Ornithology (Biology 4231)

Professor: Dr. Janice M. Hughes
Office: CB 4052
Telephone: 343-8280

Contact information: Email: janice.hughes@lakeheadu.ca

Office hours: Scheduled office hours TBA

Office hours by appointment are available and encouraged. Contacting me by email is best. Also, I am always in attendance in the labs.

Course description:

The biology of birds, including their evolution, systematics, anatomy, ecology, and behaviour. Aspects of avian morphology, such as plumages, internal anatomy, and adaptations for feeding and locomotion, will be examined using study specimens. Identification, behaviour, and natural history of Ontario birds will be emphasized.

Required supplementary notes: Hughes, J. M. *Ornithology Lecture and Lab Manual.* Lakehead University Bookstore.

Please note the following:

Lectures:

1. There is no textbook for this course. However extensive resources, including PDF outlines of lecture slides, glossaries, bird checklists, and on-line study aids, are available on the D2L course website.

2. There are two lecture exams held during the term that total 40% of the course grade overall. These exams are not cumulative. There is no exam scheduled during the final exam period in December.

3. Attendance in the lectures is highly recommended. Lecture notes will not be provided, and the PDFs of slides only show a brief outline of the course material. The things that I say in class are important!

Labs:

1. Students taking this course will be required to observe and/or handle bird study skins and skeletons during the laboratory sessions. Those who are uncomfortable with this practice should not register in this course.

2. Attendance in the labs is highly recommended. An assignment is scheduled for each lab which must be completed and handed in during the lab session. There will be no opportunity to make up missed lab assignments.

3. There will be a lab exam held during the eighth week of term. Attendance at this time is mandatory because there is no make-up exam for the lab exam.

4. There is no review lab prior to the lab exam. Make sure that you are well grounded in all lab materials and specimens before you leave the lab!

Assignments:

1. The class discussion grade comprises a participation portion and a follow-up point-of-view written paper. More information will be provided in class.

2. The major project for the course is a field notebook of bird observations made during the term. More information will be provided in class. I recommend that you begin this assignment early in the fall while there is still an abundance of bird activity in the area.

Grading scheme:

Midterm test	October 15	20%
Final test	December 1	20%
Lab assignment 1	September 30	2%
Lab assignment 2	October 14	2%
Lab assignment 3	October 28	2%
Lab test	November 4	20%
Class discussion	November 11	4%
Point-of-view paper	November 24	10%
Field notebook	December 1 (in class)	20%

Lecture Topic Outline

September 15		Introduction to the course
September 17	Unit 1	Avian origins
September 22	Unit 2	Avian classification
September 24	Unit 3	Feathers: Structure, growth, molt, and plumage
September 29	Unit 4	Flight mechanics
October 1		
October 6	Unit 5	Physiology and adaptation
October 8	Unit 6	Migration and navigation
October 13	Unit 7	Feeding: Apparatus and strategies
October 15		**Midterm Test (Units 1-6)**
October 20	Unit 8	Visual communication
October 22		
October 27	Unit 9	Vocal communication
October 29	Unit 10	Social behaviour
November 3		
November 5	Unit 11	Breeding systems
November 10		
November 12	Unit 12	Reproductive anatomy and physiology
November 17	Unit 13	Nests and parental care
November 19		
November 24	Unit 14	Growth and development
November 26	Unit 15	Demographics: Populations and communities
December 1		**Final Test (Units 7-15)**
December 3		**No lecture**

Laboratory Topic Outline

September 16		**No lab**
September 23		**No lab**
September 30	Lab 1	Form and function: Feathers and flight
October 7		**No lab**
October 14	Lab 2	Form and function: Feeding
October 21		**No lab**
October 28	Lab 3	Form and function: Everything else
November 4		**Lab Exam**
November 11		Class discussion: Avian conservation
November 18		**No lab**
November 25		**No lab**
December 2		**No lab**