

Wild Neighbors

Course Description

A lecture-based course covering the life cycles of common mammal, bird, and reptile species found in urban and suburban habitats. We'll discuss nesting/denning, breeding, feeding behaviors, impacts of human activities, actions that people can do to prevent harm to wildlife, and actions to take in the event that people encounter injured or orphaned wildlife.

Weekly Layout:

1. Introduction

2. Common mammals - life history, habitat, feeding behavior, breeding

Striped skunk

Groundhog

Grey squirrel

Raccoon

Red fox

Eastern cottontail

Bats

Whitetail deer

3. Common birds - life history, habitat, feeding behavior, breeding, migration, Part 1

Thrushes, eg American robin, Eastern bluebird

Hummingbirds, eg Ruby-throated hummingbird

Finches, eg House finch

Corvids, eg Blue jay, American crow

3. Birds, life history, habitat, feeding behavior, breeding, migration, Part 2

Wrens, eg Carolina wren, house wren

Chickadees, eg, Carolina chickadee, Tufted titmouse

Doves, eg Mourning dove

Blackbirds, eg Common grackle, Red-winged blackbird

Raptors, eg Red-tailed hawk, Great-horned owl

Non-native species, eg European starlings, House sparrows

4. Common reptile species - life history, habitat, feeding behavior, breeding, brumation

Turtles

A. Eastern box turtles

Snapping turtles

Painted turtle

Red-eared slider

B. Snakes

Eastern rat snake

Black racer

Garter snake

Common water snake

Dekay's brown snake

Rough green snake

Copperhead

5. How to co-exist with wildlife

How to humanely evict wildlife from your home

How to appropriately feed wildlife vs native planting

How to make your windows safe for birds

How to keep raptors safe from pesticides and lead

5.1 Overview of laws pertaining to wildlife

Migratory Bird Species Act

Endangered Species Act

State laws re: trapping and relocating

5.2 What to do if you encounter injured, ill, or orphaned wildlife

Delaware and Pennsylvania wildlife rehabilitators

Tri-State Bird Rescue and Research