

WILD 291: Rewilding Animal Populations

Instructor

T.J. Clark

Times & Location

MW 1-1:50

Lib Arts 233

Email

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Office Location

Forestry, Rm. 207

Office Hours

Tuesday 1-3PM

or by appointment

Course Overview

Human-induced global change is causing staggering losses in biodiversity, including defaunation, the extirpation of animal species from ecological communities. Loss of animal species can reduce the stability of nature, leading to negative cascading effects on other members of communities including mankind. Despite this continued loss, substantial progress is being made with efforts to improve the conservation status of threatened species and to restore ecosystem functions and processes facilitated by extinct species. The main goal of this course is to understand and critically dissect the efforts underway to rewild animal populations. We will tackle the ecological, biological, social, and ethical themes underpinning conservation actions like re-introduction, assisted colonization, ecological replacement, Pleistocene rewilding, and gene drives. We will also read and hear from conservation scientists and students carrying out these actions throughout North America and the world.

Recommended Texts

There are no textbooks for this class. Assigned readings will be provided for class sessions with discussions. However, here are some recommended texts to read during the semester or afterwards for more information.

Rambunctious Garden, *Emma Marris*

Feral: Rewilding the Land, Sea, and Human Life, *George Monbiot*

Rewilding North America, *David Foreman*

Course Requirements

Each student is required to attend class, participate in discussion, and read materials before class. Students will be required to complete a report and present on a rewilding/conservation biology topic of their choosing. Students will also participate in class debates surrounding conservation actions.

- Class Debates, I and II = 15% each, 30% overall
- Final Project = 45%; 25% for the paper, 10% for the presentation, 10% for the outline
- Attendance/Class Participation/Quizzes = 25%

Course Schedule

Day	Subject	Readings/Tasks
Jan 13	Introduction & Syllabus	Future of Conservation Quiz
Jan 15	a) The Anthropocene b) The Biodiversity Crisis	Mann, 1491
Jan 20	No class – Martin Luther King Jr. Day	N/A
Jan 22	a) The Science of Conservation b) Re-introduction & Connectivity	Soule & Noss, Wild Earth
Jan 27	Brenna Cassidy Guest Lecture	Stolzenburg, Where the Wild Things Were
Jan 29	Mark Hebblewhite Guest Lecture	N/A
Feb 3	Rewilding, Science Communication, and “Fake News”	Marris, A Good Story
Feb 5	Conservation Triage	Marris, Wolf Cull...
Feb 10	Passive Rewilding & Conflict Conservation	Deryabina et al., Long-term...
Feb 12	Assisted Colonization	Marris, Rambunctious Garden
Feb 17	No class – Presidents’ Day	N/A
Feb 19	Ellen Pero Guest Lecture	N/A
Feb 24	Invasive Species	Thompson, Where Do Camels Belong?
Feb 26	Ecological Replacement	Outline Due
Mar 2	Pleistocene Rewilding	Monbiot, Feral
Mar 4	Pleistocene Rewilding	Monbiot, Feral Donlan et al., Pleistocene Rewilding
Mar 9	Examples of Pleistocene Rewilding	Kolbert, Recall of the Wild Andersen, Pleistocene Park
Mar 11	Class Debate, Pt. I	N/A
Mar 16-18	No class – Spring Break!	N/A
Mar 23	Genetic Rescue	TBA

Day	Subject	Readings/Tasks
Mar 25	Donovan Bell Guest Lecture	N/A
Mar 30	Gene Editing & CRISPR	Webber et al., PNAS
Apr 1	De-Extinction	Shapiro, How to Clone a Mammoth
Apr 6	Class Debate, Pt. II	N/A
Apr 8	Ethics of Rewilding	Leopold, Land Ethic Cronon, Trouble with Wilderness
Apr 13	Ethics of Rewilding	TBA
Apr 15	Politics of Rewilding	Blankenbuehler, Pupfish
Apr 20	Politics of Rewilding	Mott & Burnham, Grizzly Bear
Apr 22	The Future!	Watson & Watson, TREE
Apr 27	Class Presentations, Group 1	Projects Due
Apr 29	Class Presentations, Group 2	Projects Due

Additional Information

- The University of Montana assures equal access to instruction through collaboration between students with disabilities, instructors, and Disability Services for Students (DSS). If you think you may have a disability adversely affecting your academic performance, and you have not already registered with DSS, please contact DSS in Lommason 154 or 406.243.2243. I will work with you and DSS to provide an appropriate modification.
- All students must practice academic honesty. Academic misconduct is subject to an academic penalty by the course instructor and/or a disciplinary sanction by the University. All students need to be familiar with the Student Conduct Code.
- Please note, this class is offered for traditional letter grade only, it is not offered under the credit/no credit option.

