

## Experiencing conservation

BIOL 484L

Spring 2020

30 pts

*“We can be ethical only in relation to something we can see, feel, understand, love, or otherwise have faith in.” Aldo Leopold*

*“I learned that nature wouldn’t ridicule you, would let you play. Oblivious, it went about its business without you, but it was there when you needed some gift, a bit of beauty: it would be waiting for you. All you had to do was notice.” Janisse Ray*

*“Nature: A place where birds fly around uncooked.” Oscar Wilde*

It is arguably much easier to conserve biodiversity if you are familiar with the actual components of biodiversity in the first place. In that vein, you will become very familiar with some aspect of local biodiversity over the semester. You will need to observe some aspect of biodiversity that is of interest to you **ten times** for **25 to 30 minutes each time**, and record on paper these detailed observations. The goal should be to have two to three observation periods in each month (January, February, March, and April). You should regularly observe a specific location. I recommend picking a place that is relatively convenient to observe so you are not limited by logistics. Also, try to pick a location with safety in mind and bring a cell phone for emergencies, but not for incessant talking/messaging. (By the way, it is fine if you need to observe a different location sometimes.)

**Tell me by e-mail** where you are going to specifically observe by **23/24 January 2020**.

You will turn in your field notes. The field notes should NOT be transcribed (i.e., they likely will be dirty from you actually being outside).

*Field notes MUST include dates, times, weather conditions, many detailed observations, and comments about why you think certain observations are occurring.*

While you are recording your observations, you will often wonder about the identity of the species you are watching. So, you also **must identify 5 plant species and 5 animal species** over the semester using appropriate resources. You will need to cite whatever resource (i.e., book, webpage) you use. Even if you already are confident that you know the identity of a species you need to check in some credible resource and briefly explain the rationale for your identification. Be sure to keep a tally of the two sets of species in your observations. Record this information in your notebook along with your observations.

You will turn in your early-semester observations on **13/14 February 2020** for a graded check to make sure you are on the right track; 10 of the 30 points will be assigned at this check and you need to have 3 observations completed and one plant and one animal species identified (with the source and reasoning you used) by this time for the chance to earn all 10 points. All written observations are due **23/24 April 2020**. Although you will be graded partly on the level of detail in your observations, don’t forget to have some fun and enjoy being ‘forced’ to spend some time outdoors.

### Timetable summary:

- 23/24 January 2020: Send location e-mail to me (jjhutch@coastal.edu)
- 13/14 February 2020: Early observations and identification check-up (10 pts)
- 23/24 April 2020: All observations due (including first set already turned in; 20 pts)