

NR 5424 Urban Wildlife
Offered: Spring Semester

INSTRUCTOR: Megan M. Draheim, Ph.D., mdraheim@vt.edu

REQUIRED TEXT: *Urban Wildlife Conservation: Theory and Practice* by R. McCleery et al., ISBN 978-1489975003

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

For the first time in history, more people are living in urban areas than rural areas, and the number of people who live in cities is projected to increase over time through the world. This has had a profound impact on both human and wildlife populations. Many assume that urban areas are inhospitable to non-human animal life but, in fact, not only do some wildlife species survive in cities, they can thrive. Cities also hold great promise as places where biodiversity can be increased, restored, and protected. Humans and wildlife living in close proximity has both positive and negative effects for both. On the positive side, people can directly enjoy and appreciate wildlife close to home, and as a consequence feel a closer connection to the natural world. The flip side of this is that conflicts between humans and wildlife are on the rise. While urbanization has created new challenges and opportunities for wildlife professionals, most have little or no special training in this field. This course will look at multiple facets of urban wildlife management and conservation, including the biological, ecological, social, and political. Emphasis will be on the synthesis and integration of knowledge, skills, and abilities that are needed as urban wildlife issues become more complex. A problem-based learning format will require students to actively participate in their own learning by researching and analyzing real-life problems to arrive at “best” solutions. The instructor serves as a cognitive coach by modeling inquiry strategies and guiding students in exploring relevant content.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING:

Grades will be computed on the following basis:

- Course participation – 30%
- Individual project – 30%
- Class Goals/Assessment – 10%
- Special Topics I – 15%
- Special Topics II – 15%

CLASS SCHEDULE

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| Week 1: | Introductions and Class Overview |
| Week 2: | Human Dimensions of Urban Wildlife Conservation |
| Week 3: | Urban Ecological Principles, Part I |
| Week 4: | Urban Ecological Principles, Part II |
| Week 5: | Urban Wildlife Behavior |
| Week 6: | Human-Wildlife Conflict in Urban Environments |
| Week 7: | Urban Wildlife Conservation and Planning |
| Week 8: | Managing Urban Wildlife |
| Week 9: | Special Topics I |
| Week 10: | Special Topics II |
| Week 11: | Special Topics III |
| Week 12: | Special Topics IV |
| Week 13: | Special Topics V |
| Week 14-15: | Wrap-Up |

SAMPLE