

Avian Ecology and Evolution, BIO 7102
Course Syllabus

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Class: 10:00 – 10:50 a.m., W
Office Hours: 9:00 – 11:00 a.m., T R; or by appt.

Course Description: This course will be an interactive discussion of avian ecology and evolution, designed to go beyond the textbook knowledge of avian ecology and evolution and provide the students with a critical examination of the theories, hypotheses, and lab and field-based data that support or refute these hypotheses. This course will be based on recent textbooks or compilations of peer-reviewed literature that challenge some of the paradigms in avian ecology and evolution.

Course Rationale: This course is designed for students interested in ecology and evolution of various species of fauna, not limited to avian systems. This course will critically examine many of the existing theories and hypotheses surrounding the evolution and ecology of birds. This course is also designed to foster critical thinking, synthesis of materials, and speaking abilities through oral presentations and classroom discussions.

Subject	Chapter(s)	Date	Lead Discussion
Introduction/Geography and Ecology	1-2	01/23	
Geographical Variation & Parapatric Speciation	3-4	01/30	
Ecological Speciation	5	02/06	
Ecological Controls and Speciation on Continents	6	02/13	
Behavior and Ecology/ Geographical Isolation/Causes of Island Endemism	7-8	02/20	
Social Selection/ Evolution of Song	9-10	02/27	
		03/05	
Divergence/ Social Selection and Ecology	11-12	03/19	
Species Recognition	13	03/26	
Mate Choice	14	04/02	
Hybrid Zones	15	04/09	
Genetic Incompatibility/ Conclusions	16-17	04/16	
Student Presentations		04/23	
Student Presentations		04/30	

Textbook:

Price, Trevor. 2008. Speciation in Birds. Roberts and Company, Publishers Inc., Greenwood Village, Colorado.

Grading: The student will be assessed by the instructor on the basis of his/her participation in classroom discussions (50%) and the quality of oral presentations (50%).

IMPORTANT: Attendance of seminar is required. I will take role in class and unexcused absences will result in reduction of class participation grade (5 points off for each unexcused absence after first offense).

Oral Presentations: Students will be required to present an oral presentations on a subject matter of their choice that pertains to speciation in birds. We will discuss subject choices on the first day of class. Oral presentation will be approximately 15 minutes and held during one of the last two class periods.

Texas State University-San Marcos Honor Code

As members of a community dedicated to learning, inquiry, and creation, the students, faculty, and administration of our University live by the principles in this Honor Code. These principles require all members of this community to be conscientious, respectful, and honest.

We Are Conscientious:

We complete our work on time and make every effort to do it right. We come to class and meetings prepared and are willing to demonstrate it. We hold ourselves to doing what is required, embrace rigor, and shun mediocrity special requests, and excuses.

We Are Respectful:

We act civilly toward one another, and we cooperate with each other. We will strive to create an environment in which people respect and listen to one another, speaking when appropriate, and permitting other people to participate and express their views.

We Are Honest:

We do our own work and are honest with one another in all matters. We understand how various acts of dishonesty, like plagiarizing, falsifying data, and giving or receiving assistance to which one is not entitled, conflict as much with academic achievement as with the values of honesty and integrity.

The Pledge for Students

Students at our University recognize that, to insure honest conduct, more is needed than an expectation of academic honesty, and we therefore adopt the practice of affixing the following pledge of honesty to the work we submit for evaluation: I pledge to uphold the principles of honesty and responsibility at our University.

The Pledge for Faculty and Administration

Faculty at our University recognize that the students have rights when accused of academic dishonesty and will inform the accused of their rights of appeal laid out in the student handbook and inform them of the process that will take place. I recognize students' rights and pledge to uphold the principles of honesty and responsibility at our University.