

Local Flora – BOT 3551C – Fall 2020

Online (asynchronous) + Fridays, periods 5-6 (11:30 am – 1:40 pm)
3 credits

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Office Hours:	TBA and by appointment	by appointment

Course Description

Local flora is a fun, field intensive course* where students will be introduced to Florida plant communities and ecosystems! Students will learn to distinguish between different ecosystems, understand the drivers shaping local vegetative communities, and identify key plants through morphologic and systematic approaches. The course has no official academic prerequisites, so students may come to the class having had no previous botany background. Students will master basic botanical concepts and terminology, but if you are a beginner, don't worry! All the botany you need to know will be taught as we go along. More advanced students will still find the course challenging as we make every effort to make the course valuable to everyone.

*Fall 2020 semester will launch our first 100% online Local Flora course. Every effort has been made to create an interesting and worthwhile version of the standard field course in a safe, socially responsible context. Students will NOT be required to visit any specific sites or parks, though they will need to venture into their yards or neighborhoods to complete some assignments.

Learning Objectives

- Learn to recognize key north Florida plant families and their corresponding habitats.
- Identify ~100 species of local plants using morphological and habitat clues.
- Learn to use and create dichotomous keys.
- Develop a systematic approach to identifying an unknown plant using knowledge about plant diversity, habitat, and vegetative morphology.
- Describe connections between plant species and the local ecosystems in which they are found.
- Compare and contrast fire regime and hydrological features of major local ecosystems.
- Outline the geographical, geological, and historical influences on local plant communities.

Virtual Field Trips & Lectures (asynchronous, online; posted Tuesdays).

- Virtual field trips consist of short clips walking through plant identification and ecosystem characters for each field site; these will be available weekly through Canvas e-learning and YouTube. Photographs with additional/close-up views of plants and ecosystem features will be posted to Canvas e-learning.
- A google map with course plants marked will be provided for each field site, whenever possible. Students are encouraged to explore the sites on their own time. You may NOT collect any living material during these visits but you are encouraged to touch, smell, and take photos! Do NOT eat any plant material, even if you think you are sure it is edible.
- You MUST follow appropriate safety protocol during these visits (see: Pandemic Precautions below).
- Dress appropriately for these visits (long pants, protective shoes, sun protection) and bring water. You may also want to bring a notebook, a snack, and bug spray.

Discussion Sessions (Fridays 11:30-1:40, online).

- Each week we will meet as a class via zoom to discuss the weekly field trip material, answer questions about plant ids, and take part in small group activities to help you better understand the course material.
- Some activities held during discussion will be worth course credit and some is simply to help you work through the more complicated aspects of the course (and botany in general!). Attendance is **mandatory** to course discussions.

Required Materials

- A 10x or 15x hand lens (available at UF Bookstore or online sources)
- Harrington, H. D. and Durrell, L. W. 1957. How to identify plants. Swallow Press Books, Ohio University Press, Athens, Ohio.

Recommended Materials (Optional)

- A pair of pruning shears (available at hardware and gardening stores)
- Wunderlin, R. P. and Hansen, B.F. 2011. Guide to the Vascular Plants of Florida, 3rd Edition. University Press of Florida, Gainesville, Florida.
- Harris, J. G. and Harris, M. W. 2001. Plant Identification Terminology: an illustrated glossary, 2nd Edition. Spring Lake Publishing, Utah.

Grades

5 regular plant quizzes @ 65pts each	325 points
Key exercise	30 points
Retro Careers Activities	165 points
Final Plant Quiz	130 points
End of semester test	100 points
TOTAL	750 points

Grading Scale

≥90 – 100 = A
≥80 – <90 = B
≥70 – <80 = C
≥60 – <70 = D
<60 = E

Course Components – ALL quizzes and activities will be given or turned in online.

1) Plant quizzes. These quizzes test your knowledge of the plant species we've learned on field trips. You'll be expected to identify plant families and/or species using photographs of freshly cut specimens or living specimens in the field. You will also be asked questions concerning the ecosystems of the sites we visit. All quizzes are cumulative.

Quizzes will be available Mondays. You will have all day to complete each quiz.

Each plant quiz is cumulative. Only Latin binomial plant names will be accepted. No credit will be given for common names.

2) Key exercise. During class time, we'll use dichotomous keys to identify unknown plants, and build our own keys to plants.

3) Retro Careers. These are a series of activities that will allow you to work individually and in small groups to learn key concepts in botany and review the material covered in class. Since Local Flora is traditionally a very fun course, instead of giving you boring, basic projects we have framed these activities as retro careers: International Spies, Matchmakers, and Travel Agents. More information will be provided for each activity throughout the semester.

4) Final plant quiz. This is the cumulative quiz testing your identification skills for all plant species learned in the course.

5) Test. The test is on material presented in the field, in lecture, and any reading assignments. The test will be **open notes**.

Attendance Policy

Attendance is required for success in this course. It is intensive and cumulative – skipping class or falling behind on videos will leave you with a big chunk of missing information in your notes and collections. Don't miss class.

Make-up Policy

Discussion activities **CANNOT** be made up. Quizzes and the end of semester test **CANNOT** be made up except for legitimately documented excused absences. You have one free pass on the plant quizzes – only 5 out of 6 will be counted toward your grade, with the lowest quiz score dropped.

Pandemic Precautions

Traditionally, this is a field-based course with instruction and discussion taking place outdoors in a hands-on manner. Due to the current pandemic it is not possible to safely hold this course in-person. As a result, we have completely redesigned the learning objectives and approach to the course so that you will still be able to virtually study the local plant life of Florida and learn the foundational information and techniques of any great botanist. We will also be checking in with each of you via periodic surveys to confirm if and how we can improve our class.

Field Activities. Several of our activities will ask you to venture outdoors to collect materials. You only need venture as far as you are comfortable (i.e. it is acceptable to remain in your yard, if you wish). Regardless of where you venture, during any outdoor excursion undertaken as part of this course **YOU MUST ABIDE BY SAFETY PROTOCOL. You MUST maintain safe social distance and wear appropriate face coverings.** This is not a discussion. If you are uncomfortable following safety protocol we ask that you refrain from outdoor activities as part of this class.

Zoom Meetings. A big part of this course is socializing with and learning from each other. Our weekly discussion sessions give us an opportunity to do this by problem solving together and helping to build a community of support for each other. There is **NO dress code** for discussion sessions. Be as comfortable as you wish; please also keep in mind the comfort of others with your attire choice. Please *turn on your video* during discussion and *mute your microphone* when not speaking. It is much easier to keep the discussion inclusive and active if we can see each other while we are talking. That said, there is often a disproportionate burden of time on some people to feel prepared to be on camera. It's ok if some days it feels like a lot to change out of your jams or move all the way to your desk and it's ok on those days to keep your camera off. We would rather have you attend than miss discussion.

Mental Health. College can be stressful under normal times, and these are not normal times. To succeed in Local Flora you will need to put in the work to study and complete the activities. However, we know that all of you are dealing with a lot of stress and chaos outside of class. We do not wish this course to become a source of unmanageable stress for anyone. If you feel you are struggling with the workload please contact Dr. Koll and we can work together to make a plan. *Additional resources available to students:*

UF U Matter We Care:

<https://umatter.ufl.edu/contact/>, umatter@ufl.edu, 352-294-CARE (2273)

- If a student is feeling overwhelmed and would like support
- If a student notices that another student is feeling overwhelmed and would like to request a well-being check-in from a member of the UF Care Team

- If a family member would like to request that a member of the UF Care Team perform a well-being check-in with a student

UF Student Health Care Center:

<https://shcc.ufl.edu/>, (352) 392-1161

COVID-19 message - It is imperative that any individuals who believe they may have been exposed to COVID-19 (Coronavirus) to contact the Alachua County Health Department at (352) 225-4181 during regular business hours or at (352) 334-7900 after hours, prior to traveling to any physician's office, emergency department, hospital, or urgent care center, to ensure proper protective measures are taken to prevent further risk of spread to others.

GatorWell Health Promotion Services:

<https://gatorwell.ufsa.ufl.edu/>, (352) 273-4450

General health and well-being coaching, including time management, stress management and relaxation strategies, study and test taking skills, sleep habits, active living, eating habits, social connection

UF Counseling & Wellness Center:

<https://counseling.ufl.edu/>, (352) 392-1575

Counseling services

If anyone is a threat to self or others, contact 911

Academic Honesty

Students should complete all work individually (or as part of assigned groups) and all submitted work should constitute original content. Quizzes and the Final Plant Quiz are CLOSED NOTES, meaning you should not have your plant lists or any other resources out while completing them. These are also not "team" quizzes. Any research you include with the assigned activities should be presented and summarized in your own words (please don't just paste write-ups from online). Written final is OPEN NOTES and should be completed individually, this is not a group test. You may use any resources you like to complete the test, however, all answers should be presented and summarized in your own words (again, do NOT just paste information from online and/or class materials).

All students registered at the University of Florida have agreed to comply with the following statement: "I understand that the University of Florida expects its students to be honest in all their academic work. I agree to adhere to this commitment to academic honesty and understand that my failure to comply with this commitment may result in disciplinary action up to and including expulsion from the University."

If you witness any instances of academic dishonesty in this class, please notify the instructor or contact the Student Honor Court (392-1631) or Cheating Hotline (392-6999). For additional information on Academic Honesty, please refer to the University of Florida Academic Honesty Guidelines at: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/advising/info/student-honor-code.aspx>

University grade policies:

For additional important information regarding UF's grade policies, please see:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

Disability Accommodation

Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Disabilities Resource Center. This office will provide documentation to the student, who must then provide this documentation to the instructor when requesting accommodation.

Course schedule – subject to change. We will notify you as soon as possible regarding any modifications to this schedule.

	Video Agenda Available Tuesdays	Friday Discussions 11:30-1:40	Activity Deadlines Due Fridays 9:35am	Quizzes Mondays
Sept 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plant Diversity and Taxonomy Determiners of local flora Florida Ecology 	Introductory Lecture: Syllabus Discussion	Survey (<i>Due Sept 7, 11:59pm</i>)	
Sept 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practice Field Trip Dichotomous keys Fruits! 	Plant ID practice *Outside		Quiz 1: Lectures and Syllabus
Sept 18	Fieldtrip 1	Key Activity *Outside		
Sept 25	Fieldtrip 2	Trips 1 & 2 review and discussion	Spy Dossiers	
Oct 2	NO CLASS – Homecoming			
Oct 9	Fieldtrip 3	Trips 3 review and discussion	Spy Identifications	Quiz 2: Trips 1-2
Oct 16	Fieldtrip 4	Work Day: Dating profiles	Survey (<i>Due Oct 19, 11:59pm</i>)	Quiz 3: Trips 1-3
Oct 23	Fieldtrip 5	Trips 4 & 5 review and discussion	Dating Profiles I	
Oct 30	Fieldtrip 6	Trip 6 review and discussion		Quiz 4: Trips 1-5
Nov 6	(none) Election Day! Nov 3*	Plant Blindness Activity	Dating Profiles II	
Nov 13	Fieldtrip 7	Work Day: Travel Pamphlets		Quiz 5: Trips 1-6
Nov 20	Fieldtrip 8	Office Hours; Trips 1-8 review (<i>Optional</i>)	Dating Matches	Quiz 6: Trips 1-7
Nov 27	NO CLASS – Thanksgiving			
Dec 4	NO CLASS – Final Plant ID Exam		Travel Pamphlets	
Dec 16	NO CLASS – Final Written Exam DUE		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Travel Vote Survey 	

*Nonpartisan exhortation to vote

Some additional resources:

<http://www.plantatlas.usf.edu/> - Florida Plant Atlas - a good resource for photographs and range maps of Florida plants.

<http://www.fnai.org/> - Florida Native Areas Inventory - a great source of data, maps and info on plant communities, rare species and conservation lands in Florida.

<http://www.fs.fed.us/database/feis/plants/index.html> – USDA Forest Service Fire Effects Data - lots of general information about fire effects on species we cover in class. Easy to look up.

<http://www.flmnh.ufl.edu/natsci/herbarium/> - University of Florida Herbarium - all kinds of info on Florida plants and collecting, including a database of images and specimens stored in the herbarium.

<http://www.virtualherbarium.org/> - Fairchild Tropical Garden Herbarium Virtual Herbarium. University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. 2018. FloraQuest 2. [Mobile application software.]