

Summer course *Wild Perspectives 2022*

3 ECTS FNP - 29 August – 2 sept 2022
Wageningen University & NatureCollege Education

✓ FNP-5AA03
3 ECTS
25 Euro
BSc 2+ & MSc

What

Wild Perspectives is a one-week summer course on the Dutch landscape from a “wild” perspective. In the course we reflect on our perspective on nature, our relationships with nature and the influences of these images and relations on nature (conservation) and land use. Through a series of workshops and excursions students immerse themselves in the landscape and reflect on our human position in nature and alternative ways of viewing and being in nature. We use amongst others writing, theatre and meditation techniques as a means of learning. Two days consist of a wild walk through the Dutch landscape and an overnight stay in the forest. Students work in teams on a creative assignment based on their summer course experiences that will be presented and evaluated during a campfire session on the last evening. Lastly, students write an essay to be submitted in the subsequent month.

Why

Nature and biodiversity are usually portrayed through the human eye as interesting or functional entities, separate from or embedded within anthropogenic structures. In this course we reconsider that portrayal and introduce the perspective of nature and our society through the lenses of animals and plants. These alternative perspectives open opportunities for nature conservation and management from a more relational perspective.

Education

We aim to provide students with new perspectives on nature and on themselves in the world, and reflect together on the role of humans in nature. We choose for various forms of *engaged learning* to let the students *experience* nature from new perspectives. By means of place-based, relational and experiential learning we aim to include not only students' cognitive (logic, linguistic) intelligences but also stimulate various other forms of intelligence, mainly naturalistic and existential intelligence. These types of intelligence allow students to keep track of (through journaling), understand (through experience) and relate (through reflection and mediation) to the natural world and to reflect on oneself as part of the world. Writing, theatre and meditation techniques a.o. are used for learning experiences. All education takes place outside in order to create an optimal environment for *embodied learning*. Part of the course will be group work (circa 4 students/group).

Course coordination: Reineke van Tol (FNP), Ignas Heitkönig (WEC), Rianne Kat (FNP)

Contributions: Bas Verschuuren (FNP), Arita Baaijens, Matthijs Schouten, Femke Keeren, Klarien Klingen, Esther Kuiler, Pablo Vanneste, Johanna Schröder, Ester Klein Hesselink, Evelien Konings, Marijke van Langen, Anna Luijten, Caroline van der Mark, Ppauw catering, Dust adrift

Examinator: Dr. Marjanke Hoogstra-Klein (FNP)

Open for: 2nd & 3rd year BSc + MSc students

Maximum participants: 24

Location: Creative garden, Bornsesteeg 87 Wageningen

Registration: Mail motivation to reineke.vantol@wur.nl (deadline 8 july)

Costs: €25,-, including 5x dinner, 2x lunch, 1x breakfast, 1 overnight stay and an awesome programme

Schedule: 29 August – 2 sept 2022

Learning Goals

Through following this course students should be able to:

- Understand, embody and reflect upon the human-nature relationship from a variety of ontological and epistemological perspectives and in different social and scientific domains
- To reflect upon their own connection to nature
- Embody different animal or plant perspectives to the landscape
- Express new gained perspectives through arts-based expression (writing, theatre)
- Explain, understand and reflect upon theory of human-nature relations and perspectives

Course Content

Excursions/ workshops (3 days)

- Perspectives on nature & meditation in nature
- Landscape immersion
- Agroecology, future farmers & relations to the land
- Common grounds for biocultural conservation
- Embodying non-human perspectives through writing and theatre

Wild walk, Bushcrafting, Camping (1 day, 1 night)

- Deep time walk
- Bushcraft skills: fire & shelter

Working on assignments & presenting outcomes (1 day)

Working on essay (1 month)

Assignments

Group expression assignment

1. Prepare a short theatre performance that highlights an urgent issue with regard to nature conservation or climate change, giving nature a voice, using the tools learned in the workshop with Boerengroep & Inspringtheater on theatre of the oppressed
2. Write a story for oral presentation from a non-human perspective one or multiple nature stories from wild perspectives, using tools from the writing workshop by Femke Keeren

Expression assignments are introduced on the first morning. Students have the whole week to gather information, experiences and tools for the assignments. Two afternoons are reserved to work with the group on the assignments. Students present their creations during a campfire session on the last evening.

Individual reflective essay

By the use of the course literature and additional self-found literature, students write an essay in which they reflect upon their own relation to the natural world, their insights from the course (literature), their experiences in the course assignments and a reflection upon the importance of widening perspectives on the landscape and our own position in the natural world.

Submit final essay by **Friday 30 September 21.00**

Literature: selected papers and book chapters on each topic (in English) provided by course coordinator + own literature search for essay

Assessment

<i>Group expression assignment</i>	40%
<i>Individual essay</i>	60%

Practical information

Location

The summer course takes place in the Creative Garden, next to the Hoge Born in Wageningen (Bornsesteeg 87). We build a base camp here. For the workshops we visit several places in and around Wageningen. Thursday night we stay at the estate Remmerstein (Oude veensegrindweg 15 Rhenen). All education takes place outside.

Food

In the evenings **vegan** dinner is catered by Ppauw catering. Breakfast and lunch should be organized by students themselves unless stated otherwise in the course schedule (lunch Tuesday, breakfast and lunch Friday). If you have any food allergies or other than vegan dietary restrictions please send an email to reineke.vantol@wur.nl.

Camping

Thursday night we will camp on estate Remmerstein. We will provide tarps and groundsheets for shelter. We camp bushcraft style so only minimum facilities are available. There will be a toilet and toilet paper, but no shower. Students should bring themselves a sleeping bag and sleeping mattress.

What to bring

- Cup/mug for tea/coffee
- Notebook + pen
- Clothes for a whole day outside (every day, including colder mornings and evenings and potential showers)
- Sleeping bag and sleeping mattress for Thursday night (bring Thursday morning to creative garden)
- Music instruments (if you have and play them, for Thursday and Friday night)
- Friends and family (for Friday night)

Contact information

For questions regarding the course, personal circumstances or inspiration please email the course coordinator:

Reineke van Tol (FNP); reineke.vantol@wur.nl; 06-18520685; Gaia B317

Contact details of other lecturers:

Ignas Heitkönig (WEC); ignas.heitkonig@wur.nl; 06-53804267; Lumen B149

Rianne Kat (FNP); rienne.kat@wur.nl; 06-16791167;

Planning

	Monday 29	Tuesday 30	Wednesday 31	Thursday 01	Friday 02
9-12.30	Introduction & welcome (<i>Reineke, Ignas, Rianne</i>) Start ritual (<i>Esther Klein Hesselink</i>)	Excursion Ommuurde Tuin: Agroecology & Toekomstboeren (<i>Esther Kuiler & Klarien Klingen</i>)	Common grounds for biocultural conservation in the Heelsumse Brook valley (<i>Bas Verschuuren</i>)	Nature awareness (<i>Marijke van Langen</i>)	Wild walk (<i>Caroline van der Mark</i>)
12.30-13.30	LUNCH @ Creative garden	LUNCH @ Ommuurde Tuin	LUNCH @ Beekdal	LUNCH in Nature	LUNCH in Nature
13.30-17	Landscape immersion binnenveld (<i>Arita Baaijens</i>)	Workshop Images of nature & Meditation in Nature (<i>Matthijs Schouten</i>)	Working on assignments	Deep time walk (<i>Evelien Konings</i>)	Working on assignments/ performances
17-18.30	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner
18.30-20.30	Wild writing (<i>Femke Keeren</i>)	Theatre in the wild (<i>Pablo Vanneste & Johanna Schröder</i>)	Council of All Beings (<i>Evelien Konings</i>)	Bushcraft skills: Fire & shelter (<i>Anna Luijten</i>)	Campfire presentations, music & pizza party (<i>Dust adrift</i>)

* Please note that this is a rough schedule for the course. For details and exact times, please check the separately provided course schedule.

Course literature

Bang, M., Medin, D. L., & Atran, S. (2007). Cultural mosaics and mental models of nature. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 104(35), 13868-13874.

Booth, K. I. (2013). Deep ecology, hybrid geographies, and environmental management's relational premise. *Environmental Values*, 523-543.

Hanley, A. W., Derringer, S. A., & Hanley, R. T. (2017). Dispositional mindfulness may be associated with deeper connections with nature. *Ecopsychology*, 9(4), 225-231.

Ingold, T. (2002). Globes and spheres. The topology of environmentalism. In *The perception of the environment: essays on livelihood, dwelling and skill*. London & New York: Routledge.

Ives, C. D., Freeth, R., & Fischer, J. (2020). Inside-out sustainability: The neglect of inner worlds. *Ambio*, 49(1), 208-217.

Kimmerer, R. W. (2013). *Braiding sweetgrass: Indigenous wisdom, scientific knowledge and the teachings of plants*. Milkweed Editions.

Smith, K. K. (2006). Natural subjects: Nature and political community. *Environmental Values*, 15(3), 343-353.

Sowards, S. K. (2006). Identification through orangutans: Destabilizing the nature/culture dualism. *Ethics and the Environment*, 45-61.

Strang, V. (2020). Re-imagining the river: new environmental ethics in human engagements with water. *One Earth*, 2(3), 204-206.

Thoren, R. (2018). Co-creating with Animals: Crossing the 'Narrow Abyss of Non-comprehension'. *Landscape Review*, 18(1).

Trigwell, J. L., Francis, A. J., & Bagot, K. L. (2014). Nature connectedness and eudaimonic well-being: Spirituality as a potential mediator. *Ecopsychology*, 6(4), 241-251.