

# **Waterfowl Ecology and Management**

*(WILD 361/561)*

University of Wisconsin – Stevens Point

Spring 2024

Lecture: Monday & Wednesday 9:30-10:45AM in CBB 135

Lab: Wednesday 11:00-12:50AM in CBB 135 (and outside!)

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## **Instructor:**

Dr. Benjamin Sedinger

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Office hours: TBD

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## **Course Description:**

This course covers the history, theory and application of waterfowl ecology and management. Lectures are used to cement core concepts introduced in weekly readings. Labs focus on the application and management of waterfowl ecology. Exams will cover core concepts and will consist of multiple choice, short answer and essay questions.

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## **Course Objectives:**

1. Identify waterfowl by species and sex, both ‘on the wing’ and in the hand.
2. Understand core concepts in waterfowl ecology and be able to apply them to management scenarios.
3. Gain experience in common waterfowl field techniques.
4. Develop a working knowledge of wetland plants important to waterfowl both locally and across North America.

## **Required Text:**

Crossley, R., P. Baicich and J. Barry. 2017. The Crossley ID guide: waterfowl. Crossley Books 1<sup>st</sup> Edition. [UWSP text rental or online]

## **Optional Text:**

Baldassarre, G.A. and E.G. Bolen. 2006. Waterfowl Ecology and Management. 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition.

## **Other resources:**

1. [Carney Waterfowl Wing Plumage Guide](#)
2. [USFWS Waterfowl ID Website](#)
3. [Cornel Lab of Ornithology](#)
4. [Wetland Plants and Plant Communities of MN and WI](#)
5. [Aquatic and wetland vascular plants of the northern Great Plains](#)
6. Peer-reviewed literature *TBD during semester*

**Grading:**

Assignments, quizzes and exams will cover material presented in the course during lecture and lab. I want you to learn this material, not stress over your grades on these assessments. If your work indicates that you do not understand something, I want you to have the opportunity to think about it more. Instead of the typical point scheme that is traditionally used, we are going to use contract grading this semester. On the first day of class I will hand out contracts for you to sign based on the amount of work you are willing to put in for your grade at the end of the semester. The contract is outlined here:

**(1) Class Attendance/Discussion**

Class attendance is required. For a grade of A, students will attend at least 12 classes. For a grade of B, students will attend at least 10 classes. If readings are assigned, students will come to class prepared to discuss these readings.

**(2) Waterfowl Identification**

We will spend the first few weeks of the semester on learning about waterfowl identification and will have an ID quiz on 2/23. For an A, students will score a 3 on the quiz (0-3 point scale). For a grade of B, students will score a 2 on the quiz. Students receiving a 1 or 2 will have the opportunity to complete a follow up assignment to increase their score.

**(3) Field Trips**

For an A, students will attend all fieldtrips unless absence and make up is arranged with Sedinger before the trip. For a B, students will attend 4/5 fieldtrips unless absence and make up is arranged with Sedinger before the trip.

**(4) Lab Assignments**

For an A, students will score  $>2.5$  on lab assignment average (3 total assignments). For a B, students score an average of 2 on lab assignments.

**(5) Exams**

For a grade of A students will average  $>2$  on the midterm and will pass the DU Ecology Conservation and Management Certification or score  $>2$  on an alternate assignment. For a B, students will average 2 on the midterm and pass the DU Ecology Conservation and Management Certification or score a 2 on an alternate assignment.

**(6) A NOTE ON GRADES OTHER THAN AN A OR B**

Students not meeting requirements for an A or B will receive a C if commensurate for the amount and quality of work completed. For a C, students will attend  $>50\%$  of fieldtrips and will score  $<2$  on assignments/quiz/exams. Students who miss most fieldtrips and score  $<2$  on their assignment/quiz/exams average will receive a D or F in the course.

**Academic Dishonesty:** Don't cheat — aside from the fact that cheating is cause for dismissal from the university, you are just short-changing yourself when you stoop to that. You're better than that, and UWSP is better than that. If you wanted an "education" where your grades, rather than your learning, was the most important thing then you should have gone somewhere else.

**Harassment:** Be cool. Nobody likes a bully or a jerk. If I see any form of harassment, whether in my classroom or anywhere else on campus, I'll report it to the Dean of Students, I've got no patience for that kind of behavior. Everybody is different, and we all deserve to be treated with respect.

**Recording:** Lecture materials and recordings for WLDL361 are protected intellectual property at UW-Stevens Point. Students in this course may use the materials and recordings for their

personal use related to participation in this class. Students may also take notes solely for their personal use. You are not authorized to record my lectures without my permission unless you are considered by the university to be a qualified student with a disability requiring accommodation. Unauthorized use of these copyrighted lecture materials and recordings constitutes copyright infringement and may be addressed under the university's policies, UWS Chapters 14 and 17, governing student academic and non-academic misconduct.

**Cell Phones and Other Electronics:** Cell phones, tablets, and laptops may be distracting to those around you. This is especially true if you are using these devices to view content not related to this course. As such, as a courtesy to your classmates and instructors, we ask that electronic devices be put away unless they are being used for note taking or interacting with digital lecture material in class. Please speak with me ahead of time if you have some other reason which requires access to electronics.

*Tentative schedule on the next page!*  
**Tentative schedule**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Lecture</b>	<b>Lab (Thursday)</b>
1/22	IntroDUCKtion	Wing identification #1
1/24	Waterfowl ID #1	
1/29	Life history evolution	Wing identification #2
1/31	Waterfowl ID #2	
2/5	DUCKS 9	
2/7	DUCKS 9	
2/12	Biogeography	Duck art and specimen review
2/14	Early evolution and systematics	
2/19	Feeding ecology	<b>Waterfowl ID Quiz</b>
2/21	<b>Waterfowl ID Quiz</b>	
2/26	Foraging ecology	Communicating waterfowl science
2/28	Annual Cycle & Migration	
3/4	Breeding Ecology	Virtual fieldtrip to YKD
3/6	Post-Breeding Ecology	
3/11	Winter Ecology & Carryover Effects	
3/13	<b>Midterm Exam</b>	
3/14-3/18	Mississippi River duck banding fieldtrip (optional)	Stay at Kibbe Field Station and band diving ducks
3/18	<b>Spring Break</b>	
3/20	<b>Spring Break</b>	
3/25	Tim Eisele Guest Lecture on Ding Darling	Waterfowl surveys and abundance estimation
3/27	Guest Lecture – Chris Nicolai Delta Waterfowl	
3/30 or 4/6	<b>Goose Pond Saturday Fieldtrip**</b>	<b>ALL DAY SATURDAY 7am – 7pm</b>
4/1	Guest Lecture – WDNR Biologists	<b>Activity budgets at Pfiffner Park*</b>
4/3	<b>Activity budgets at Pfiffner Park*</b>	
4/8	History of Waterfowl Management	Band Recovery Analysis and Discussion
4/10	Harvest Management I	
4/15	Harvest Management II	Waterfowl survey on your own
4/17	Waterfowl survey on your own	
4/22	Habitat Management I	<b>Mead Wildlife Area Fieldtrip*</b>
4/24	<b>Mead Wildlife Area Fieldtrip*</b>	
4/29	Habitat Management II	<b>Schmeckle Nest Box Fieldtrip*</b>
5/1	<b>Schmeckle Nest Box Fieldtrip*</b>	
5/6	Semester Review	
5/8	Semester Review	
5/15	<b>FINAL EXAM 12:30-2:30 PM</b>	

\*Lab fieldtrip, please prepare accordingly

\*\*All Saturday fieldtrip