

ION 2016 Class Schedule

Introduction and Birding Basics

February 20

Kickoff the year long program in the white oak woodlands of Cooper Mountain Nature Park learning about birds. We will introduce ourselves and the program goals, then hit the trails in search of the parks avian residents. By the middle of February, we are gaining 3 minutes of daylight per day! As the days grow longer, birds become more active in preparation for nesting season and their vocalizations begin to increase. Learn the basics of bird identification by sight and fine tune your ears to the patterns of songs and alarms in order to recognize them by sound. Bring binoculars if you have them. *All*

Moss and Lichen

March 19

This class provides an introduction to the smaller things in the forest. Small but mighty, moss and lichen play many important roles in a forest ecosystem. The communities they form on soil, rocks, and trees create small ecosystems of thousands of living things. We will take a closer look at these systems while we discuss plant evolution and lichen natural history. Hand lenses will be provided as we learn to identify the most common mosses and lichens in the area. *Froehlich*

Introduction to Bird language

April 16

Birds are one of the most vocal animals on Earth. Have you ever wondered why they are in constant dialogue? From hunting Cooper's hawks, to sneaky snakes and elusive felines, birds need to be keenly aware of predators on the landscape. In this class, expand your observation skills and begin to interpret the five voices of song birds and how predators shape their movements. *Conley*

Fundamentals of animal tracking

May 21

Wild animals are all around us, yet are often difficult to observe in the field. Tracking can reveal surprising insights about their secret lives. This class will open the world of tracking by learning to read clear tracks for identification and track patterns to understand gaits. *Daly*

Native Plants

June 18

This class provides an introduction to identification of native plants. We will dissect flowers and learn how plants have evolved over time. In this we class we will discuss human uses of plants and provide the opportunity to take a closer look at the natural history of these species. Hand lenses will be provided. *Froehlich*

Insects

July 16

Insects are the largest and most diverse group of animals on Earth. When summer is in full swing, these ectotherms are at their peak. The day will be spent learning the basics of invertebrate classification, capturing creatures and doing our best at basic identification. All specimens are released after observation. *Conley*

Geology in Oregon

August 20

Four hundred million years ago, the landscape now known as Oregon was open ocean. Oregon has been forged by earthquakes and floods, volcanoes and ancient island chains. Journey through geologic time to discover the epic events that make life in the Cascadia Subduction Zone what it is today. *Daly*

Tracking II

September 17

Tracking is a life-long adventure and takes patience and perseverance to learn. Build upon the foundation set in the first tracking class to integrate and reaffirm the core components of wildlife tracking. We will learn the fine art of pattern recognition and search for subtle signs left on the landscape. *Conley*

Salmon homecoming

October 15

Nothing says "Pacific Northwest" like the annual return from the ocean of salmon, fighting upstream to spawn and die in the rivers of their birth. In October, witness this ancient, iconic phenomenon as you walk the banks of a wild river. See firsthand how salmon are so intricately tied to the ecology of the Western Cascades, and learn the science behind salmon restoration efforts that are improving rearing conditions for wild fish. *Daly*

Beginning fungus identification

November 12 (**NOTE:** this class is the second Saturday of the month)

Autumn rains elicit the most astonishing "bloom" of the famously diverse fungi of the Northwest. Mushroom identification is a challenge. While we won't be able to identify every fungus found on our walk, you will learn the basic steps of mushroom identification. Bring along mushrooms you have found before class to try to identify.

Froehlich

End of Class Celebration

Tuesday November 15

6:30pm-8:30

Let's get together and celebrate our year together! What have we learned? What new questions do we have? This is a fun time to reflect on how the year of nature has influenced us. Join all the instructors and the entire class for good food, drinks and stories from the year. Get fired up about keeping the outdoor adventures going in these shortened, yet beautiful winter days.