

MONTANA MASTER NATURALIST AUGUST SYLLABUS 2021

<i>DATE</i>	<i>CLASS TOPIC</i>	<i>NOTES</i>
8/9	Aquatic and Terrestrial Insects	Greenough Park and Kim Williams Trail
8/10	Botany	Maclay Flats and Fort Missoula Native Plant Garden
8/11	Birding	Lee Metcalf Wildlife Refuge
8/12	Nature Journaling/Forest Ecology	Pattee Canyon
8/13	Montana Mammals + Final Exercise	Council Grove State Park

The five-day intensive Montana Master Naturalist Summer Course will meet at the Montana Natural History with travel to field sites by MNHC bus. Instructors: Christine Morris, Community Programs Coordinator and Naturalist at MNHC; Elena Ulev, Naturalist at MNHC; Jenah Mead, Naturalist at MNHC
Time: 9:00 a.m.- 4:00 p.m. Expect to spend 1 hr each evening after class reviewing notes and practicing skills.
Dates: August 9-13
Evaluation: Completion of Field Journal and Final Exercise

This course will enable you to interpret the landscape on your own; to pry out its secrets and share those secrets with others; to take in the natural world first hand rather than through a guide. This confidence begins with knowing the details: the names of the local flowers, birds, trees, and butterflies. Throughout the course you will practice specific naturalist skills and gain foundational knowledge that will assist in your engagement with the natural world for years to come. We will cover major natural history topics in our local area, spending most of the time in the field.

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COURSE GOALS:

- I. Develop a foundation of knowledge to facilitate accurate natural history observation
- II. Develop field identification skills
- III. Develop field journaling skills
- IV. Develop habits that promote a sense of place.

OBJECTIVES: After completing the course, you will be able to...

Goal I: Foundational Knowledge

- ... describe the role geology plays in the landscape and ecology of western Montana.
- ... identify the basic organization and components of a plant, including the flower.
- ... identify the parts of an insect and the basic wing structure of insect orders.
- ... understand basic anatomy, physiology, and topography of birds.

Goal II: Field ID Skills

- ... be comfortable using field guides and dichotomous keys to make identifications.
- ... identify the major gymnosperms that dominate the Montana landscape.
- ... identify common Montana shrubs by twig and leaf characteristics
- ... classify 8 flowers to the family level.
- ... identify 15 common Montana birds by sight and sound.
- ... identify 10 common Montana insect orders

Goal III: Field Journaling skills

- ... maintain a record of observations in a field journal.
- ... use field sketching and note-taking to sharpen observation skills
- ... be comfortable reflecting on field experiences.

Goal III: Sense of Place habits

- ... maintain a regular field journal.
- ... connect the knowledge, skill, and experience gained to the local landscape
- ... wander, investigate, and develop a relationship with the local landscape.