BSc. (Life Science) -
Zoology Component (Semester - V)

DISCIPLINE SPECIFIC CORE COURSE-15 (Zoo-LS-DSC-15):– Evolutionary Ecology

CREDIT DISTRIBUTION, ELIGIBILITY AND PRE-REQUISITES OF THE COURSE

Course title & Code	Credits	Credit distribution of the course			Eligibility criteria	Pre-requisite of the course (if any)
		Lecture	Tutorial	Practical		
Evolutionary Ecology Zoo-LS-DSC-15	04	02	Nil	02	Passed Class XII with Chemistry/ Biology/ Biotechnology	Basic concept of Ecology

Learning Objectives

The learning objectives of this course are as follows:

- to explore the interface of ecological and evolutionary forces that leads to the diversity of the form.
- to understand the function, and behaviour among animals.
- to impart an understanding of the evolutionary origin and drivers of biological variation and diversity, including the significance of genetic variation, natural selection, and genetic drift.
- to unravel the evolution of animals, sexual selection, the evolution of mating systems, animal interactions, reaction norms and plasticity.
- to learn about co-evolution between species and ecology from a phylogenetic perspective and compares evolutionary processes behind reproductive and ecological adaptations.
- to understand how communities and species interact with their environment at large spatial and temporal scales.

Learning Outcomes

By studying this course, students will be able to

- better understand the diverse relationships that the organisms have in the environment.
- analyze the patterns of distribution of animals in different regions and ecosystems.
- gain insight to the major events in history of life and major theories of evolution.
- know the fundamental concepts of natural selection, speciation, mass extinction and macro-evolution.
- explain the characteristics, dynamics, and growth of populations.
- appreciate the characteristics of the community, ecosystem development and climax theories.
- gain knowledge about the relationship of the evolution of various species and the environment they live in.

SYLLABUS OF DSC- 15

UNIT- 1: Introduction to Evolutionary Ecology **3 hrs**

Introduction to the concepts of evolution and ecology and the relationship, evolutionary theories and origin of life, Levels of ecological hierarchy, heritability, natural selection, fitness and adaptation; Types of selection, Ecological adaptations of animals to their environment.

UNIT- 2: **Population Ecology** **7 hrs**

Group attributes- Density, natality, mortality, dispersal and dispersion, life tables, fecundity tables, survivorship curves, age ratio, sex ratio, dispersal and dispersion. Population growth- Exponential and logistic growth, Life history traits - r and K selection. Population regulation - Density dependent and independent. Population interactions: Positive and negative interactions.

UNIT- 3: Community Interactions **6 hrs**

Characteristics of community- species richness, dominance, diversity and abundance. Community organisation – habitat, niche, guilds, and dominant species. Interspecific interactions with examples. Species diversity indices. Types of ecological succession. Characteristics of climax community, Concept of keystone, flagship, umbrella species with examples.

UNIT- 4: Processes of Evolutionary Change and Species Concept **7 hrs**

Natural selection and its types, Genetic drift, Artificial selection. Species concept, Isolating mechanisms, Modes of speciation (Allopatric, Sympatric, Parapatric and Peripatric), Adaptive radiation/macroevolution (Darwin finches).

UNIT- 5: Coevolution **4 hrs**

Introduction to coevolution; types of coevolution (pairwise coevolution, diffuse coevolution, and gene-for-gene coevolution); Co-evolutionary interactions (Coevolution of competitors, Predator-prey coevolution, Host-parasite coevolution, Coevolution of mutualists); Evolutionary equilibria. Approaches to examine coevolution; Co-speciation and diversification.

UNIT- 6: Macroecology **3 hrs**

Introduction to macroecology: patterns and constraints; macroecological datasets; statistical patterns of abundance, distribution and diversity; Allometry: metabolism, body size and temperature; Macroecology of humans; Conservation macroecology: assessing, prioritizing, and quantifying biodiversity at large scales; Extinction dynamics.

Practical: **60 hrs**

(Laboratory periods: 15 classes of 4 hours each)

1. Study of the phytoplankton and zooplankton: Collection of specimens from an ecosystem (pond/river/lake/forest/garden) to study its biotic and abiotic components.
2. Measurement of temperature, turbidity/penetration of light, determination of pH, Dissolved Oxygen content (Winkler's method), chlorides, hardness, Chemical Oxygen Demand, free CO_2.
3. Gause's Principle with laboratory and field examples, Lotka-Volterra equation-significance in competition; Lotka-Volterra equation, functional and numerical responses in Predation.
4. Determination of population density in a natural/hypothetical community by quadrate method and calculation of Shannon-Weiner diversity index for the same community.
5. Study of life tables and plotting of survivorship curves of different types from the hypothetical/real data provided.
6. Catch, mark and recapture technique for finding the population size.
7. Study of homology, analogy and homoplasy from suitable specimens.
8. Construction of cladograms based on morphological characters.
9. Study and verification of Hardy-Weinberg Law by Chi-square analysis
10. Project report based on the visit to natural history museum/National Park/Biodiversity Park/Wildlife Sanctuary.

Essential/recommended readings

1. Futuyma, Douglas and Mark, Kirkpatrick (2017) 3rd Ed. Evolutionary Biology, Oxford University Press
2. Zimmer C. and Emlen D. J., (2013) 1st Ed. Evolution: Making Sense of Life, Roberts & Co.
3. Hall, B.K. and Hallgrimson, B. (2013) Evolution; 5th Edition, Jones and Barlett Publishers.
4. Chapman, J., and Reiss, M. (2012). Ecology Principles and Applications; Cambridge University Press.
5. Miller, T., and Spoolman, S. (2008) 12th Edition Environmental Science- Problems, Concepts and Solutions; Thomson Brooks/Cole.
6. Odum, E. P. and Barrette, G. W. (2008) Fundamentals of Ecology; 5th Indian edition; Brooks/Cole

Suggestive readings

1. Smith T. M. and Smith R. L. (2015). Elements of Ecology. 9th International Edition. Publisher: Benjamin Cummings.
2. Ridley, M. (2004). Evolution. III Edition, Blackwell publishing.
3. Southwood, T. R. E., & Henderson, P. a. (2000). Ecological Methods, 3rd Edition; Blackwell Science Ltd. (Vol. 278, Issue 5705).