

# Appalachian Ecology Course

June 17 - 26, 2022

Cost: \$2,800

This course is designed for the future conservation professional, based on principles of service learning. Service learning is, simply put, challenging participants by immersion while they conduct “real” work. Students of this course will be exposed to a variety of conservation field skills and disciplines and have the chance to put several concepts into practice, using newly learned skills including the chance to improve and/or monitor wildlife and their habitats.

This is not a summer camp program; it is a serious residential field course where students will live and work, camping at the Sanctuary. Participants will form a closely knit working unit responsible for shared meal preparation and other live-in chores. Student’s group camp area will be adjacent to the Director of Stewardship’s personal residence.

An applicant must be between the ages of 15 to 17, have a passion for the natural world and have a potential interest in a future career in conservation or wildlife management. It will offer direct interaction and mentorship from Hawk Mountain Sanctuary’s world-renowned scientists and award-winning Sanctuary Stewardship staff along with the chance to interact with plenty of other conservation professionals over the ten-day course curriculum. This approach is to maximize the chance to gain knowledge, insight, and networking opportunities. On the final evening, each participant will share a presentation on what their personal learning experience to an audience of conservation professionals across several disciplines, thus providing another excellent networking opportunity.

Below are several of the disciplines for immersion:

**Raptors:** Hawk Mountain Conservation Scientists

Field based related to ongoing research of grassland and forest birds

Classroom ID component/Telemetry/Nest box banding and nest observation

**Songbirds:** Hawk Mountain Conservation Scientists

Field based with mist netting/banding demonstrations

**Forest Ecology/Dendrology:** Dr. Chris Sacchi, Kutztown University

Field identification related to Hawk Mountain and central Appalachian species

**Habitat Management:** Hawk Mountain Stewardship team and others

Field based management within meadow and forest including storm water management and invasive species management

**GIS/GPS in Conservation:** Hawk Mountain Conservation scientists and Stewardship team

Overview of importance of mapping with a field exercise aiding Hawk Mountain land management and supervised by Hawk Mountain Stewardship staff

**Riparian Corridors:** Hawk Mountain Stewardship and Stroud Water Research Center Field based with canoe travel and water quality assessments, chemical and invertebrate sampling on the Little Schuylkill River, one of Pennsylvania's Scenic Rivers, and located within Hawk Mountain viewshed

**Herpetology:** Hawk Mountain Stewardship team and others  
Field based conducting inventories

**Native Plants:** Hawk Mountain Stewardship team and others  
Focus on planting and propagation of native plants for wildlife

**Entomology/Native Plants/Pollinator Focus:** Mike Slater, botanist and entomologist  
Classroom introduction with field time in Hawk Mountain native plant garden

**Rigging/Mechanical Advantage:** Hawk Mountain Stewardship team  
Use of basic field equipment for forest/trail work

**Wildland Travel:** Hawk Mountain Stewardship and others  
Canoe use within riparian corridor and overnight trek on foot

**Life Skills:** Hawk Mountain Stewardship team and ALL other  
Basic automotive care, basic tools, and machinery review, cook a meal, Proper PPE use, and more

**Conservation Careers:**  
Overview/discussions of what is available prior and during Participant Presentation/Cultivation night. Hawk Mountain staff, PA Game Commission, The Nature Conservancy staff, NRCS staff, Berks Nature staff, Hawk Mountain board of directors, Stewardship Advisory Committee, and others. Participants present a short program of their week's work while building "networking" skills on the last night of course.

**Emergency/Medical Protocols:**  
One to two Wilderness First Responders/EMT (WFR, WEMT) will be serving as mentors for group during daytime field time. Evening mentors when not in field will consist of Wilderness First Responders and Registered nurse(s). Covid Protocols: CDC recommendations will be followed for any indoor component. If a participant does not have a face mask it will be provided. Any relevant medical history/medications of selected participant must be filed with Director of Stewardship for reference during program.

**Qualifications and Needs:**

Participation demands a drive and passion for conservation including a strong work ethic. Other items needed are work clothes such as work/hiking boots, long pants, and long-sleeved shirt advisable as well as additional clothing for a week afield. Evening camp shoes can be open such as sandals, but each day closed toe shoes must be worn. Advisable to have an old pair of sneakers for river day, and no open toe footwear such as sandals on river. Enough clothes for the week is advisable, there being limited access to laundry with the exception of a camp combined load or two.

Personal sleeping bag with sleeping pad is necessary. Ideal to have one that is packable for overnight trek. If participants have their own backpack that is helpful but not required for the overnight trek. Personal toiletries for the week are necessary. Showers will be accessible to students for the week except during the overnight trek. If a participant is selected with dietary restrictions that will be discussed so that reasonable accommodations can be made within a team dining environment.

### **How to apply:**

As mentioned, this is a serious course with performance expectations. If willing to commit to be considered for this course your application will consist of a heading including name, address, and contact email and phone number. Following heading an essay of approximately 700 words is required on why you want to explore the possibility of working in the field of conservation and how you feel this experience could shape your career direction.

After submittal and review of essays, the top candidates will be scheduled for an interview. If a candidate is within an hour's drive, an in-person interview will be conducted. If greater than an hour travel, two zoom interviews will be conducted. References may be requested for any candidate.

Seeking to have course filled by 31 May 2022. Applicant review will initiate immediately but interviews for selection will not be conducted until 18 April 2022. With this process it is advantageous to apply early.

All potential participants wanting to be considered need to email their above information and essays to Todd Bauman, Director of Stewardship at [bauman@hawkmountain.org](mailto:bauman@hawkmountain.org) with subject heading "Appalachian Ecology Course Applicant."