Danta is pleased to announce our 2019 field courses in tropical biology. Our course are intended for undergraduates or early graduate level students who have a keen interest in tropical ecosystems and conservation, but have little or no experience of working in a tropical environment. Participants may enroll on either a credit or non-credit basis.

 DANTA operates on a cooperative and collaborative teaching model with multiple international instructors on each course. Co-instruction allows for more individualized instruction, and the sharing and appreciation of different ideas. Visiting scholars are often incorporated into the curriculum to broaden student experience.

As much of our advertising is done by word-of-mouth, we encourage you to spread the word by forwarding this information to students or friends who may be interested in our programs.

For more information, please visit our website at [www.DANTA.info](http://www.danta.info/) and/or email [conservation@danta.info](mailto:conservation@danta.info). For an alumni perspective on our programs, please see our blog DANTAisms - <http://dantablog.wordpress.com/>.

Methods in Primate Behavior and Conservation

Dates:  July 3 – July 18, 2019

Program Fee: $2600

Application deadline: June 1, 2019

Course Description

This course is designed to provide students with field experience in primate behavior, ecology, and conservation. This course will be held at [Osa Conservation’s](http://www.osaconservation.org/" \t "_blank) Piro Reseach Station in Costa Rica’s spectacular Osa peninsula. As the one of the largest tracts of rain forest north of the Amazon (roughly 400,000 acres in the Osa Conservation Area), it is renowned for high species diversity. It is one of only a few places in Costa Rica that has jaguar, puma, sea turtles and four species of monkey (mantled howler monkey, black-handed spider monkey, white-faced capuchin and squirrel monkey).

The learning experiences for the course fall into four main categories: field exercises, seminars, lectures, and applied conservation. The field exercises and seminars provide instruction and experience in: (1) methods of measuring environmental variables, including assessment of resource availability, (2) methods of collecting and analyzing the behavior of free-ranging primates, (3) assessments of biodiversity and (4) techniques for estimating population size. Lecture topics will cover the behavior and ecology of Old and New World primates from an evolutionary perspective. Selected lecture topics include primate sociality, feeding ecology, taxonomy, rain forest ecosystems and conservation. Service learning is a large component of all our programs. Students will gain experience in applied conservation through participation in Osa Conservation’s reforestation, sustainable agriculture and wildlife monitoring programs (big cat and sea turtle).

Primate Behavior and Conservation

Dates: June 5-July 1, 2019

Program Fee: $3500

Application deadline: May 15, 2019

Course Description

This course is designed to provide students with field experience in primate behavior, ecology, and conservation. The course will be conducted at [Osa Conservation](http://osaconservation.org/" \t "_blank)‘s Piro Research Station in Costa Rica’s spectacular Osa peninsula. As the one of the largest tracts of rain forest north of the Amazon (roughly 400,000 acres in the Osa Conservation Area), it is renowned for high species diversity. It is one of only a few sites in Costa Rica that contain 4 species of primate (mantled howler monkey, black-handed spider monkey, white-faced capuchin and squirrel monkey). Four species of sea turtle also nest along its beaches. Please help us protect this unique region which is of international conservation concern.

The learning experiences for the course fall into five main categories: field exercises, independent research, discussions, lectures and applied conservation. The first half of the courses is devoted to learning ecological field techniques, while in the second half students develop, carry out and present data from their independent research projects. Many of our participants have gone on to present their work at national and regional conferences. The field exercises and seminars provide instruction and experience in:(1) methods of measuring environmental variables, including assessment of resource availability, (2) methods of collecting and analyzing the behavior of free-ranging primates, (3) assessments of biodiversity and (4) techniques for estimating population size. Lecture topics will cover the behavior and ecology of Old and New World primates from an evolutionary perspective. Selected lecture topics include primate sociality, feeding ecology, taxonomy, rain forest ecosystems, conservation, climate change and sustainability. Participants gain experience in applied conservation through participation in Osa Conservation’s reforestation,and sea turtle breeding and monitoring programs.

Wildlife Conservation and Sustainability

Dates: June 18 – July 1, 2019

Program fee: $2600

Application deadline: May 15, 2019

Course Description

The proximate and ultimate causes of declines of rain forest habitats and biodiversity will be examined through a combination of direct observations in the field, lectures, and critical reviews of the literature. Topics will include the role of hunting, logging, agriculture, disease, predation, expanding human populations and their consumption of natural resources as they affect forest and biodiversity conservation. Emphasis will be on sustainable solutions and how today’s human societies can endure in the face of climate change, ecosystem degradation and resource limitations. The majority of the course will be conducted at [Osa Conservation](http://www.osaconservation.org/" \t "_blank)‘s Piro Research Station in Costa Rica’s spectacular Osa Peninsula. As one of the largest tracts of rain forest north of the Amazon (roughly 400,000 acres in the Osa Conservation Area), it is renowned for high species diversity. It is one of only a few sites in Costa Rica that contain 4 species of primate (mantled howler monkey, black-handed spider monkey, white-faced capuchin and the Central American squirrel monkey). Four species of sea turtle also nest along its beaches. Students gain hands-on experience through participation in Osa Conservation’s sustainable agriculture, wildlife monitoring and reforestation programs. Problems of various land-use activities will be evaluated with side trips to an oil palm plantation, a coffee plantation, and small-scale agricultural plots.

Sustainable Tourism: Evaluation and Implementation

Dates: July 29-August 11, 2019

Program fee: $2800

Application deadline: July 1, 2019

Course Description

In this course, we explore the growing industry of nature tourism and gain an understanding of its benefits and costs.  There is obvious educational value gained by tourists seeing wildlife in their own habitat and the mere presence of a tourist operation can provide a level of protection for wildlife species. Income generated by tourism is another major benefit, particularly when those funds are earned at the local level. However, there are many negative impacts of the tourism industry. Operations are often negligent of the needs and rights of local people, interfering with their customs and encroaching on their property. Moreover, pollution, degradation of the habitat, and negative effects on wildlife behavior can add to the costs of tourism. Thus, the term “ecotourism” was born. The “eco” part of ecotourism requires the tourism experience to be conducted in such a way to benefit wildlife, their habitats, and the people who live in and around the tourism site. This requires a careful approach to understanding the wildlife species being visited, protecting the environment, and assuring economic enhancement of relevant stakeholders. In this course, we will explore the impact of tourism on all stakeholders, including tour operators, tourists, governments, local people, and the wildlife themselves. The course will explore several case studies of nature tourism and we will visit a number of tourism sites. Students will work in small groups to develop a hypothetical ecotourism operation as part of the course requirement and develop a tourism assessment tool to be used as a potential accreditation system.

Field Excursion

All courses include a visit to a wildlife rehabilitation center, sustainable chocolate plantation and dolphin and snorkeling trip of the Golfo Dulce. We overnight on the Boruca Indigenous Reserve where we will learn about the community and their traditional lifeways, and help with needed projects. Every effort is made to implement eco-friendly and socially responsible practices into our day-to-day operations, field courses and overall mission.

Enrollment in each course is limited to 10 students. The course is open to both credit and non-credit seeking students. University credit can be arranged through your home institution.