

UC California Naturalist

Instructor

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Course Start & End

6 March 2024 – 8 May 2024

CalNat Website

<http://calnat.ucanr.edu/>

Course Website

[https://www.pgmuseum.org/
California-naturalist](https://www.pgmuseum.org/California-naturalist)

Class Location

Wednesday evenings online, every other Saturday in-person at a field site in Monterey County

Class Schedule

6:00 pm - 8:00 pm
Wednesdays

9:00 am – 1:00 pm
Saturdays

Course Overview

The California Naturalist course will introduce you to the wonders of our local ecology and engage you in the stewardship of California's natural communities. The course will combine a science curriculum with guest lecturers, field trips, and project-based learning to immerse you in the natural world of Monterey County.

Course Format

The class will meet from 6:00-8:00 each Wednesday evening online and every other Saturday in-person at a different field site in Monterey County. The online classes involve guest speakers as well as group and individual work. Field trips involve hands-on learning in the field with a guest expert. Students will also participate in a group stewardship project and will take part in at least one community science project.

Learning Outcomes

- Understand what it means to be a naturalist
- Integrate knowledge about the interconnectedness of abiotic, biotic, and cultural factors and their influence on the natural history of the central coast
- Demonstrate skills in making and recording natural history observations in a field notebook and on iNaturalist
- Develop skills in communicating and interpreting natural history and conservation
- Apply knowledge of the local bioregion to local and global environmental issues.

Course Requirements

1. **Required Reading:** Weekly reading assignments will be selected from [The California Naturalist Handbook](#) and [Natural History of the Central Coast Bioregion](#). Students will be provided with reading discussion questions and these will be used as discussion prompts in class. Additional readings will be assigned for some topics.
2. **Class Attendance and Field Trips:** Participants must complete the work for all classes (20 hours) and field experiences (20 hours). Attendance at the online classes provides students with a rich, collaborative experience by interacting with classmates and guest speakers. However, a missed class can

be made up by watching the class recording and completing the class activities independently. Participants can make up one of the 5 field experiences by completing a self-study field experience.

3. **Stewardship Project:** Participants are required to complete a volunteer service project in one of four areas: Stewardship, Education/Interpretation, Community Science, or Program Support. The Stewardship project provides an opportunity for participants to integrate their own personal interests with the in-class material toward the development of an applied work project that is done in conjunction with a natural resource agency or organization. Participants will work on projects in small groups and will start with planning and getting pre-approval for Stewardship Projects in the first three weeks of the course. Participants will present their Stewardship project on graduation day. Participants are expected to spend a minimum of 8 hours in addition to the 40 hours in the course on the stewardship project and will add hours spent into both the UCANR and PG Museum volunteer portals.
4. **Using a Field Notebook and Journal:** All participants will keep a field notebook during the course. The field notebook will contain entries for class activities and field experiences. There may also be entries required as part of the homework for the course. Field notebooks will be shared with the class periodically.
5. **iNaturalist Observation:** Over the course of the California Naturalist class, each participant will be responsible for registering for an iNaturalist account (<http://www.inaturalist.org/>) and adding at least 8 observations to the Pacific Grove Museum of Natural History's naturalist project.
6. **Class Participatory Science Project (Community Science):** At least one of our field experiences will involve participation in a Community Science Project. Each class participant will have an opportunity to contribute to the project.
7. **Volunteer and Volunteer Portal (VMS):** Participants are asked to record all of their volunteer hours, including the 8 hours spent on the stewardship project, in both the UCANR and PG Museum volunteer portals. Participants will be provided an online account for both the [UCANR VMS system](#) as well as the [PGMNH Volgistics system](#). Tracking volunteer hours is an essential way to prove the need and impact of a program like the California Naturalist Program. Both organizations, UCANR and PGMNH, benefit from the hours participants record.

Participants are strongly encouraged and hopefully committed to volunteering at least 40 hours a year following a California Naturalist certification in environmental stewardship, education, program support, or community science and record all hours of service in the [UCANR VMS system](#) as well as the [PGMNH Volgistics system](#). Pins are awarded each year for participants who meet this goal, and the pins differ from year to year.

8. **Evaluation:** Completion of the post-course evaluation survey is expected and the final confirmation of graduation from Trainee to California Naturalist may be withheld until completed.

Required Texts

- [The California Naturalist Handbook](#), Greg de Nevers, Deborah Stranger Edelman, Adina Merenlender. This text is available for purchase as a paperback or E-book.
- [Natural History of the Central Coast Bioregion](#), William Tietje, William Preston, and Anne Polyakov. This text is available as a free ebook download.

Recommended Resources

- Ecosystems of California with Erika Zaveleta, available from the [California Naturalist YouTube](#) channel
- Golden State Naturalist podcast <https://www.goldenstatenaturalist.com/>

Course Materials

The following course materials are strongly recommended in order to meet the course requirements:

- **Computer, Chromebook, tablet, or** smartphone. If you do not have access to one of these devices or internet access, please request accommodation from your instructor
- **Email Account:** For communication, Volunteer Portal, and iNaturalist
- **Field Notebook & Journal** This can be lined or unlined. We will be using it for drawing and writing.
- **Pencil(s)** Colored pencils are helpful for drawings
- **Optional - Hand lens (10x)**
- **Optional - Binoculars**

Class Schedule:

Wednesday Evenings - 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm on Zoom. Saturdays – 9:00-1:00 at various field sites in Monterey County

Week	Date	Topic	Homework Assignment (due this day)
1	March 6	Chapter 1: Introduction to California’s Natural Resources and the California Naturalist Program	Read Chapters 1 + 2: “introduction” and “Geology, Climate, and Soils” in the textbook <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Reflect on one of the reading questions in your field journal ● Install iNaturalist on your laptop or get the app on your phone
Field Trip 1	March 9	Field Trip: Community Science -Watershed Guardians, GLOBE, Soils	Location: Garland Ranch, Carmel Valley Time 9:00-1:00
2	March 13	Chapter 2: Geology, Climate, and Soils Stewardship Project Overview	Read Chapter 2: “Geology, Climate, and Soils” in the textbook <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Make an observation in your field journal and reflect on reading questions ☞ Make 1 entry in iNaturalist ☞ Read info on the stewardship project
3	March 20	Chapter 3: Water Stewardship Brainstorming	Read Chapter 3: “Water” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Make an observation in your field journal and reflect on reading questions ☞ Make 1 entry in iNaturalist ☞ Brainstorm stewardship projects
Field Trip 2	March 23	Field Trip: SFB Morse Preserve	Location: Jacks Peak Park, Monterey 9:00 am -1:00 pm
4	March 27	Chapter 5: Forest, Woodland, and Range Resources Stewardship Proposal due	Read Chapter 5: Forest, Woodland, and Range Resources and Management in the textbook <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Make an observation in your field journal and reflect on reading questions ☞ Make 1 entry in iNaturalist ☞ Meet with your stewardship team
5	April 3	Chapter 4: Plants Stewardship Workplan Due	Read Chapter 4: “Plants” in the textbook <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Make an observation in your field journal and reflect on reading questions ☞ Make 1 entry in iNaturalist ☞ Stewardship work with your team
Field Trip 3	April 6	Field Trip: Fort Ord National Monument	Location: Fort Ord, Marina 9:00 am -1:00 pm

6	April 10	Chapter 6: Animals (Part 1) small mammals of Monterey County	Read Chapter 6: "Animals" in your textbook ☒ Make an observation in your field journal and reflect on reading questions ☒ Make 1 entry in iNaturalist ☒ Stewardship work with your team
7	April 17	Chapter 8: Interpretation, Collaboration, & Community Science	Read Chapter 8: "Interpretation, Collaboration, & Community Science" ☒ Make an observation in your field journal and reflect on reading questions ☒ Make 1 entry in iNaturalist ☒ Stewardship work with your team
Field Trip 4	April 20	Field Trip: Elkhorn Slough	Location: Elkhorn Slough, Moss Landing 9:00 am -1:00 pm
	April 22	Earth Day – Celebrate by doing something outdoors and for the Earth!	
8	April 24	Chapter 7: Energy and Global Environmental Issues	Read Chapter 7: "Energy and Global Environmental Issues" ☒ Make an observation in your field journal and reflect on reading questions ☒ Make 1 entry in iNaturalist ☒ Stewardship work with your team
	April 28	City Nature Challenge – 10:00-1:00 @ Locke Paddon, Laguna Grande, and Washington Park In this optional extra field trip, California Naturalists will help visitors use iNaturalist to participate in the City Nature Challenge	
9	May 1	Extra Topics – Ocean, Climate, and Environmental Justice	Supplemental readings Stewardship Presentation
Field Trip 5	May 4	Field Trip: Point Lobos (*Low tide ~2pm)	Location: Point Lobos, Carmel Time 9:00-1:00
10	May 8	Stewardships Project Presentations Graduation Ceremony	Stewardship Presentation

Cancellation Policy

Registrants may cancel up to two weeks before the first day of instruction for a full refund, minus a \$50 administrative fee. Registrants that can successfully refer another student to replace their spot in the course prior to the first day of class will receive a full refund. Registrants that drop the course within the first two weeks of the course, may receive a 50% refund. Registrants that drop the course after that time will not receive a refund.

Course Credit

Upon completing certification requirements, participants are eligible for four academic credits through UC Davis Extension for an additional nominal fee. Graduates who expressed interest in this opportunity with their instructor will receive a communication from the UC California Naturalist program post-course with information on how to obtain the optional credits.

Special Accommodations

If you have a learning or physical need that will require special accommodations in this class, you will need to notify the course instructor, Liese Murphree (murphree@pgmuseum.org) in writing of your accommodation

needs. Please notify at least 14 days prior to the first class if you require any special accommodations for learning or physical impairments. This will allow us to best meet your needs and allow us ample opportunity to provide suitable accommodations. We make reasonable accommodations for people with documented disabilities. Materials will be available in alternate formats (Braille, audio, electronic format, or large print) upon request.

Cost

Students are responsible for course fees (\$450), purchasing books and materials, and transportation for the field trip. Discounts and scholarships are listed on the course website: <https://www.pgmuseum.org/california-naturalist>.