A starling making use of a post box as a nest, UK.

SEMESTER 2, 2013
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COURSE STAFF

Convener/Lecturer/Tutor Details:

Name: Dr Thom van Dooren
Room: MB323
Phone: 9385 3768
Email: t.van.dooren@unsw.edu.au
Consultation Times: Mondays 1-2pm (or by appointment)

COURSE DETAILS

This document provides the relevant introductory material for ARTS2244 Rethinking Wildlife. This is a Level Two courses offered within the Environmental Humanities Undergraduate program. It can also be studied within the Philosophy Undergraduate Program. It is worth 6 units of Credit (UOC).

This course explores philosophical and political issues in wildlife conservation from a range of disciplinary perspectives. In particular, it draws on the theoretical insights of environmental philosophy, anthropology, science and technology studies (STS) and the emerging field of ‘animal studies’. The course will explore questions like: what is ‘wild’ about wildlife, and does it matter? What is ‘biodiversity’, and how does this way of thinking about the environment structure conservation priorities and possibilities? What is ‘extinction’, and should we be trying to prevent it?

These questions will be taken up through a range of key topics, case studies and approaches. In particular, this course will provide students with basic training and experience in the ethnographic methods that are foundational to field research in the environmental humanities, principally interviewing and site observation. Students will work in groups to design and conduct a research project based on a human/wildlife relationship or issue. The bulk of the assessment, however, focuses on individually authored research plans and final reports. In this written work students will draw their fieldwork into conversation with the diverse philosophical and theoretical material covered in lectures and tutorials, as well as their own independent textual research.

Key topics for both the discussions/readings in class and the field research beyond the university include: the future of ‘urban wildlife’; the divide between native and introduced species; the role of gene banking and cloning in conserving and possibly resurrecting endangered species; and, the frequent conflicts between conservation priorities on the one hand and animal welfare or local autonomy and subsistence on the other.
COURSE STRUCTURE

There are four key components to this course:

1. **Primary lectures**: There are ten lectures in this course (weeks 1-9 and 11). The ten primary lectures in this course will explore philosophical and political issues in conservation through both theory and concrete case studies from Australia and around the world. (In addition, in weeks 12 and 13 students will make group presentations to the class in their normal lecture timeslot.)

2. **Mini lectures**: There are also six mini lectures in this course (weeks 2-6 and 8). These mini lectures will be held in the final 45 minutes of the usual lecture slot. These lectures will focus on key ethnographic methods like, designing your research, ethics approval, conducting interviews, bringing ethnographic work into dialogue with theoretic insights. Two of these mini lectures will be given by guests.

3. **Tutorials**: Nine one hour tutorials are also a core component of this course (weeks 2-9 and 11). This time will be spent both discussing the set readings for each week (*students are asked to complete the required reading in advance of the tutorial and come ready to talk*), and discussing research methods, plans and experiences.

4. **Research Ethics Workshop**: In addition to the above classes, this course includes one compulsory workshop held outside of normal class hours (1:00-2:00, Monday 19 August – week 4). This workshop will focus on the requirements for the conduct of safe and ethical field research. We will also discuss the completion of the Ethics Approval form that is a required component of the individual Research Plans that students will submit (see Assessment 1 below).

Please note that all classes in week 3 and the workshop in week 4 are strictly compulsory. Students who do not attend them will not meet the preparation requirements to conduct fieldwork and will be required to do additional reading, sit a quiz and meet with me in person to discuss this material. PLEASE DO NOT MISS THESE CLASSES.

COURSE AIMS

1. To develop skills in **researching and writing** at the intersection of the humanities and the natural sciences (with particular reference to conservation/wildlife issues);
2. To develop an **in-depth understanding** of the philosophical and political issues that drive human interactions with wildlife;
3. To develop the **ethnographic skills** (in particular interviewing and observation) required to conduct independent field research on human/wildlife interactions;
4. To enhance skills of **critical inquiry, reflection and discussion** through a detailed engagement with set readings.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the completion of this course students will be able to:
1. Explain the historical and philosophical development of biodiversity conservation, its underlying analytic frameworks, and its shifting priorities.
2. Explain how cultural and political factors impact upon understandings of and interactions with wildlife (especially efforts to conserve endangered species).
3. Analyse the complex intersection between cultural and biological/ecological approaches to conservation issues.
4. Apply selected disciplinary approaches to the understanding of biodiversity and extinctions; and draw on a range of different disciplinary approaches and ethnographic methods to explore some of the multifaceted ways in which wildlife matters (to people and larger ecosystems).
5. Apply upper level skills of, critical analysis, problem solving and interpretation in both written work and in-class discussions.
6. Conduct independent research, including ethnographic field research, with demonstrated ability to assemble, synthesise and communicate findings and interpretations.

LEARNING AND TEACHING RATIONALE

This course asks students to engage with complex theoretical work that challenges foundational assumptions about the world, human/wildlife interactions and the objectives of conservation and environmentalism more generally. The core objective of this course is to familiarise students with this difficult material through lectures, in-depth tutorial discussions, independent research, and the preparation of assessment. This course places a strong emphasis on the development of critical analysis, reading, and discussion skills. The tutorials play a key role in the achievement of these learning outcomes, requiring students to carefully read and analyse material from a range of disciplines, in small and large groups.

In addition, this course aims to provide students with basic training and familiarity with key ethnographic methods (interviewing and observation). These methods play a central role in much of the research on social, political and ethical issues that takes place within the environmental humanities.

All of the assessment in this course is oriented around students bringing these skills of critical analysis into conversation with ethnographic field research. Working in groups, students will conduct field research on a case study of their choice. As groups, students will deliver a polished presentation to the rest of the class on the key themes and outcomes of their research (15-20 minutes). The major assessment items, however, will be completed and assessed individually: a research plan and a final research report (details below). The final research report, due at the completion of the session (2,500 words), will require students to conduct significant independent research that brings key analytic concepts and themes (from lectures, tutorials and beyond) into their analysis of their chosen case study.

TEACHING STRATEGIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning outcome</th>
<th>Achieved through….</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Explain the historical and philosophical development of biodiversity conservation, its underlying analytic frameworks, and its shifting priorities.</td>
<td>Theoretical discussions in the lectures and tutorials. Research plans and final reports will provide an opportunity to deepen this understanding.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
2. Explain how cultural and political factors impact upon understandings, valuations and efforts to conserve endangered wildlife. Theoretical discussions in the lectures and tutorials. Research plans and final reports will provide an opportunity to deepen this understanding.

3. Analyse the complex intersection between cultural and biological/ecological approaches to conservation issues. Theoretical discussions in the lectures and tutorials. Research plans and final reports will provide an opportunity to deepen this understanding.

4. Apply selected disciplinary approaches to the understanding of biodiversity and extinctions; and draw on a range of different disciplinary approaches and ethnographic methods to explore some of the multifaceted ways in which wildlife matters (to people and larger ecosystems). Guidance for this provided in lectures and tutorials; supported through the practice which resides in the assessment – especially fieldwork and its synthesis with the course materials.

5. Apply upper level skills of, critical analysis, problem solving and interpretation in both written work and in-class discussions. Self-directed research and assignments. There is a strong emphasis in this course on verbal and written engagements with set readings.

6. Conduct independent research, including ethnographic field research, with demonstrated ability to assemble, synthesise and communicate findings and interpretations. Self-directed research and assignments will require students to draw together key ideas and build on them through independent research.
COURSE SCHEDULE

Please see the detailed notes above (‘Course Structure’, p. 4). This course includes lectures, tutorials and an additional seminar on Research Ethics (conducted outside of the usual class hours).

A few additional important notes:
1.) Please make sure that you do the readings before class each week (ideally before the lecture).
2.) When doing the readings please make special note of any sections that you found particularly interesting, controversial or challenging.
3.) These readings have been carefully selected and are the backbone of the course. Students who do not complete them each week will miss out on core ideas and will find it difficult to achieve a high grade in the course.
4.) In some of the early weeks there are heavier reading loads in this course, but this is made up for by the fact that there are no required readings after week 9.
## Week-by-week Course Schedule

### Week 1
29 July

**What is wildlife?**  
*Course overview – key concepts and approaches*

**Required readings:** NONE (no tutorial)

### Week 2
5 August

**Entangled: people and wildlife**  
*How are various human communities bound up with wildlife (as threats, commodities, sources of subsistence, conservation projects, etc.)*

**Mini lecture:** ethnographies of human/wildlife entanglements

**Required readings:**

**Methods Readings (also required)**

**Readings of interest (not required):**
- Tonnesen, Morten (2010) "Is a wolf wild as long as it does not know that it is being thoroughly managed" *Humanimalia*, vol. 2.1
- Whatmore, Sarah and Lorraine Thorne (1998) "Wild(er)ness: reconfiguring the geographies of wildlife" *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, vol. 23.4
The cognitive and emotional worlds of animals

The history of thought about ‘animal minds’ – cognitive ethology and contemporary understandings of the mental and emotional lives of animals – bringing ethology into conversation with ethnographic fieldwork and philosophy.

Mini lecture: Planning your ethnographic research / Risks and responsibilities in field research.

Students MUST attend the lecture and tutorial this week or they will not meet UNSW’s requirements for field research preparation. If you miss either the lecture or the tutorial you will be required to do some additional reading, sit a quiz, and meet with me to discuss the relevant content before you are able to conduct any field research.

Required readings:


Readings of interest (not required):

Ethology

- Books by Marc Bekoff and Frans de Waal offer good introductions to the field of ethology for non-specialist readers. See the library catalogue for a full listing of available books.

Bringing ethology and ethnography together

  *(and other articles in this special issue)*
Ethical duties to wildlife?

*Ethical thought about animals in general (utilitarianism, rights) – animal welfare and environmentalism (conflicting positions?) – the ethical significance of being a wild animal.*

**Mini lecture:** Making meaning out of field research

**IMPORTANT:** This week we will also have an additional class, a Research Ethics Workshop, which you must also attend (details below).

**Required readings:**


**Readings of interest (not required):**


**19 August – ADDITIONAL CLASS**

**ADDITIONAL CLASS:** Research Ethics Workshop

1:00-2:00, Monday 19 August (Location TBD)

*If needed I will also organise another workshop time for those unable to attend this one. The workshop will focus on the safe and ethical conduct of ethnographic research.*

**Required Readings and preparation**

(Both available through the Moodle site for this course)


*In addition to reading this blank form you will need to individually prepare a draft answer to question 4 (Project Description) before the workshop.*

*Students MUST attend this workshop or they will not meet UNSW’s requirements for field research preparation. If you miss this workshop you will be required to do some additional reading, sit a quiz, and meet with me to discuss the relevant content before you are able to conduct any field research.*
**Week 5**
**26 August**

**Native and Invasive: Which wildlife belongs?**
*What does it mean to be ‘invasive’? – who counts as native and who is introduced? – killing invasive species for conservation, practicalities and ethics – ‘Rewildling’ environments.*

**Mini lecture:** Ethnographies of humans and animals – Prof. Deborah Rose *(focused on * reading below)*

**Required readings:**

**Readings of interest (not required):**
Extinction and endangered species

The current mass extinction event – does the extinction of species matter? Why (not)? – when should we attempt to conserve species (and how?) and when is the cost too high?

Mini lecture: Ethnographies of crow conservation in Hawai’i (focused on * reading below)

Required readings:
2. *van Dooren, Thom (forthcoming) "Living With Crows: Conservation in Haunted Landscapes" in *Extinction Studies: Stories of Time, Death and Generations*, Deborah Rose, Thom van Dooren and Matthew Chrulew (Eds.) – This is a draft paper and is not included in the course reader. I will provide printouts in week 5.

Readings of interest (not required):
- Website of the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species (www.iucnredlist.org)
- Bekoff, Marc (2010) "First do no harm" *New Scientist*, 28 August, pp. 24-5
Urban wildlife

Contemporary issues facing wildlife in urban places – making space for wildlife in the city, practicalities and ethics – animals as pests in the city.

Required readings:

1. van Dooren, Thom and Deborah Rose (2012) “Storied-places in a Multispecies City” Humanimalia, vol. 3.2, pp. 1-27 (28 pages)


NOTE: Research Plans will be returned in tutorials this week. We will then have a detailed discussion about them and any potential problems/changes that may have to be made.

Readings of interest (not required):

Week 8
16 September

Conserving wildlife: the politics of biodiversity

*What is biodiversity? – How and when did we begin to think about the environment in this way? – Which biodiversity gets conserved and with what consequences for whom?*

Mini lecture: Doing Multispecies Ethnography – Dr Eben Kirksey (focused on * reading below)

Required readings:

Readings of interest (not required):
Week 9  
23 September

Humanimals? Exploring human/animal borderlands

**Required readings:**

**Readings of interest (not required):**
5. Gane, Nicholas (and Donna Haraway) (2006) “When We Have Never Been Human, What Is to Be Done?: Interview with Donna Haraway,” *Theory Culture Society*, vol. 23.7-8, pp. 135-158

Mid Semester Break (28 Sept – 6 Oct)

Week 10  
7 October

Public Holiday – Labour Day  
*No lecture or tutorials*
**Week 11**  
**14 October**

Living with wildlife (short lecture)  
*Summing up; general lessons and approaches*

**NO READINGS**  
*Tutorials this week will be run as field research debriefs. In groups and as a class we will discuss your experiences, what you have learnt, and how you might adapt your methods and practices for future research projects.*

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**Week 12**  
**21 October**

Student Research Presentations

**NO READINGS**  
*No tutorials this week. Instead, I will have extended office hours for individual discussion of any questions relating to the finalisation of your research reports.*

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**Week 13**  
**28 October**

Student Research Presentations

**NO READINGS**  
*No tutorials this week. Instead, I will have extended office hours for individual discussion of any questions relating to the finalisation of your research reports.*
ADDITIONAL REFERENCES

For additional references on any of the topics covered in this course, the best place to start is the ‘readings of interest’ listed under each week in the course schedule.

Students seeking resources can also obtain assistance from the UNSW Library. One starting point for assistance is: [http://info.library.unsw.edu.au/web/services/services.html](http://info.library.unsw.edu.au/web/services/services.html)

COURSE EVALUATION AND DEVELOPMENT

Student evaluative feedback on this course is welcomed and is gathered periodically, using among other means UNSW’s Course and Teaching Evaluation and Improvement (CATEI) process.

Student feedback is taken seriously, and continual improvements are made to the course based in part on such feedback. Significant changes to the course will be communicated to subsequent cohorts of students taking the course.

ASSESSMENT

<table>
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<th>Assessment 1</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Individual Research Plan</strong></td>
<td>Students will each submit and be individually assessed on their own research plan (and final report). Although field research will be conducted in groups, students will be individually responsible for the way in which they collect, analyse and frame this research.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Value:</strong> 30%</td>
<td>Your research plan should include:</td>
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| **Word length:** 1500 words (plus annotated bibliography) | • A brief **overview** of your chosen topic/case study (300 words);  
• The **rationale** for the research;  
• The **methods** and **methodologies** that you plan to employ;  
• An **annotated bibliography** (with at least eight references);  
• A completed UNSW/HREA **ethics application form**. |
| **Due Date:** Week 5, Friday 30 August | In the weeks leading up to this submission we will discuss all of these topics in great detail and students will be provided with all of the guidance necessary to produce a polished research plan.  

*These research plans will be returned in tutorials in week 7, where we will have a detailed discussion about how research projects might be improved.*
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<th>Assessment 2</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<td><strong>Group Presentations</strong></td>
<td>In lectures in weeks 12 and 13, groups will make a polished presentation to the rest of the class on their research project. Presentations should provide an overview of the research focus/case study, key questions and the methods applied. Using a Powerpoint and/or other relevant presentation materials, you should aim to draw the rest of the class into your topic to convey what is interesting about it and what your research has found. Further information on presentations will be provided in class. These presentations will also provide students with an opportunity to gain valuable inspiration and feedback from their peers, prior to submission of a final written report. In addition to my own assessment of these presentations, students will be asked to provide feedback on their own and each of their group members’ contributions (to both the overall fieldwork and the presentation). This feedback will play a role in mediating final grades for this assessment item. We will allocate presentation times towards the end of the semester. Groups will either present in week 12 or 13, and may not get their first choice of presentation time.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Value:</strong> 20%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Length:</strong> 20 minutes</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Due Date:</strong> In lectures in weeks 12 and 13 (21 &amp; 28 Oct.)</td>
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<th>Assessment 3</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Final Research Report (individual)</strong></td>
<td>Individual reports will be structured around a specific research question that student’s will define for themselves. Reports will draw on the field research conducted as a group, as well as extensive individual reading and textual research. These reports will be the culmination of a whole semester’s planning, research, reflection and discussion, and they should offer a high quality and original engagement with the topic. Of particular importance, is the ability to bring field research into conversation with the theoretical material and examples covered in the course readings and lectures. This is a two way movement: ideally, fieldwork should both enrich understandings of, and itself be enriched by, theoretical insights. Further information on the structure and substance of these final research reports will be provided in class.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Value:</strong> 50%</td>
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<td><strong>Word Length:</strong> 2,500 words</td>
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<td><strong>Due Date:</strong> 4pm, Friday 8 November</td>
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**Submission of Research Plan and Report**

- The cut off time for submissions in the School is **4pm** of the stated due date.
- 2 copies must be submitted - 1 paper copy and 1 electronic copy.
The hard/paper copy should be posted into the Assignment Drop Boxes at the School of Humanities and Languages, outside the front counter located on Level 2, Morven Brown Building. A completed cover sheet must be securely attached to assignments. The School is not responsible for any missing pages from poorly bound or stapled assignments.

In addition, a soft copy must be sent by 4pm on the due date by email to assessment@unsw.edu.au. All emailed assessments sent to assessment@unsw.edu.au will receive an electronic acknowledgement.

Important Note

- Electronic copies emailed to assessment@unsw.edu.au will not be marked. Only hard copies submitted in the drop boxes will be marked/assessed.
- The electronic copy will be used as evidence of assignment submission during appeal and dispute cases. Students have no recourse if a soft copy is not submitted. Therefore it is essential that students keep the electronic record of their sent assignment (e.g. If assignment was sent to assessment@unsw.edu.au: the original sent email with the attached assignment kept in their ‘sent box’ and the electronic acknowledgement.

Assignment Collection

Assignments should be collected from your lecturer and must be collected by the owner/author of the assignment. A Stamped Self Addressed Envelope must be provided on submission if students require their assignment to be posted back to their home address.

Assignment Extensions

A student may apply to the Lecturer/Tutor for an extension to the submission date of an assignment. Requests for extension must be made via myUNSW before the submission due date, and must demonstrate exceptional circumstances, which warrant the granting of an extension. If medical grounds preclude submission of assignment by due date, contact should be made with subject coordinator as soon as possible. A medical certificate will be required for late submission and must be appropriate for the extension period. To apply for an extension please log into myUNSW and go to My Student Profile tab > My Student Services channel > Online Services > Special Consideration

Late Submission of Assignments

Assignments submitted after the due or extended date will incur a 5% penalty per day excluding weekends (calculated from the maximum marks available for that assignment). Assignments received more than 10 calendar days after the due or extended date will not be allocated a mark.

ATTENDANCE

To successfully complete this unit you are required to attend minimum 80% of classes. If this requirement is not met you will fail the unit. Attendance records will be kept in both lectures and tutorials.

ACADEMIC HONESTY AND PLAGIARISM

Students seeking information on plagiarism should visit the following web site: http://www.lc.unsw.edu.au/plagiarism/index.html
OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

UNSW's Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Policy requires each person to work safely and responsibly, in order to avoid personal injury and to protect the safety of others.

Any OHS concerns should be raised with your immediate supervisor, the School's OHS representative, or the Head of School. The OHS guidelines are available at:

STUDENT EQUITY AND DIVERSITY

Students who have a disability that requires some adjustment in their learning and teaching environment are encouraged to discuss their study needs with the course convener prior to, or at the commencement of the course. Alternatively, the Student Equity and Diversity Unit can be contacted on 9385 4734. Further information is available at:
http://www.studentequity.unsw.edu.au

GRIEVANCES

All students should be treated fairly in the course of their studies at UNSW. Students who feel they have not been dealt with fairly should in the first instance attempt to resolve any issues with their tutor or the course convenors. If such an approach fails to resolve the matter, the School of Humanities and Languages has an academic member of staff who acts as a Grievance Officer for the School. This staff member is identified on the notice board in the School of Humanities and Languages. Further information about UNSW grievance procedures is available at:
https://my.unsw.edu.au/student/atoz/Complaints.html

OTHER STUDENT INFORMATION

myUNSW is the single online access point for UNSW services and information, integrating online services for applicants, commencing & current students and UNSW staff. To visit myUNSW please visit either of the below links:

https://my.unsw.edu.au
https://my.unsw.edu.au/student/atoz/ABC.html