This seminar is an intensive course in ethnobiology, the study of the interrelations between humans and the natural world. Ethnobiology includes ethnobotany, the study of human-plant relationships, and ethnozoology, the study of human-animal relationships. In a broad sense, ethnobiology can be understood from ecologic, cognitive, and symbolic perspectives. Human knowledge of natural resources entails sensing, recognizing, naming, and classifying living things. Ethnobiology is a discipline very capable of connecting scientific methods to systems of knowledge and belief in human cultures. Lecture topics and accompanying readings have been selected to expose you to the full scope of ethnobiological theory, methodology, and praxis. I hope to provide you with a “toolkit” to envision and conduct your own research in the days to come. Please keep me informed about your thoughts on the course this semester—I welcome your office visits and email!

Textbooks:

Course Format:
• Mondays and Wednesdays are reserved for lectures and videos, and Fridays will be designated for group discussions of the weekly readings.

Attendance:
• Regular attendance is absolutely critical in an upper-level seminar. Your presence in class is necessary (1) to achieve a good grade and (2) to ensure my success as your instructor!

Assignments and Grading:
• Microthemes.—You will be assigned three microthemes (short, 3-4 page essays), each worth 15% of your grade. Microthemes will entail a synthesis of the reading assignments, in particular the linkages between them. You are also encouraged to develop your own ideas as they relate to lecture topics (e.g., “What do you think?”). Microtheme topics will be assigned least one week before they are due.
• Discussion lead.—You will also be responsible for leading the class discussion for one topic of your choice as designated in the course outline below. Discussion leaders will bring a list of questions and points of interest, designed to facilitate dialogue and debate with reference to the assigned readings. Note: this is not a mere summation of the material; the goal is to lead the class in the exchange of ideas. Your performance as discussion chair will be worth 15% of your grade. You are free to choose which topic you would like to chair, and assignments will be made on a first come, first serve basis. Discussions will begin on Week Three, so choose early!
• Field trip.—A Saturday afternoon excursion to Cherokee Nation has been planned during November. Here we will learn how ecological resources and Cherokee traditions, such as rivercane basketry, mask making, and storytelling, are intertwined and understood from an ethnobiological perspective.
Participation on this journey will constitute 15% of your grade. If you are unable to attend, please advise, and you will be able to write an additional microtheme instead.

- Finally, the remaining 40% of your grade will be based on a final paper project, of 10-15 pages in length. Your topic should address an original research concept deemed relevant to ethnobiology as a discipline. Paper topics will be discussed, developed, and approved in advance. The last three class sessions will be devoted to project presentations (around ten minutes in length). Details on potential paper topics are forthcoming.
- Your semester grade will be based on the following percentages:
  - Microthemes (3 @ 10% each) 30%
  - Discussion Lead: 15%
  - Field Trip Participation 15%
  - Final Paper: 40%

100%

The following grading scale will be used to determine your semester grade:
- A: 90–100%
- B: 80–90%
- C: 70–80%
- D: 60–70%
- F: below 60%

**Other Concerns:**
- Students who have special conditions as addressed by the Americans with Disabilities Act and who need any test or course materials furnished in an alternate format should notify me immediately. Reasonable efforts will be made to accommodate the needs of these students.
- You are expected to observe the University’s standards for academic honesty. Any student suspected of academic dishonesty will be reported to the Provost’s office.

**Inclement Weather Policy:**
In the case of inclement weather, please call my voice mail at 575-3855 for announcements about possible class cancellations. You are also welcome to call me at home at 442-5509. The bottom line is this: when roads become icy, please do not attempt to drive or walk to campus.

**COURSE OUTLINE**

**WEEK 1: August 20-24**
**Introduction to Ethnobiology**
Readings from *Ethnobiology at the Millennium*—
Introduction: Ethnobiology at the Crossroads, by R. Ford
Readings from *Ethnobiology and the Science of Humankind*—
Introduction, by Roy Ellen.

**WEEK 2: August 27-31**
**Ethnobiological Classification: Foundations**
Papers on reserve—
Chapter 1 of *Ethnobiological Classification*, by B. Berlin
Form or Function: A Comparison of Expert and Novice Classification of Marine Fishes, by Boster and Johnson
WEEK 3: Sept. 3-7
Linguistic Ethnobiology
Readings from Ethnobotany: A Reader—
   The Pragmatics of Folk Classification, by Morris
   Alternatives to Taxonomic Hierarchy, by Hunn and French
Readings from Ethnobiology at the Millennium—
   An Ethnozoological Perspective on the Ethnobiological Enterprise, by E. Hunn
Readings from Ethnobiology and the Science of Humankind—
   The First Congress of Ethnozoological Nomenclature, by Berlin.

WEEK 4: Sept 10-14
Ethnobiological Methods
Readings from Ethnobiology at the Millennium—
   In the Field with People, Plants, and Animals: A Look at Methods, by C. Fowler
Papers on reserve—
   Considerations for Collecting Freelists in the Field, by M. Quinlan
   Some Field Methods in Medical Ethnobiology, by Berlin and Berlin

WEEK 5: Sept 17-21
Resource Perception and Cognitive Ecology
Readings from Ethnobotany: A Reader—
   Factors Influencing Resource Perception among the Huastec, by J. Alcorn
Readings from Eating on the Wild Side—
   Agriculture and the Acquisition of Medicinal Plant Knowledge, by Logan and Dixon
Papers on reserve—
   A Sensory Ecology of Medicinal Plant Therapy in Two Amazonian Societies, by G. Shepard.
   Persistence of Botanical Knowledge among Tzeltal Maya Children, by Zarger and Stepp.
   Human Taste and Cognition in Tzeltal Maya Medicinal Plant Use, by D. Casagrande

WEEK 6: Sept 24-28
Exploring Plant Foods and Drugs in the Americas
Readings from Eating on the Wild Side—
   North American Food and Drug Plants, by D. Moerman
   The Health Significance of Wild Plants for the Siona and Secoya, by W. Vickers
Papers on reserve—
   The Role of Weeds in Pharmacological Research, by J. R. Stepp
   Plants in the Folk Medicine of the Texas-Mexico Borderlands, by C. Kimber

WEEK 7: Oct 1-5
Natural Resources and Health Belief Systems
Readings from Ethnobiology and the Science of Humankind—
   The Interface between Medical Anthropology and Ethnobiology, by Waldstein and Adams
Papers on reserve—
   The Hòzhò Factor: The Logic of Navajo Healing, by B. Toelken
   Herbal Medicine among the Lumbee Indians, by E. Croom
   Folk Medicine in New Jersey’s Pine Barrens, by D. S. Cohen
WEEK 8: Oct 8-12
Afro-Caribbean Ethnomedicine and Ethnobiology
Papers on reserve—
  Herbal Mixtures in the Traditional Medicine of Eastern Cuba, by Cano y Vapalto
  Concepts and Treatments of Intestinal Worms in a Rural Caribbean Village, by Quinlan et al.
  Invisible Hospitals: Botánicas in Ethnic Health Care, by Jones et al.

WEEK 9: Oct. 15-19
Fall break: No Class

WEEK 10: Oct 22-26
Symbolic Ethnozoology: Understanding Human-Animal Relationships
Readings from *American Wildlife in Symbol and Story*—
  The Turkey, by T. Tuleja
  The Alligator, by J. Mechling
  The Fox, by M. Hufford
Paper on reserve—
  Emotionality and Ethnozoological Cognition, by Nolan et al.

WEEK 11: Oct 29-Nov 2
Ethnozoology in the Postindustrial World
Readings from *Animal Spaces, Beastly Places*:
  Constructing the Animal Worlds in Inner-City Los Angeles, by Wolch et al.
  Fantastic Mr. Fox? Representing Animals in the Hunting Debate, by M. Woods
  What’s a River Without a Fish? Symbol, Space, and Ecosystem in the Waterways of Japan,
    by Waley

WEEK 12: Nov 5-9
Ethnobotany and Cultural Conservation in the Rural US
Reading *Wild Harvest in the Heartland: Ethnobotany in Missouri’s Little Dixie*

WEEK 13: Nov 12-16
Social Ecology and Biodiversity
Papers on reserve—
  Where Biological and Cultural Diversity Converge: Safeguarding Endemic Species and
    Languages on the Colorado Plateau, by Nabhan et al.
  Weaving Ecological Knowledge into the Restoration of Basketry Plants, by D.Shebitz
  Mountains and Biocultural Diversity, by Stepp et al.
  Undermining Modernity: Protecting Landscapes and Meanings among the Mi’kmaq of Nova Scotia, by Hornberg.

WEEK 14: Nov 19-23
(Field Trip to Cherokee Nation, TBA)
Thanksgiving break
WEEK 15: Nov 26-30
Final Presentations

WEEK 16: Final Presentations on Monday, December 3, only. (December 5 is ‘Dead Day’).

**Final papers due in my mailbox (Old Main 330) on Thursday, December 6th, by noon.**

Suggested and Reserve Readings:
Most available online, but hardcopies can be found in Old Main 332.


