

**Introduction to The Mojave Desert Tortoise**  
**Online Lectures – Friday and Saturday, Oct. 24 & 25, 2025**  
**Draft Syllabus**

**Friday October 24, Day one, 12:00 to 17:00 Pacific Time**

| Times (minutes) | Topic                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|-----------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 12:00 (20)      | Welcome, course logistics, Instruction on using ZOOM (David Hedrick)                                                                                                                                  |
| 12:20 (10)      | Course introductions (Ed LaRue)                                                                                                                                                                       |
| 12:30 (70)      | The Mojave Desert Tortoise: taxonomy, anatomy and physiology, ecological characteristics, habitats and distribution, seasonality, nutrition and feeding, reproduction, behaviors. (Dr. Kristin Berry) |
| 13:40 (10)      | Q&A                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| 13:50 (20)      | Break                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| 14:10 (35)      | Threats to Tortoises (Dr. Michael Tuma)                                                                                                                                                               |
| 14:45 (10)      | Q&A                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| 14:55 (35)      | Field Evaluations of Desert Tortoises for Health and Disease; Effects of Diseases on Populations (Dr. Kristin Berry)                                                                                  |
| 15:30 (10)      | Q&A                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| 15:40 (20)      | Break                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| 16:00 (40)      | Translocations: Issues and Options (Dr. Kristina Drake)                                                                                                                                               |
| 16:40 (30)      | Question and Answer panel (Q&A for Dr. Drake and then add Ed LaRue, Dr. Berry, Dr. Tuma)                                                                                                              |
| 17:00           | End of day one (Ed LaRue, David Hedrick)                                                                                                                                                              |

**Saturday October 25, Day two, 09:00 – 14:00 Pacific Time**

|            |                                                                                    |
|------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 09:00 (10) | Welcome to day two, assure all is working, confirm logistics (Dave Hedrick)        |
| 09:10 (10) | Course Introductions (Ed LaRue)                                                    |
| 09:20 (60) | Tortoise Field Surveys, Data Collection, and Interpretation (Dr. Alice Karl)       |
| 10:20 (10) | Q&A                                                                                |
| 10:30 (50) | Finding Tortoises and Distinguishing One Type of Sign from Another (Peter Woodman) |
| 11:20 (30) | Video on proper tortoise handling (Rachel Woodard)                                 |
| 11:50 (10) | Q&A                                                                                |
| 12:00 (20) | Break                                                                              |
| 12:20(30)  | Overview of Regulations & Permitting (Peter Sanzenbacher)                          |
| 12:50 (10) | Q&A                                                                                |
| 13:00 (30) | Resource Monitoring on Construction Projects (Ed LaRue)                            |
| 13:30 (30) | Q&A (Ed LaRue, Dr. Karl, Peter Woodman, Peter Sanzenbacher)                        |
| 14:00      | End of class. Reminder of what's next (quiz and field day) (Dave Hedrick)          |

**Sunday – Wednesday (October 26 – 29):** Complete the online quiz to be eligible to attend the field portion of the course.

**EITHER** Sunday November 2 **OR** Monday November 3 Attend the field workshop in Ridgecrest CA.

**Complete** an online evaluation of the course. Participants will receive certification of attendance by snail mail by mid-December after everything has been completed and **if we have correct mailing addresses**.

**\*Schedule is subject to change if needed.**

See our website for details about our symposium, memberships, etc.: <https://deserttortoise.org/>

Email [intro-course@deserttortoise.org](mailto:intro-course@deserttortoise.org) with issues or questions.

Participants will receive a list of speakers with contact information, pdf files of lecture outlines, suggested references, and a handout listing the agencies that oversee aspects of desert tortoise work in the field.