

UNIVERSITY OF OTTAWA
Ontario Universities Program in Field Biology

Course Title:	Introduction to Tropical Ecosystems
Instructor(s):	David Currie (dcurrie@uottawa.ca)
Dates:	May 1 – May 14, 2017 Exact dates may change by a day or two, depending on flight availability.
Location:	Costa Rica
Cost:	<p>Approximately \$4750 (\$350 deposit to home university, \$4400 balance). The final price, to be announced in January, depends on airfares and the exchange rate with the US dollar. Expenses in Costa Rica are charged in US dollars. The estimated cost assumes an exchange rate of 1.00 USD = 1.35 CAD. We will adjust the price, depending on the exchange rate when we pay the bill in January.</p> <p>Includes: airfare from Ottawa or Toronto to Costa Rica, lodging, all meals and class activities, and transportation within Costa Rica. We reserve a fixed number of seats from each departure point. At the time of registration, please indicate whether you prefer to depart from Toronto or Ottawa. If you are flexible, please tell us that. We cannot guarantee that everyone will be able to get the departure point they prefer, but we will try to do so.</p> <p>Excluded: Provincial health care plans do not cover medical costs outside of Canada. Students must obtain private out-of-country health insurance, which is available from many travel agencies, banks, insurance companies, etc. You may already be covered by a plan through your work, parents, or spouse. You will be required to provide the course organizer with your health insurance details.</p>
Prerequisites:	<p>One year of university-level introductory biology, and a one-semester course in introductory ecology.</p> <p>NOTE: Participants must be prepared for moderately strenuous hiking. Hikes may take several hours, sometimes up steep slopes, in very hot weather.</p>
Enrolment:	16 students (6 reserved for Ottawa)
Description:	<p>Costa Rica has an amazing array of different tropical ecosystems. Participants will visit several different ecosystems. Provisionally, these will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-montane elfin forest surrounding the crater of Poás volcano. If the clouds permit, you will be able to look down into the volcano's crater. • Seasonally dry forest in Guanacaste Province. Often we see three species of monkeys there. • Ramsar Convention-designated wetlands in Palo Verde National Park (if there has been rain; otherwise the wetlands may be dry). • A magnificent, nearly deserted beach on the Pacific Ocean at Junquillal de Quajiniquil. There, we will see a mangrove forest, and primary succession. We will do a small study in tidal pools along the shore. There will be time for a swim. • The magnificent Monteverde Cloud Forest Preserve and, near-by, a “sky-walk” – bridges suspended through the forest canopy. • Arenal Volcano National Park. An eruption in 1968 buried one side of the volcano under lava and ash. We will see primary succession on lava fields.

*****\$350 Deposit is due at time of registration.**

Tuition at your home institution is *in addition* to any field module costs.

Students who drop a field course should not expect a refund of any field course costs.

Students are encouraged to purchase cancellation insurance if airline tickets are required.

Students are responsible for all fees incurred by the home or host university due to any bounced cheque.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Atlantic Slope rain forest at La Tirimbina research station. <p>At several sites, we describe and quantify forest structure, as well as the diversity of plants, birds, and insects, in relation to physical environmental conditions. Participants will also carry out small studies of animal behavior, island biogeography theory or related subjects. At La Tirimbina, participants will also design and carry out a small independent research project.</p> <p>Much of this course involves hikes through natural ecosystems, with observation and discussions of the ecology of the ecosystems we visit. Accommodations range from quite basic field stations (bunk bed, no a/c) to very comfortable tourist lodges. Running water, flush toilets, and beds with sheets are available at all accommodations. Swimming is possible at some.</p>	
Evaluation:	Students are required to have read, before the course, <i>Tropical Nature: Life and Death in the Rain Forests of Central and South America</i> by Adrian Forsyth and Ken Miyata (1987).	
	<p>Quiz on the book on the first day of the course</p> <p>Presentation prepared in advance, on a subject relevant to the course. A list of possible topics will be available</p> <p>Final exam written in the field</p> <p>Participation</p> <p>Two written reports, to be submitted within one month of returning to Canada on projects carried out during the course</p>	<p>5%</p> <p>15%</p> <p>20%</p> <p>20%</p> <p>40%</p>
Further information:	<p>Course website: http://mysite.science.uottawa.ca/dcurrie/oupfb_course.html</p> <p>There, you will find more information about the planned itinerary, a packing list, suggested topics for presentations, a course handout, etc.</p> <p>Risks -- International travel and fieldwork involve certain inevitable risks. You will find a statement of risks on the web site, and a waiver form. A condition of participation in the course is that you must read the statement of risks and sign the waiver, which indicates that you accept responsibility for the risks involved in participation in the course. Since provincial health insurance does not necessarily cover all medical expenses outside of Canada, students will also be required to obtain private health insurance for travel abroad.</p>	

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