

ANM104 Marine Vertebrates: Sharks, Seabirds, Fish, Turtles and Whales

School: School of Science, Technology and Engineering

2026 | Trimester 2

UniSC Sunshine Coast
UniSC Moreton Bay
UniSC Fraser Coast

**BLENDED
LEARNING**

Most of your course is on campus but you may be able to do some components of this course online.

Please go to unisc.edu.au for up to date information on the teaching sessions and campuses where this course is usually offered.

1. What is this course about?

1.1. Description

The marine vertebrates include all bony fish, sharks, reptiles (turtles, sea snakes and crocodiles), birds (seabirds, shorebirds, raptors, penguins) and mammals (seals, dolphins, whales and dugong) that live in, or on, the ocean. These charismatic animals are of immense public interest and provide focal points for conservation, fisheries and scientific research. This exciting course will introduce you to the identification, evolution, biology and ecology of marine vertebrates, with emphasis on the species of eastern Australia. Your studies will include two days of hands-on field research.

1.2. How will this course be delivered?

ACTIVITY	HOURS	BEGINNING WEEK	FREQUENCY
BLENDED LEARNING			
Learning materials – Recorded learning materials, quizzes and recorded interview with experts in the field "Chats with Champions"	1.5hrs	Week 1	12 times
Tutorial/Workshop 1 – Face to face workshop which includes weekly Kahoot quiz and additional learning support	2hrs	Week 1	12 times
Fieldwork – Overnight fieldtrip	20hrs	Week 2	Once Only
Laboratory 1 – Computer lab	2hrs	Week 7	Once Only

1.3. Course Topics

1. Learn to identify the major groups of marine vertebrates (fish, reptiles, birds and mammals);
1. Discover the origins and evolutionary history of the major groups of marine vertebrates;
1. Appreciate the unique adaptations (i.e., body morphology, behaviour, physiology) of marine vertebrates to their environments;
1. Understand global and local threats to marine vertebrates and key issues for their conservation and management;
1. Apply modern techniques for studying marine vertebrates in the wild in a hands-on fashion; and
1. Learn field skills that will help you to answer fundamental questions about marine vertebrate ecology.
2. Be exposed to global experts in the field through on-line, pre-recorded interviews

2. What level is this course?

100 Level (Introductory)

Engaging with discipline knowledge and skills at foundational level, broad application of knowledge and skills in familiar contexts and with support. Limited or no prerequisites. Normally, associated with the first full-time study year of an undergraduate program.

3. What is the unit value of this course?

12 units

4. How does this course contribute to my learning?

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES	GRADUATE QUALITIES
On successful completion of this course, you should be able to...	Completing these tasks successfully will contribute to you becoming...
1 Communicate effectively and professionally	Empowered
2 Demonstrate and apply knowledge about the evolution, diversity and ecology of marine vertebrates and key issues for their conservation and management.	Knowledgeable
3 Critically analyse and evaluate the local and global threats to marine fish, reptiles, birds and mammals, and field data to investigate basic ecology of marine vertebrates.	Sustainability-focussed

5. Am I eligible to enrol in this course?

Refer to the [UniSC Glossary of terms](#) for definitions of “pre-requisites, co-requisites and anti-requisites”.

5.1. Pre-requisites

Enrolled in Program SC012, SC107, SC316, SC319, SC320, SB303, ED112, ED312, ED315 or UC103

5.2. Co-requisites

Not applicable

5.3. Anti-requisites

Not applicable

5.4. Specific assumed prior knowledge and skills (where applicable)

Not applicable

5.5. Microcredential Information

Not applicable

6. How am I going to be assessed?

6.1. Grading Scale

Standard Grading (GRD)

High Distinction (HD), Distinction (DN), Credit (CR), Pass (PS), Fail (FL).

6.2. Details of early feedback on progress

Task 1 quizzes will offer ongoing formative feedback on progress. Task 2 feedback regarding field trip work and data collection. Computer workshops in week 10 are designed for focused formative feedback and development of Task 3, Field Course Report.

6.3. Assessment tasks

DELIVERY MODE	TASK NO.	ASSESSMENT PRODUCT	INDIVIDUAL OR GROUP	WEIGHTING %	WHAT IS THE DURATION / LENGTH?	WHEN SHOULD I SUBMIT?	WHERE SHOULD I SUBMIT IT?
All	1	Quiz/zes	Individual	0%	20 multiple choice questions	Throughout teaching period (refer to Format)	Online Test (Quiz)
All	2	Written Piece	Individual	25%	Max 500 words +/- 10%	Week 6	Online Submission
All	3	Report	Individual	50%	Max 2000 +/- 10% words	Week 12	Online Assignment Submission with plagiarism check
All	4	Examination - Centrally Scheduled	Individual	25%	2 hr (1000 words)	Exam Period	Online Test (Quiz)

All - Assessment Task 1: Kahoot quiz

GOAL:	Demonstrate your knowledge and understanding of the ecology, biology and diversity of marine vertebrates.		
PRODUCT:	Quiz/zes		
AUTHORSHIP STATEMENT:			
FORMAT:	You will individually participate in a game show-like online quiz consisting of 20 multiple choice questions that reviews the key points from the previous week's learning material.		
CRITERIA:	No.		Learning Outcome assessed
	1	Demonstrate and communicate knowledge of the diversity and ecology of marine vertebrates;	1 2
	2	Apply knowledge from learning material and readings to solve unseen problems.	1 2
GENERIC SKILLS:	Communication, Problem solving, Applying technologies, Information literacy		

All - Assessment Task 2: Field notebook and data sheets

GOAL:	Demonstrate knowledge and basic data collecting skills in the investigation of marine vertebrates and of key issues for their conservation and management.	
PRODUCT:	Written Piece	
AUTHORSHIP STATEMENT:		
FORMAT:	You will complete two data sheets and corresponding worksheets which collates the data and experiences undertaken during the field trip to show understanding of field work techniques and to help support the writing of the field course report.	
CRITERIA:	No.	Learning Outcome assessed
	1 Apply correct field work techniques	3
	2 Accurate data collection	3
GENERIC SKILLS:	Organisation, Applying technologies, Information literacy	

All - Assessment Task 3: Field Course Report

GOAL:	Demonstrate knowledge and basic analytical skills in the scientific investigation of marine vertebrates and of key issues for their conservation and management.	
PRODUCT:	Report	
AUTHORSHIP STATEMENT:		
FORMAT:	You will compile a short (max. 2000 ± 10% words) report using the template provided (which follows the format of a standard scientific paper) to test ecological hypotheses by analyzing data collected during the field course.	
CRITERIA:	No.	Learning Outcome assessed
	1 Collect and analyse data to answer a scientific question pertaining to the ecology and conservation of marine vertebrates	1 2 3
	2 Interpret and contextualise findings in the light of available scientific literature regarding the biology of the selected animal, the threats it faces, and the tools available for its conservation	1 2 3
	3 Communicate your understanding in a professional and scientific manner.	1 2 3
GENERIC SKILLS:	Communication, Collaboration, Problem solving, Organisation, Applying technologies, Information literacy	

All - Assessment Task 4: Examination

GOAL:	Demonstrate your understanding of and ability to communicate knowledge regarding marine vertebrates.									
PRODUCT:	Examination - Centrally Scheduled									
AUTHORSHIP STATEMENT:										
FORMAT:	A two (2) hour written examination, comprising of multi-choice questions. The questions will be based mainly on the material covered in the theory component of the course (i.e., learning material), supplemented with material presented during the field exercises, and expert interviews.									
CRITERIA:	<table border="1"><thead><tr><th>No.</th><th></th><th>Learning Outcome assessed</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>1</td><td>Demonstrate and communicate knowledge of the diversity and ecology of marine vertebrates</td><td>1 2</td></tr><tr><td>2</td><td>Apply knowledge from learning material and readings to solve unseen problems.</td><td>1 2</td></tr></tbody></table>	No.		Learning Outcome assessed	1	Demonstrate and communicate knowledge of the diversity and ecology of marine vertebrates	1 2	2	Apply knowledge from learning material and readings to solve unseen problems.	1 2
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GENERIC SKILLS:	Communication, Problem solving, Applying technologies, Information literacy									

7. Directed study hours

A 12-unit course will have total of 150 learning hours which will include directed study hours (including online if required), self-directed learning and completion of assessable tasks. Student workload is calculated at 12.5 learning hours per one unit.

8. What resources do I need to undertake this course?

Please note: Course information, including specific information of recommended readings, learning activities, resources, weekly readings, etc. are available on the course Canvas site– Please log in as soon as possible.

8.1. Prescribed text(s) or course reader

There are no required/recommended resources for this course.

8.2. Specific requirements

You will be required to undertake field studies during this course. When conducting fieldwork you will need to wear covered footwear, hat, long-sleeved shirt and long trousers for field safety. Accommodation and travel costs will be covered. Details of management and costs for food will be set out at the beginning of the trimester. Discuss any financial hardship that might be associated with the field studies with the Course Coordinator.

9. How are risks managed in this course?

Risk assessments have been performed for all field activities and low to moderate levels of health and safety risk exists. Moderate risks may include working in an Australian bush setting, working with people, working outside normal office hours for example. It is your responsibility to review course material, search online, discuss with lecturers and peers and understand the health and safety risks associated with your specific course of study and to familiarise yourself with the University's general health and safety principles by reviewing the [online induction training for students](#), and following the instructions of the University staff.

10. What administrative information is relevant to this course?

10.1. Assessment: Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is the ethical standard of university participation. It ensures that students graduate as a result of proving they are competent in their discipline. This is integral in maintaining the value of academic qualifications. Each industry has expectations and standards of the skills and knowledge within that discipline and these are reflected in assessment.

Academic integrity means that you do not engage in any activity that is considered to be academic fraud; including plagiarism, collusion or outsourcing any part of any assessment item to any other person. You are expected to be honest and ethical by completing all work yourself and indicating in your work which ideas and information were developed by you and which were taken from others. You cannot provide your assessment work to others. You are also expected to provide evidence of wide and critical reading, usually by using appropriate academic references.

In order to minimise incidents of academic fraud, this course may require that some of its assessment tasks, when submitted to Canvas, are electronically checked through Turnitin. This software allows for text comparisons to be made between your submitted assessment item and all other work to which Turnitin has access.

10.2. Assessment: Additional Requirements

Eligibility for Supplementary Assessment

Your eligibility for supplementary assessment in a course is dependent of the following conditions applying:

- (a) The final mark is in the percentage range 47% to 49.4%; and
- (b) The course is graded using the Standard Grading scale

Eligibility for Supplementary Assessment Your eligibility for supplementary assessment in a course is dependent of the following conditions applying: The final mark is in the percentage range 47% to 49.4% The course is graded using the Standard Grading scale You have not failed an assessment task in the course due to academic misconduct

10.3. Assessment: Submission penalties

Late submissions may be penalised up to and including the following maximum percentage of the assessment task's identified value, with weekdays and weekends included in the calculation of days late:

- (a) One day: deduct 5%;
- (b) Two days: deduct 10%;
- (c) Three days: deduct 20%;
- (d) Four days: deduct 40%;
- (e) Five days: deduct 60%;
- (f) Six days: deduct 80%;
- (g) Seven days: A result of zero is awarded for the assessment task.

The following penalties will apply for a late submission for an online examination:

- Less than 15 minutes: No penalty
- From 15 minutes to 30 minutes: 20% penalty
- More than 30 minutes: 100% penalty

10.4. Links to relevant University policy and procedures

For more information on Academic Learning & Teaching categories including:

- Assessment: Courses and Coursework Programs
- Review of Assessment and Final Grades
- Supplementary Assessment
- Central Examinations
- Deferred Examinations
- Student Conduct
- Students with a Disability

For more information, visit <https://www.usc.edu.au/explore/policies-and-procedures#academic-learning-and-teaching>

10.5. Student Charter

UniSC is committed to excellence in teaching, research and engagement in an environment that is inclusive, inspiring, safe and respectful. The [Student Charter](#) sets out what students can expect from the University, and what in turn is expected of students, to achieve these outcomes.

10.6. General Enquiries

For course-specific questions, contact your teaching staff or Course Coordinator.

For other enquiries or to access support, please contact Student Central:

- [UniSC Student Central](#)
- [UniSC Adelaide Student Central](#)