

## FIELD RESEARCH AND CONSERVATION



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### ♦ CLASS OVERVIEW

Field Research & Conservation emphasizes long-term field research experiences, examines ecosystem processes, and explores the evolution of American perspectives about nature.

A group of four students was selected from numerous applicants to serve as research assistants to Dr. Scott Sakaluk, Dr. Sandra Steiger, and Geoff Ower. During our two week stay at AMK, we collected sagebrush cricket (*Cyphoderris strepitans*) specimens, monitored their mating status through the progression of their mating season, and assisted in gathering data concerning behavioral responses to acoustical signals.

We also provided assistance to Dr. Chad Johnson in collecting data concerning the behavior of male sagebrush crickets in a laboratory setting. At night we recorded data concerning the males' calling behavior and during the day we helped care for the animals, mass them, and collect data as they performed a variety of behaviors.

Living within a community of research scientists had tremendous benefits to my students. On numerous occasions we conversed with researchers about their work and gained valuable insights concerning the design and implementation of scientific studies. Dr. Amy Krist stands out in particular in this regard because we were able to accompany her research team as they gathered and sorted freshwater snails in Yellowstone National Park.



Aside from assisting with research, we explored Grand Teton and Yellowstone National parks to learn about ecosystem dynamics, the role of disturbance and succession, and the influences of geologic process in shaping landscapes and the communities that occupy them. We also gained insight about human management of communities by speaking with Lori Iverson (National Elk Refuge), Kerry Murphy (a wildlife biologist at Bridger-Teton National Forest), and Matt Metz (a wolf biologist at Yellowstone National Park).

