 | NO CLASS – SPRING BREAK |  |
| 3/26 | NO CLASS – SPRING BREAK |  |
| Week 12 | 3/31 | Lecture: Amphibians  Lab: Reproductive Biology (camera traps, PVC poles) (white, gray) | Mammal account due |
| 4/2 | Lecture: Reptiles  Lab: Highland Road Park (white, silver) | Assign herp account |
| Week 13 | 4/7 | Lecture: Herps (Jeff Boundy) [Quiz 5]  Lab: Ben Hur tract (white, gray) |  |
| 4/9 | Lecture: Herps (Bones)  Lab: Kendalwood Road Park (white, gray) |  |
| Week 14 | 4/14 | Lecture: Bat ecology (Ashley Long)  Lab: Pick up camera traps at Reproductive Biology (white, gray)  Evening bat lab (Ashley Long) |  |
| 4/16 | Lab only: Big Branch NWR (home late) (white, gray)  Evening bat lab (Ashley Long) |  |
| TRIP TO LEE FOREST. Leave Friday 4/17 and return Saturday 4/18. Gopher tortoises, herping, smammal trapping, trail cams, birding. Home before 5:00 on Saturday. (green, blue pickup, expedition, work truck) | | | |
| Week 15 | 4/21 | Lecture: Prothonotary Warblers (Katie Percy, Luke)  Lab: Bluebonnet Swamp (white, gray) | Herp account due  KEVIN GONE |
| 4/23 | NO CLASS | KEVIN GONE |
| Week 16 | 4/28 | Lecture: Emily’s honors presentation, review  Lab: Review (white, gray) |  |
| 4/30 | Lecture: Final lecture exam  Lab: Final lab exam (white, silver) | …on Kevin’s bday! |