

Environmental Biology
Ecosystems of Southwest Florida
BSC 1051C

Nature Journal I: Description and Task List

Nature Journal: This is to be hand-written and not typed. Field excursion and campus walk notes and observations, “Nature Spot” observations (~1/week), and *multi-page* summaries highlighting the importance of our journal tasks, guest speakers, and in-class videos must be included. The journal will be collected unannounced during the semester for spot-checks and one final time for grading on the final day of regular classes. **Think of this as a working study guide that helps encourage study habits and retention of course material.** You must include a **Table of Contents** and order your entries in the listed order for credit.

Your Nature Spot: Find a location, where you can spend 30 minutes observing the landscape that surrounds you. This can be a spot you locate on or off campus. It can be a private beach, a cypress dome, next to a pond, etc. Make sure it is a place you feel safe, secure, inspired, comfortable, and relaxed. Visit this spot and make careful observations in your journal according to the task list given below. Hopefully, this will turn into a location you come back to and visit throughout your college career when you need a place to study, think, or collect your thoughts.

Task List I Entries (*10 entries*) **Due Date: Class #6**

- **Nature Spot Entry 1:** Identify and describe the habitats present (include pictures, photos, and drawings to supplement your text)

Identify 5 Plant species (Draw, explain distinguishing features, location)

Identify 5 Animal species (Draw, explain distinguishing features, location)

- **Nature Spot Entry 2:** Weather observations (Observe for 30 minutes and write *in detail*)

Observe the food web ... draw a graphical depiction of Primary Producers, Primary Consumers, Secondary Consumers found at your Nature Spot. Explain the interactions and energy flow.

- **Nature Spot Entry 3:** Using Figure 3-10 on page 57 of your textbook as a guide, draw and describe: The major components of the ecosystem found at *your* nature spot. Include both living and non-living factors specifically related to your nature spot. Explain in great detail; I do not just want the textbook figure copied into your nature journal. Pick one animal species found at your spot, and explain, in detail, its “niche”, or its total way of life.

- **Introductory Campus Nature Walk Summary** (use question sheet as a guide)

- **Ecology of Ants Lab Summary** (1 full page quality essay summary required)

- **Ecological Footprint Exercise**

- **Lord of the Ants video summary** (1 full page quality essay summary required)

- **Ecosystems Staged Drawings Classroom Exercise Summary** (1 full page quality essay summary required)

- **CREW Field Excursion Summary** (use question sheet as a guide)

- **Create a “Wordle” word cloud** at www.wordle.net. Use terminology from this class, class exercises, and your own personal interests. Print the word cloud and include with your Nature Journal. Choose one word within the word cloud and explain why that word is important to you.