

**UNIVERSITY OF OTTAWA**  
**Ontario Universities Program in Field Biology**

<b>Course Title:</b>	Wildlife and Ecology in East African Ecosystems
<b>Instructor(s):</b>	Professor Jeremy Kerr, Department of Biology, University of Ottawa, Ottawa, Ontario K1N6N5 <a href="mailto:jkerr@uottawa.ca">jkerr@uottawa.ca</a>  Dr. Allyson MacLean, Department of Biology, University of Ottawa, Ottawa, Ontario K1N6N5
<b>Dates:</b>	<u>ROUGHLY August 1 to August 16, 2024.</u> Dates chosen to balance flight costs and optimum wildlife experiences in the field.
<b>Location:</b>	<i>Northern Tanzania</i>
<b>Cost:</b>	<b><u>Approximately \$6000</u></b> (Airfare, accommodations, travel within country, and food <b>are included</b> ; some additional costs for travel medicine and a travel visa are necessary). The exact cost will depend upon airfares, itineraries, and the international monetary exchange rates at the time our booking is made. We have no control over such fluctuations and students must recognize that costs may vary. The standard OUPFB deposit of \$350 will be required to secure a place in the course. That OUPFB registration cost will be subtracted from the approximate course cost estimate. Balance due February 1.
<b>Prerequisites:</b>	<u>Completion of second year</u> university biology program, including <u>introductory ecology</u> course, or equivalent that we recognize is mandatory. Permission of the instructor and satisfactory completion of the course's risk assessment materials are required. For safety reasons, students must agree to and abide by a code of conduct, take responsibility for their actions in the field, and formally recognize risks in a waiver.
<b>Enrolment:</b>	22 (8 reserved for uOttawa)
<b>Course Description (brief):</b>	This course brings students on wildlife safari through some of the world's most extraordinary and iconic ecosystems, found across northern Tanzania, one of the safest areas in Africa. Ecosystems in the area include different kinds of forests, savannahs, and higher elevation ecosystems on the slopes of extinct volcanoes. We will visit iconic parks and regions, such as Serengeti, Kilimanjaro, Ngorongoro, Tarangire, Mkomazi, and Arusha). We will discuss how ecological interactions in this region are shaped by climate, predators, herbivory, wildlife migration, volcanic history, and human use of different habitats. We will observe species' behaviour and interactions in the field and some introduction to human-wildlife interactions (including zoonotic diseases).
<b>Evaluation:</b>	Evaluation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 15% oral participation and engagement with course activities, including Mandatory half-day risk management session attended in person or by teleconference.</li> <li>• 15% oral presentation in the field based on elements of the field experience in Tanzania. Oral presentation is researched and prepared in advance of field course.</li> <li>• 35% field book: observations and responses to questions completed in the field.</li> <li>• 35% final essay: expanded and scholarly presentation of material covered in the oral presentation for the course, using primary scientific literature (i.e. journal articles) as sources.</li> </ul> <p>All components of the course must be completed, including risk management participation</p>

**An Average Day – What to Expect**

(a) Daily timeline	The daily itinerary varies throughout the course. In the early phases of the course, we will be closer to Moshi town. Breakfast will be served around 0700, and an excursion into nearby field sites might depart by 0830. Some hiking at medium elevations might be necessary, such as a walk through forested areas on the lower reaches of Mount Kilimanjaro. Packed lunches might then be provided, and a return to a hotel expected before nightfall. For most of the course, however, we will be in or near national parks. Days will be spent on safari, with packed lunches provided. Accommodations will be camping accommodations in well-managed and/or guarded areas. On a few days, we will be up at or before dawn to see sunrise in the Serengeti, or to potentially see distinctive wildlife species present at such times.
(b) Work habitat & Physical exertion	Some days will include walking safaris or gentle hikes through hilly terrain at moderate elevations (up to approximately 2000m). Most people will find it easy to get out of breath in such areas, so the pace of those experiences will be slow. On most days, safari experiences will necessarily be vehicle-based, so physical exertion needed for course activities will be limited.
(c) Common activities	Travel through wildlife areas in dedicated safari vehicles, with stops for lunches at designated areas within national parks. Visits to springs, waterfalls, a coffee plantation, even occasional swimming in pools at certain campsites, such as our site overlooking the Rift Valley.
(d) Weather, dehydration, & biting insects	The climate in areas we will visit is generally quite moderate. There may be times in Serengeti, for example, where midday temperatures are quite warm, but humidity is typically low during our dry season visits, making it much easier to remain comfortable than in southern Ontario in summer. Biting insects are generally uncommon at the time of our visit, but there will be mosquitoes in some areas and tsetse flies (somewhat like deer flies in Ontario) elsewhere. There are no areas in this course where we will encounter biting flies at levels anywhere near densities encountered in the field in spring/summer in Ontario.
(e) Toxic/poisonous , wildlife/ plants	We will encounter extraordinary diversity of wildlife species. Very few of these pose risks except if students behave in ways that are clearly unacceptable. For example, it is forbidden to leave safari vehicles except in designated areas for very good reasons. It is unlikely that anyone will encounter toxic plants. Snakes are present but are virtually never seen. We do not visit areas where unexpected encounters with any such species are likely.
(f) Sleeping, washroom & laundry facilities	Sleeping arrangements vary, but include gender-appropriate double rooms in a hotel in Moshi town, and otherwise mostly shared tents that are provided for the course. Conventional washrooms (flush toilets, showers, running water for washing purposes) are present in all areas, but can be rustic in the most remote areas (e.g. Serengeti). Tents are set up and taken down by a camp crew.
(g) Meal plans & food allergies	Meals are provided at all times throughout the course – students never need to cook or wash dishes. Cooks will accommodate allergies or other food preferences readily.
(h) Non-academic responsibilities	Describe daily non-academic student responsibilities (e.g., camp chores, cooking/cleaning/sweeping duties, washroom cleaning)
(i) Degree of isolation	We will sometimes be in remote areas, but cell access is usually available or nearby. Many camp sites include basic wireless internet access, but such services can be slow. Charging of devices is normally possible everyday.
(j) Alcohol & drugs	Zero drug use or presence permitted at any time. Students may choose to access beer or other alcohol in certain camp sites. Alcohol abuse must not take place anywhere.

**MODULE#16**

(k) Vaccinations/ Insurances	Students should have their own travel health insurance. Consult a travel medicine doctor to identify vaccinations that are advised or necessary to visit northern Tanzania. This can include Yellow Fever, Hepatitis A and B, Typhus, tetanus, and other vaccines. Only your doctor can advise you on your medical needs. We will provide guidance on how to seek and obtain such medical advice during detailed briefings in advance of the course.
(l) Social Situations	We travel as a closely-knit, mutually supportive group. We attempt to ensure the best possible experience for every single person on the course. Travel in safari vehicles will be with 5 other students, an instructor/professional guide, and a professional safari driver.
(m) Final comments	Our objective on this course is to provide students with a life-changing, positive experience. The course is designed specifically to offer that possibility through an unforgettable experience in close, safe proximity to iconic wildlife species and ecosystems present in northern Tanzania.