

Biology 361–Spring 2011
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Office Hours:
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Ecological Communities of San Diego Syllabus and Schedule

Objectives/Course Description: This course will acquaint students with the ecological communities of San Diego County. We will focus on the organisms and ecological relationships that characterize local intertidal, marsh, chaparral, montane, and desert habitats. This field course is designed to complement other natural history courses such as Ecology (Biology 460), Plant Systematics (Biology 344), Vertebrate Natural History (Biology 346), and Invertebrate Zoology (Biology 350). It also complements courses in earth science (e.g., Environmental Studies [ENVI] 110), and it can be used not only for the Biology major but the Environmental Studies minor.

Required Text: Natural History of Southern California: a Laboratory Guide by Anciniec et al.

Field Notebook: “Rite-in-Rain” is a small waterproof notebook for the field.

Optional Texts: any field guides to birds, mammals, reptiles and amphibians, and plants
The required text will be available from the USD Bookstore. Field guides normally are available from the Natural History Museum of San Diego in Balboa Park. But our Bookstore can special order any field guide you think would be useful. We will talk about this in class the first day.

Grading: Three quizzes are scheduled. There will be an attempt to make them of approximately equal weight. Because the quizzes will include a practical portion with plants and animals to be identified, there are no make-up exams. However, one or more dates can be changed if the entire class (and the instructor) agrees. In addition to a practical component, there may be lecture-style questions on the exams. All quizzes will reflect our experiences in the field and the assigned reading.

Course Structure: We are scheduled to meet in Shiley 330 on Mondays at 2:30 pm. On most days, following an introductory lecture, we will leave campus on a field trip. On some weeks, we will work in the laboratory. Only very heavy rain will cause any rescheduling of field trips. There will be one mandatory overnight field trip on **April 16-17** (if you have a conflict with this date, contact me [at once](#)).

Rules for the Field: Although there will be stated field safety rules given to you, there are specific guidelines you should follow in the field.

1. Dress appropriately, usually in layers. You must wear closed toe and heel shoes; sandals of any kind are not acceptable.
2. Stay on paths at all times unless directed to leave a path.
3. You may not collect plants, animals or animal remains, or rocks on any trip unless given permission by the instructor.
4. Carry binoculars on all field trips (you can check them out from Biology for the semester).

Learning Outcomes: You and I should share certain learning expectations in this course. When you leave the course, you should be able to

- understand the wide diversity of communities in San Diego County
- recognize the common plants and animals characteristic of each community we visit
- appreciate the different habitats and microhabitats in those communities

CLASS SCHEDULE

<u>Date</u>	<u>Activity (tentative)</u>	<u>Reading*</u>
January 24	Introduction to San Diego County climate and geomorphology	pp. 1-4
January 31	Rocky Intertidal: La Jolla	Ex. 5
February 7	Scripps Aquarium	Ex. 4 and pp. 98-99
February 14	Salt Marsh: Tijuana Estuary	Ex. 7
February 21	Coastal Strand	Ex. 11 and pp. 100-106, 127-128
February 28	Quiz 1 (Marine) and Vernal Pools (tentative)	Ex. 10
March 7	Low Chaparral and Coastal Sage Scrub: Tecolote Canyon	Ex. 13
March 14	SPRING BREAK EASTER BREAK	
March 21	Torrey Pine Woodland: Torrey Pines State Reserve	Ex. 12
March 28	High Chaparral: Mt. Woodson	Ex. 14
April 4	Quiz 2 (Chaparral); Other?	
April 11	Succession in Burned Chaparral: Location TBA	
April 16-17	Overnight field trip to Laguna Mountains and Anza-Borrego Desert	Exs. 15-16
April 18	NO CLASS (tentative)	
April 25	Special Topic or Make-up Date	
May 2	Review	
May 9	Quiz 3 (Vernal Pools, Succession, Desert/ Mountains)	

* Readings in Anciniec et al. 2002. Natural History of Southern California, 3rd ed. Pearson Pub.