



FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE STUDENT FOCUS

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Puerto Rico field course provides unique opportunity for learning

By Larkin Powell
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“Puerto Rico, here we come!” was the cry from students and faculty from the College of Ag Sciences and Natural Resources during Spring Break in March 2006. The trip marked the first CASNR-sponsored Tropical Ecology field course in Puerto Rico.

Faculty selected 21 students from a pool of over 40 applicants, and all CASNR students received \$700 scholarships to make the 9-day field course affordable.

UNL students toured cultural sites such as Spanish forts and a native Tiano cultural site in Ponce. We spent time in National Wildlife Refuges, a National Cave Park, a marine science research station, a USDA tropical forestry research station, and a rain forest research station for the University of Puerto Rico. Students stayed in dormitories on campuses of two Universities in Rio Piedras and Mayaguez.

Highlights of the trip included

night-time tree frog research with Dennis Ferraro, UNL’s herpetology instructor. We also conducted a population estimate of Cuban Rock Iguanas on Isla Magueyes (see photo at right). Students snorkeled in marine ecosystems, and sampled local cuisine and markets.

CASNR plans to offer a Puerto Rico field course each spring, and I will be leading the Tropical Ecology course again in the spring of 2008.

The course counts as a major elective for F&W majors, and also satisfies the CASNR International Focus requirement. Puerto Rico is a territory of the US, but most of the population speaks Spanish.

Thanks to Dennis Ferraro and Walter Schacht for helping teach the course! We had an excellent group of students, and look forward to many more enjoyable experiences.



Above, F&W majors Joe Holdren and Scott Harter record data from a Cuban rock iguana. Students previously marked the iguana with the white paint on its left side. Cuban rock iguanas are threatened elsewhere, but are a damage management problem on Isla Magueyes, a 7-hectare island off Puerto Rico’s southern coast, with nearly 600 individuals.



Left, students and faculty spent Spring Break in Puerto Rico, studying tropical ecology. Here, students pose during a cultural visit to an historic Spanish fortress in San Juan.

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New curriculum unveiled for F&W major

By Larkin Powell

F&W Undergraduate Coordinator

F&W major advisors are excited about 11 new options available to students in the Fall of 2006. The new options, listed at right, provide a structured list of courses for students pursuing a range of careers in Fisheries and Wildlife.

The new options are available automatically to freshmen and transfer students entering in Fall 2006. Current students can visit with their advisor about the options, and may choose to select the 2006-2006 Bulletin as their contract for graduation—allowing them to complete the options, as well.

Students must complete at least one option to graduate with a degree in F&W, and advisors hope students will declare an option by the end of their sophomore year. To declare an option, students should visit their F&W advisor.

Information on the new options will be available in the new recruiting and advising offices in Hardin Hall. Students can also view descriptions of the options at the following web site:

New options for F&W major:

- Aquatic Ecology*
- Conservation Biology*
- Fisheries Ecology and Management*
- Geospatial Information Sciences*
- Habitat Management*
- Law Enforcement*
- Wildlife Damage Management*
- Wildlife Disease*
- Wildlife Ecology and Management*
- Zoo Animal Care*
- General Option*

http://snr.unl.edu/degrees/undergrad_Fisheries_Wildlife.asp

F&W alum enjoys fisheries position in Colorado

By Jason Wentz

Alum, F&W major

I graduated from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln in December 2003 with a B.S. in Natural Resources, and my major was Fisheries and Wildlife.

I now work for the Aquatic Section of the Colorado Division of Wildlife. My main duty is to sample fish in lakes, reservoirs, rivers and streams in the Arkansas River drainage in central Colorado.

From the data we collect, managers estimate population sizes; our data is also used to make management decision for these populations.

I was able to learn the skills needed for this job while attending UNL. Some of the classes that helped me achieve this were Fisheries Science, Fish Biology, and Wildlife Management Techniques. Also attending Cedar Point Biological Station in the summer of 2002 helped me quite a bit. I really enjoy being out in the field. I was fortunate to attend UNL and have the great teachers that I did.



Another day at the office? UNL alum Jason Wentz holds a 19 pound lake trout, or mackinaw, during sampling for the Colorado Division of Wildlife. Jason gill netted the fish at Mt. Elbert Forebay.



Students in Dr. Hygnstrom's senior seminar contribute to Nebraska's State Waterfowl Plan

By NRES 404 students
F&W majors

Last spring, Dr. Scott Hygnstrom approached waterfowl program manager Dr. Mark Vrtiska of the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission (NGPC) and asked if his UNL Senior Wildlife Seminar class could participate in the development of a management plan for resident Canada geese. The class evaluated management options and analyzed movement data collected from area resident geese during a four-year period.

Several hundred geese had been observed by NGPC employees at lakes surrounding Lincoln. The geese had previously been banded and equipped with neck collars so observers could monitor the movements of individual geese.

The class began analyzing the data using several different software packages including Microsoft Excel, Microsoft Access and ESRI ArcView. The students organized the data currently stored by the NGPC and created visual representations of the movements and use areas of collared geese.

Resident Canada geese are becoming a large problem across eastern Nebraska. Geese are responsible for damage to golf courses, fouling ponds and reservoirs, defecation on sidewalks and public access areas, as well as biting and chasing people when defending their nesting areas. The NGPC will produce a management

Resident Canada geese are becoming a large problem across eastern Nebraska.

plan to deal with the resident geese, based in part on the information provided by the class.

Possible management strategies include habitat modification, trapping and translocation, frightening tactics, fertility control, and increased hunting options for Nebraska residents.

The students developed a presentation and poster that Dr. Vrtiska will use at the 2006 Midwest Fish and Wildlife Conference in Omaha, Nebraska this coming December. The recommendations from these results will be used by the NGPC over the next several years in an effort to effectively deal with resident Canada geese.

This collaboration was a good example of a service-based project in which UNL students can influence current policies and management programs in Nebraska. The collaborative effort included all students in the class, and required various groups to achieve a common goal; a management plan that will be used throughout Eastern Nebraska.

Participating students included: Levi Adam, James Brannen, Dirk Delap, Andrew Dinges, Sean Elliot, Scott Groepper, Steven Herdzina, Leslie Johnson, Jordan Katt, Naoko Kobayashi, Ryan Lodge, Jason Macrander, Drew



Signs like this are becoming common-place in Lincoln and Lancaster County as Canada goose populations are on the increase.

Paproski, Eric Schacht, Trevor Schmidt, Kyle Tonneges, Ryan Walrath, Linsey Willman. Greg Clements, Seth Korte, and Jason Gilsdorf provided assistance with the project.



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Email with story ideas!

Fisheries and wildlife professionals are responsible for the conservation, protection, regulation, and management of our nation's fish and wildlife resources. Their management strategies must provide for both consumptive (hunting, fishing) and non-consumptive uses (bird watching, non-game species enhancement, threatened and endangered species protection, and others).

Students who successfully fulfill the requirements in the fisheries and wildlife major are prepared to enter postgraduate programs as well as competitively enter the work force. The breadth of the curriculum prepares graduates to address complex environmental issues and to interact professionally with a multitude of natural resources disciplines to develop solutions to problems. Typical careers for graduates of this major include fisheries biologist or wildlife biologist with private consulting firms and zoos, as well as with governmental resource management agencies at the local, state, or federal level.

Students in the fisheries and wildlife major are encouraged to choose from several career paths as they select their coursework. Options are available in Aquatic Ecology, Conservation Biology, Fisheries Ecology and Management, Geospatial Information Sciences, Habitat Management, Law Enforcement, Wildlife Damage Management, Wildlife Disease, Wildlife Ecology and Management, and Zoo Animal Care.

End Notes

Hardin Hall ready for students this fall!

F&W majors will find their advisor and classrooms in a new building this fall. All F&W courses will be taught in Hardin Hall, and all advisors' offices will have been moved to Hardin Hall by the time classes begin.

F&W advisors' offices are on the 4th and 5th floors of Hardin Hall, on the corner of 33rd Street and Holdrege Avenue. All emails and phone numbers will remain the same as in the past.

Students will find brand new lecture halls, computer labs, teaching labs, and research labs. Come take a tour, and see our new facilities—we're excited to move in this summer!

Gamma Sigma Delta's top award to Jason Thiele

Jason Thiele, a junior in the F&W major, was awarded the 2006 "Outstanding Underclassman Award" from the Gamma Sigma Delta honor society at UNL.

Others receiving recognition for their academic performance were sophomores Andrew Furman, Dane Peterson, and Rebecca Sikes, and junior Landon Pierce, and Jason .

The F&W advisors are proud of our students' performance. This is the second time in a row that a F&W major has won the campus-wide award. Casey Cain, a current senior, received the Outstanding Underclassman Award in 2005.

Two F&W majors serve as SNR Ambassadors

The School of Natural Resources has announced its 2006-2007 student Ambassadors. Scott Harter and Jason Macrander will represent the F&W major. SNR Ambassadors help with student recruiting, campus tours, and off-campus Admissions activities.

Scott and Jason will receive scholarships for their participation in this program. Interviews for Ambassador positions are held each spring. Students can contact Jennifer Aerni, SNR recruiting coordinator for more information.

Other students serving as SNR Ambassadors include Fraser MacDonald (Environmental Studies), and Merrilynn Hirsch (Grassland Ecology and Management).