

**ECOSYSTEMS OF THE
SOUTHERN PACIFIC:
THE NEW ZEALAND PROJECT**

**Meeting Place: Los Angeles, CA
(Time & location determined later)**

March 27 – May 8, 2010* *(Please note the date has changed since published in the catalog)*
12 semester system units (equivalent to 18 quarter system units)
Program Fee \$2595 plus \$75 Application Fee

Thank you for your interest in our New Zealand program. Wildlands Studies team members will embark on an exploration of the fascinating and unique islands of New Zealand. Because of their isolation in the South Pacific, these islands support a distinctive range of environments and highly unusual ecosystems, providing rich opportunities for discovery as we journey throughout the land. Our field studies in New Zealand's fall will take us from pristine high alpine fields, through magnificent rainforests, to untouched shorelines. Throughout the program we will investigate critical natural resource management issues pertaining to increased tourism, a rapidly growing economy, exotic flora and fauna, and the changing face of fisheries and agriculture. Our investigation is a timely one as well, in that these islands are in the midst of major social, economic and environmental transformations.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

In New Zealand, the environment is emerging as a symbol of vulnerability much as it has in the United States and no culture experiences the limits and possibilities of its environment more intensely than an island nation. Today, against a background of new concerns, New Zealanders are taking a hard look at their social, political, and environmental priorities.

New Zealand provides an excellent setting for interdisciplinary field studies such as ours. New Zealanders are English-speaking people who are more than willing to share their unique perspectives with inquisitive student visitors. In addition their country harbors a remarkably rich diversity of environments. Here, in a relatively compact area, sub-tropical rainforests give way to majestic alp-like peaks, steaming volcanoes and miles of wild coastal beaches. The New Zealanders themselves are a diverse lot as well. With a rare mix of English, Scottish and Polynesian cultural backgrounds, they have developed their own dynamic relationship with the New Zealand isles and the natural resources they contain. Our field studies will explore both the history and current status of this unique relationship between New Zealanders and their environment.

Our program objectives include providing team members with a firsthand introduction to the culture and natural history of New Zealand, an onsite examination of critical resource sustainability issues through hands-on exchanges with the land and its people, and field investigations of both the historical development of the nation's wild environments and the status of their management today.

PROJECT GOALS & ACTIVITIES

Our New Zealand project will consist of wilderness explorations, field seminars, and research activities which will serve as vehicles for hands-on environmental and cultural field studies for our team. Each phase focuses on a specific land or water management issue. Cultural and natural history field studies are an integral part of each program phase. **All field methods and data gathering techniques will be taught in New Zealand. No prior research experience is required.**

Management of Parks & Wilderness Areas: Our team will have the exciting opportunity to examine National Park, wilderness, and marine resources in New Zealand through backpacking and canoeing explorations in both the North and South Island wildlands. We will conduct ecological surveys of plant and animal communities, as well as an onsite investigation of management policies regarding wildlands preservation and recreation opportunities. We anticipate seminars/discussions with national Park officials on specific goals and objectives of long and short range plans for New Zealand's famed National Parks. Throughout this segment of the program, our backpacking investigations will offer us intimate field studies of magnificent alpine landscapes, rugged coastlines and lush rainforests.

Wildlife Habitat and Conservation Studies: Our island field studies will take us to key wildland habitats supporting the nation's unique wildlife populations. In these settings, the team will investigate management policies for endangered species. We will learn about various wildlife research techniques and have the chance to employ them on research projects. We will also examine the rich evolutionary history leading to New Zealand's present day fauna/habitats, and survey differing ecological "life zones" and the wildlife species found there. These explorations will take us from sub-tropical rainforest and coasts, to high alpine ecosystems.

The New Zealand People: Through team interactions with New Zealanders we will discover diverse perspectives on the proper role of elements such as scientific research, private conservation organizations and governmental politics in natural resource management. Together we will explore New Zealand's rich history from first human settlement, the dramatic changes wrought by both Polynesian and European pioneers, and the effects of this rich human heritage on the status of natural resource management today.

Resource Management: During the program our team will meet with representatives from various sides of current environmental issues. We anticipate information exchanges and seminars with resource specialists and/or representatives from preservation organizations. During this segment of the program, firsthand field studies in controversial environmental settings will enable us to analyze cultural, ecological, and political perspectives on key environmental issues. We will use new knowledge gained to jointly develop recommendations addressing the problem of long term environmental and cultural sustainability in New Zealand.

Exotic Species Management: This segment will include an examination of exotic and introduced species management which has had such an important influence on New Zealand's ecology. We will examine the history of introductions and the resulting ecological damage wrought by the many species of plants and animals accidentally and purposefully brought to these remote islands. We will gain hands-on field experience through projects devoted to dealing with the problems of exotics and the conservation of the native flora and fauna.

Reasonable efforts will be made to follow the program that Wildlands Studies has outlined here. However, experience indicates that weather conditions, road flooding, and environmental considerations may affect our plans. Wildlands Studies has put together an innovative program in New Zealand, and team members need to be flexible, patient, and prepared to adapt to unexpected situations. Being flexible also allows us to take advantage of unique opportunities that inadvertently arise during our journeys, often producing some of the program's most memorable moments. By the end of the program, each of us will have gained both a new understanding of the diversity of cultures and environments in New Zealand, as well as a firsthand knowledge of a fascinating South Pacific wildland.

ACADEMIC CREDIT

Students will receive 12 semester units (18 quarter units) awarded through California State University Monterey Bay Extended Education. While students usually encounter no difficulties in transferring credit to their home campus, applicants should check with their advisors prior to enrolling. Our staff will be happy to explain the program in further detail to the applicant's advisor, if necessary. The New Zealand field studies program gives credit in three courses:

- ENVS 370, Environmental Wildlands Studies (4 semester system units)
- ENVS 371, Environmental Field Survey (4 units)
- ENVS 372, Wildlands Environment and Culture (4 units)

Students will be evaluated on the basis of: 1) active participation in all scheduled class and field activities; 2) examinations; 3) extent and quality of field journals; 4) papers and/or projects concerning environmental and cultural issues of New Zealand; and 5) the design, implementation and recording of a research project.

Team members are expected to conduct themselves in a mature and responsible manner. Wildlands Studies reserves the right to require any student to withdraw from the program if their conduct is detrimental to or incompatible with the interests, safety, or welfare of any course participants.

TEAM LOGISTICS

A travel itinerary will be made available for team members to fly from Los Angeles, CA to New Zealand. If this is out of the way for you, or you are traveling prior to the program, you will need to meet the team when the recommended flight arrives in New Zealand. Logistical information, including flight plans, contact details for our travel agent, an equipment list and other essential logistical details will be emailed to enrolled participants 8-10 weeks prior to the start of the program.

ACCOMMODATIONS: During our time in New Zealand, most of our nights will be spent in our tents or in primitive huts situated in the high mountains, sub-tropical rainforests or South Pacific coastal beaches. Our research activities arranged with universities, government departments, or private organizations could include other facilities or campsite space.



CLIMATE: We will be in New Zealand in autumn, but weather can be unpredictable. We could easily encounter winter-like conditions as we hike in the Southern Alps, as well as many warm sunny days on the North Island beaches. We must be prepared for almost any type of condition, especially as wilderness travelers. In addition, New Zealand wilderness has an infamous reputation for its “no see’ums” (tiny gnats). We will send enrolled participants a detailed equipment list when we send our logistics letter.

OFFICIAL DOCUMENTS: A United States citizen who wishes to visit New Zealand must hold a valid US Passport (valid for six months beyond the intended date of departure from New Zealand). US citizens who wish to visit New Zealand for a period not exceeding 90 days do not require visas, providing they hold tickets for the journey out of New Zealand (either open or confirmed). US citizens who wish to go to New Zealand for periods exceeding 90 days must obtain New Zealand visas. New Zealand visa applications take 2-3 months to process, *so plan ahead!* Applications are available from the New Zealand consular offices in Los Angeles, San Francisco, New York or Washington, DC.

PRE-PROGRAM MAILINGS

Detailed information regarding gear/food, meeting plans, group expenses payment and medical recommendations will be sent to all team members in a subsequent update logistics letter after enrollment.

PROJECT COSTS

Program Fee:	\$2595 plus \$75 Application Fee. Program fee due February 1, 2010 Enrollment on a space-available basis after the fee due date until the program is full.
Estimated in-country Expenses:	\$1850 per person share of land/sea transportation and fuel in New Zealand, instructors transportation, lodging, field activities/permits, group supplies, readings
Food in New Zealand:	\$300-400
Airfare:	\$1000 (as of February 2009)
Personal Spending Money:	\$350 (this varies according to taste - but don't be caught short)

Students should inquire at the financial aid office of their home campus regarding the use of their loans or grants for this program. CSU, Monterey Bay/Wildlands Studies is not responsible for non-refundable airline or other tickets or payments or any similar penalties that may be incurred as a result of any course cancellation or changes.

PROJECT LEADERS

Adam Dillon is an ecologist who has conducted research on a variety of wildlife projects throughout North and Central America. His main focus is wildlife ecology and conservation with an emphasis on mammalian carnivores.