

Twenty-eighth Desert Tortoise Council Fall Course
Introduction to Desert Tortoises¹ and Field Techniques
Pinnacles Room at the Kerr McGee Center, 100 W. California Ave., Ridgecrest, CA

2019 Syllabus - Draft

First Day (Saturday November 2):

7:00 to 8:00	Check-in
8:00 to 8:05	Welcome (Maggie Fusari)
8:05 to 8:15	Notes (Ed LaRue)
8:15 to 8:30	The Three Species of Desert Tortoise, <i>Gopherus agassizii</i> , <i>G. morafkai</i> , and <i>G. evgoodei</i> (Dr. Kristin Berry)
8:30 to 10:00	General Overview of Mojave Desert Tortoises (Dr. Kristin Berry)
10:00 to 10:30	Break
10:30 to 11:05	Threats to Tortoises (Dr. Michael Tuma)
11:05 to 11:50	Field Evaluations of Desert Tortoises for Health and Disease; Effects of Diseases on Populations (Dr. Kristin Berry)
11:50 to 12:35	Finding Tortoises and Distinguishing One Type of Sign from Another (Peter Woodman)
12:35 to 12:55	Instructions for outdoor session (Ed LaRue and Maggie Fusari)
12:55 to 1:30	Lunch provided – special time with Kristin Berry
1:30 to 2:00	Travel to Outdoor Field Session #1
2:00 to 4:30	Outdoor Field Session #1: Finding tortoises and sign - Demonstrations; Field identification of burrows, scat, carcasses; Transecting tips.
7:00 to 9:00	Ask It Basket session (Ed LaRue, with Maggie Fusari and all available speakers)

Second Day (Sunday November 3) (STANDARD TIME TODAY – FALL BACK):

8:00 to 8:05	Announcements (Ed LaRue)
8:05 to 8:25	Bureau of Land Management (Caroline Woods)
8:25 to 8:45	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Ray Bransfield)
8:45 to 9:05	California Department of Fish and Wildlife (Becky Jones)
9:05 to 9:20	Overview of the Permitting Processes (Becky Jones)
9:20 to 9:30	Questions for Agency Personnel
9:30 to 10:00	Break
10:00 to 11:00	Tortoise Field Surveys, Data Collection, and Interpretation (Dr. Alice Karl)
11:00 to 11:30	Resource Monitoring on Construction Projects (Ed La Rue)
11:30 to 11:45	Instructions for the final outdoor session with data collection (Maggie Fusari)
11:45 to 1:00	Lunch (on your own) and travel to field site for Outdoor Session #2
1:00 to 4:00	Outdoor field session #2, completion of surveys, completing a good datasheet.

Plot surveying and final paperwork - end time depends on your transecting time.

Schedule is subject to change as needed by circumstances.

¹ This course focuses on the Mojave Desert Tortoise (*Gopherus agassizii*) in the Mojave Desert. Techniques will be different for the Sonoran Desert Tortoise (*Gopherus morafkai*) in Arizona due to differences in behavior and habitat.