

Field Course in Ecology, BIOL 409

August 20 – September 3, 2006

Kluane National Park, Yukon

Instructors: Mark Vellend, Darren Irwin, Dick Cannings

Course outline (** details are all subject to change)

20 August: **Travel from Vancouver to Kluane Research Station.**

21 August: **Introduction and orientation to the station and the park.**

- Early morning lecture and discussion of the history, geology, flora and fauna of the region.
- Late morning - afternoon tour of the field station and the park.

22 August: **Free day to explore the natural history of Kluane.**

- In groups of 2-3 (because of bears, no one should travel the park alone) wander the area, making field observations and notes on whatever aspects of organismal natural history catch your attention.

23-25 August: **Rotation among instructors for plants, birds, and mammals/insects.**

- Students divide into three groups, and each group spends one day with each instructor, focusing on methods of analysis for *individuals, populations, and communities* of particular taxonomic groups.
- Plants – Mark Vellend; Birds – Darren Irwin; Mammals and Insects – Dick Cannings.

26 August: **Group day – Alpine ecology.**

- We will hike up to an alpine environment to observe its unique characteristics.

27 August: **Designing an ecological field study.**

- In the morning we will discuss key considerations in study design, including replication, spatial scale of observations, categorical vs. continuous variables, and other topics.
- In the afternoon, you will form groups of 2-3 to design an independent project in consultation with the instructors.

28 August – 1 September: **Independent projects.**

- Execute your field project; consult with instructors as needed.

2 September: **Finish and present project results.**

- In the morning you will finish any last minute project details, and prepare an oral presentation for presentation in the afternoon.

3 September: **Travel from Whitehorse to Vancouver.**

11 September: **Hand in written project reports.**