

**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 (10)      | Instruction on using ZOOM (David Hedrick)   |
| 12:10 (10)      | Welcome, course logistics (Dr. Maggie Fusari)   |
| 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, Dr. Fusari, Dr. Alice Karl)  |
| 17:00           | End of day one  |

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

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| 09:00 (10) | Welcome to day two, assure all is working. (Ed LaRue, Dave Hedrick, Dr. Fusari)    |
| 09:10 (15) | Caring about your data. (Dr. Fusari)   |
| 09:25 (55) | 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, USFWS)                   |
| 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, Dr. Fusari)            |
| 14:00      | End of class. Reminder of what's next (quiz and field day) (Dr. Fusari)            |

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

**EITHER** Friday November 1 **OR** Saturday November 2: 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.