

- DRAFT -

CONSERVATION BIOLOGY & RESTORATION ECOLOGY  
Group Contract/ Spring 1995

Faculty Sponsors: Lawrence Eickstaedt and Peter Taylor.

General. This program was about conservation biology and restoration ecology, two rapidly developing areas of applied ecology which respond to concerns about the earth's seriously declining biodiversity due to human causes. These two subjects overlap in addressing the protection and restoration of species, habitats, and ecosystems based on ecological, social, and ethical principles. Program activities included assigned reading, lectures by faculty and invited speakers, seminars, field trips, and research projects.

Lectures. The faculty-sponsors presented lectures to introduce conservation biology and restoration ecology, about prairie restoration, and about New Zealand's biota - its history, human influences, and conservation. Invited speakers presented talks about management and restoration of the Mima Mounds and Fort Lewis prairies, Washington State's Natural Areas Program, management and restoration of Thurston County lakes, implementation of the U.S. Endangered Species Act, missions and programs of The Nature Conservancy, and conservation issues and programs in Madagascar. Two videos featured, respectively, New Zealand's geologic and biotic history, and Madagascar's biota and conservation problems.

Texts-seminar. The texts were *Essentials of Conservation Biology* (Primack), *Saving Nature's Legacy* (Noss & Cooperrider), *Restoration Ecology* (Jordan, Gilpin, & Aber), and *Environmental Restoration* (Berger). A weekly texts-seminar was based on readings in each of the texts. Each student was assigned to read a summary or response-paper for one of the seminar-meetings during the quarter.

Book-seminar. A weekly book-seminar was based on readings in the following books: *A Sand County Almanac* (Leopold), *Biophilia* (Wilson), *Why Preserve Natural Variety?* (Norton), *Extinction* (Raup), and *Beyond Preservation* (Baldwin, De Luce, & Pletsch). Each student was assigned to read a summary or response-paper for one of the seminar-meetings during the quarter.

Student talks. Each student presented one talk, 10-15 minutes, about a topic or article relating to conservation biology and/or restoration ecology, for a series of weekly class meetings held for that purpose.

Field trips. Observational/ informational field trips were conducted to local prairies, wetlands, and forested uplands preservation and restoration sites (Fort Lewis Military Base, Mima Mounds Natural Area Preserve, Nisqually Tribal Salmon Hatchery, Olympic National Forest, Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge), each hosted by the respective managers and/or biologists for each site.

Academic notebook. As an ongoing assignment, each student was expected to produce written summaries or responses to the readings in the texts and seminar-books, lectures, seminars, and field trips, all accumulated in an organized notebook.

Research project. A major assignment for each student was to research, primarily using library resources, a topic appropriate to the program's subjects. The results of each student's research project were synthesized in a written report. For a final informational exchange about the projects, each student presented orally the report's abstract to the whole class, optionally supported by a poster or other exhibit, followed by open discussion.