

**Instructional Related Activities
Report Form**

SPONSOR	DEPARTMENT
Dr A. Chapman	Biology

ACTIVITY TITLE	DATE (S) OF ACTIVITY
Field Trip to Santa Cruz Island and the Western Foundation of Vertebrate Zoology	March 13 th (Santa Cruz Island) April 22 nd (WFVZ)

PLEASE EXPLAIN (1) DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY; (2) HOW DID THE ACTIVITY RELATE TO A COURSE(S); AND (3) WHAT YOU LEARNED FROM THE PROCESS.

The Channel Islands field trip is an integral component of Biol 433 Ecology and the Environment. The trip includes crossing the Santa Barbara Channel with stops made enroute to look for, and identify, the marine fauna of this region. Once on the island, the students took a guided hike by an experienced naturalist. They were introduced to the unique aspects of the ecology of the many plant communities, and identifying dominant, endemic, and indicator plant species to be found on the island.

Students investigated the ecological characteristics of natural ecosystems and the basic effects of human society upon those systems. Plant and animal distribution patterns in relation to past and present physical and biotic factors were covered. Issues of resource management, population, food production, global environmental problems were also emphasized. This field trip addressed several educational objectives of the Ecology and the Environment course. Namely to:

- (a) understand the history of the Channel Islands
- (b) familiarize students with native and exotic species
- (c) evaluate the methods currently being used to restore the island
- (d) quantify the effectiveness of the different management strategies adopted and consider their controversial nature.
- (e) observe and consider the distinct plant and animal communities and how they relate to island biogeography
- (f) appreciate the islands as a repository for the biodiversity of this region

The WFVZ trip allowed students to appreciate the value of museum collections and gain an understanding of how scientists use these collections to answer hypothesis –driven questions.