**Course Description and Objectives:**
Students will get an in-depth experience in field herpetology and research, with heavy emphasis on the reptiles and amphibians found in Northern Ohio. The class will cover the biology, life-histories and taxonomy of Ohio’s herpetological fauna. Students will be exposed to several different types of current data collection techniques including radio-telemetry, mark-recapture and tissue sampling. Additionally, the students will have the opportunity to meet and work with other experts in the field. **Daily field trips are planned** to both mainland and island study sites. Students should be prepared for an exciting and intense hands-on experience in field collection and specimen preparation, monitoring and surveying techniques, field identification and taxonomy, and conservation strategies used in herpetology.

**Course Materials:**
***Students MUST show up with all of the following course materials, as there will be NO bookstore or internet access available for the first half of the course.***


**Misc. Required Daily Readings:** Are posted as downloadable pdf’s on the Stone Laboratory website: http://stonelab.osu.edu/courses/upper/51

**STUDENTS NEED TO COME TO CLASS WITH THESE READINGS ALREADY DOWNLOADED OR PRINTED AS THERE WILL BE LIMITED INTERNET ACCESS AT THE OLD WOMAN CREEK DORM FOR THE FIRST THREE DAYS OF CLASS.**

**Other Supplies:**
Rite-in-Rain Field Notebook
Writing utensils (pencils and pens)
Hiking Boots (preferably leather) that cover the ankles
Appropriate field clothes/shoes
Sunscreen
Insect Repellant
Hat

**Additional Instructor Comments on Course Materials:** All students MUST have their own field guide. We recommend the Peterson guide, but if you already own another guide that you believe to be adequate, you may use it. The daily miscellaneous readings from various herpetological texts will be available for downloading on the Stone Lab website and will be necessary for the student to have read PRIOR to the corresponding daily field trip. You need to download or print these PRIOR to the first day of class. It is not a bad idea to have already read some of the introductory chapters before the start of class.

**Instructors:** Dr. Kristin Stanford
OSU Stone Laboratory
Email: stanford.147@osu.edu
Office phone: 419-285-1847
Cell phone: 419-341-7323
Field Trips and Course Schedule (subject to change):
Since this is primarily a field-based course, you will meet and work with several herpetologists at their field site throughout the week. We will also have some evening sessions with guest speakers. It is to your advantage to have completed the readings associated with each day’s field trip BEFORE meeting and speaking with these experts. Approximately 80-90% of your time will be spent at a field site. The course has very little in class lecture time.

Therefore, we wish to make it abundantly clear that students MUST come prepared to do field work; i.e. bring appropriate clothes, bug spray, sunscreen, boots, hats or any other field related gear that may be appropriate for the course. For example, the trip to Southern Ohio REQUIRES that you wear hiking boots that cover your ankles, since we will be searching for venomous snakes. You may not be able to participate in this field trip if you do not bring appropriate footwear. If you feel you will have issues participating in ANY of the field trips, you should re-consider your enrollment in this course.

The first 3 days (4 nights) of this course will be based out of Old Woman Creek National Estuarine Research Reserve Dormitory Facility in Huron, Ohio. Students will be expected to get themselves to the facility no later than 4pm on Sunday, June 9. Some registration materials will be filled out on site, including some housing forms and waivers, however, YOU MUST HAVE ALL OF YOUR FEES PAID PRIOR TO SHOWING UP ON THE FIRST DAY! Students who have not paid the housing or tuition for the course will not be allowed to stay. Please make sure this is taken care of well in advance of the first day of class.

Students will be responsible for their own meals. Food can be brought, stored and cooked at the dormitory or purchased at nearby restaurants. We may contact you (via e-mail) before the start of the course regarding the interest of some planned group meals, however, be prepared to “fend for yourself”.

The last two and a half days of the course will be spent at Stone Laboratory. Student fees will cover the transportation to the island, housing and meals for these days. If you are being dropped off and picked up by another person, please make sure that they are aware you will be on the islands the last half of the class.

The finalized schedule of specific trips are dependent on researcher and project availability and will be revealed at the start of the course, however, recent past years have included the following trips:

Destination: South Bass Island and Gibraltar Island
Lake Erie water snakes: Research, Recovery and Conservation of a Federally Listed Species and Status and Distribution of Eastern Fox Snakes in Ohio – with Kristin Stanford

- Learn about the Lake Erie watersnake and Eastern Fox Snake including life history, past and current research and outreach objectives.
- Learn about radio-telemetry techniques.
- Learn mark-recapture and life-history survey techniques; capture methods; pit-tagging, scale-clipping, measuring, weighing and diet analysis.
- Learn about federal recovery plans, habitat conservation plans and other management plans to conserve endangered or threatened species.
- Learn about the role of artificial refugia and cover boards as it relates to the LEWS.
- Local species identification.
Destination: LaSuAn Wildlife Area  
**Conservation of the Copperbelly Watersnake** – with Bruce Kingsbury & Lauren Hall at Indiana-Purdue University at Fort Wayne  
- Learn about the status, distribution and habitats of Copperbelly Watersnakes in Ohio.  
- Conduct a herpetological census for Copperbelly Watersnakes and all other species encountered at LaSuAn Wildlife area.  
- Local species identification and life history.

Destination: Kelleys Island  
**Genetics and Reproductive Modes of Unisexual Hybrid Island Salamanders** – with Dr. Katy Greenwald (Eastern Michigan University)  
- Learn about the Unisexual Salamander complex, their unique methods of reproduction and how they differ from the other species of salamanders found on Kelleys Island and Northern Ohio.  
- Learn techniques for finding and identifying local salamanders and their habitats  
- Learn about proper collection of tissue samples for genetic analyses.  
- Local species identification and life history.

Destination: Oak Openings Region and The Toledo Zoo  
**Mark-recapture of Turtles in the Oak Openings Region and Toledo Zoo Department of Herpetology Tour** – with Kent Bekker and John Chastain  
- Learn about the history of the Toledo Zoo’s Department of Herpetology and the newly created WILD Toledo program.  
- See and hear all the native frogs in Ohio in the zoo’s Frog Town display.  
- Learn how zoo programs aid in both local and international reptile and amphibian conservation.  
- Learn about techniques used to handle and work with venomous snakes, what to do if ever bitten by a venomous snake, and some of the myths associated with venomous reptiles.  
- Participate in one of the zoo’s current local conservation projects.  
- Learn about turtle survey techniques including marking and capture methods.  
- Local species identification and life history.

Destination: Tar Hollow State Forest  
**Radio-Telemetry of the Timber Rattlesnake in Southern Ohio** – with Doug Wynn  
- Learn about the natural history of the endangered Timber Rattlesnake  
- Participate in radiotracking this state endangered species  
- Observe first-hand the factors that impact this species  
- Observe species of amphibians and reptiles that may be unique to Southern Ohio.

Destination: Mohican State Park & South-Central Ohio  
**Status and Conservation of the Eastern Hellbender in Ohio** – with Greg Lipps  
- Learn about the status of the Eastern Hellbender within the state of Ohio and across its range in the United States.  
- Learn about and participate in techniques used to survey for Hellbenders.  
- Survey amphibian diversity at Mohican State Park.  
- Local species identification and life history.
Grading:
Student performance will be evaluated by the following items:

**Question Packet** – 300 points. Questions from readings and field presentations due Saturday morning PRIOR to taking the final exam.

**Final Exam and Lab Practical** – 200 points. Questions will come DIRECTLY from the question packet or from field presentations. Specimens may include any species seen during the week as well as those available for viewing in the classroom.

**Oral presentation** – 100 points. 5-10 minute presentation on a current research paper (within last 5 years) on a native amphibian or reptile.

**Field Participation** – 400 points. This course is designed to provide you with an immense opportunity to join and help researchers in their projects that you will find NO WHERE ELSE. It is the students responsibility to take advantage of this opportunity by listening, participating when necessary and asking intelligent questions during these trips, not at the end of the class prior to the final exam. Make no mistake, NOT JUST ATTENDANCE BUT GOOD PARTICIPATION IS MANDATORY TO PASS THIS CLASS.

Grades will be distributed on a 1000 point system as follows:

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<tr>
<td>A</td>
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**Academic Misconduct**
It is the responsibility of the Committee on Academic Misconduct to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. The term “academic misconduct” includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed; illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with examinations. Instructors shall report all instances of alleged academic misconduct to the committee (Faculty Rule 3335-5-487). For additional information, see the Code of Student Conduct (http://studentaffairs.osu.edu/info_for_students/csc.asp).

**Disability Services**
Students with disabilities that have been certified by the Office for Disability Services will be appropriately accommodated, and should inform the instructor as soon as possible of their needs. The Office for Disability Services is located in 150 Pomerene Hall, 1760 Neil Avenue; telephone 292-3307, TDD 292-0901; http://www.ods.osu.edu/.

*****PLEASE ASK US*****
If you have ANY questions regarding the course, please e-mail Kristin Stanford at stanford.147@osu.edu.