

# Guidelines for Working in the Field

## Dress appropriately and bring your own personal gear.

- Wear old jeans/clothes and comfortable walking shoes that you will not mind getting dirty and wet. Some labs will require that you wade into swamps and wetlands. Even in warm weather, long pants, a long-sleeve shirt, sturdy shoes, and a hat are recommended for protection from abrasion and exposure to insects and allergenic plants. Bring a light raincoat as well. Laboratory exercises will be conducted *rain or shine*.
- Bring a personal supply of water, insect/tick repellents, and a small snack.
- Bring writing materials, lab handouts and any necessary lab equipment.

**Be aware of the risks associated with exposure to organisms you may encounter.** This includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- [Stinging insects](#), including bees, wasps and hornets
- [Mosquitos](#) which may carry West Nile virus
- [Ticks](#) which may carry Lyme disease, Rocky Mountain spotted fever or Ehrlichiosis
- [Allergenic plant materials](#) (e.g., poison ivy)
- [Venomous snakes](#) (i.e. [copperhead](#), [cottonmouth](#) and [timber rattlesnakes](#))

## Report any accidents or injuries to the instructor immediately.

- Nausea and light-headedness are two early warning signs of heat stroke. Please notify the instructor if you begin to feel heat stressed during the lab. *Drink plenty of water while outdoors!*
- Students with severe allergies and other relevant health issues must carry their own medications (e.g., [EpiPens](#) to counteract anaphylaxis), as these will not be provided by the instructor. *Students at risk for allergic reactions must inform the instructor as well as lab partners of emergency protocols (e.g., location of emergency medication, administration instructions).*

**Minimize exposure to ticks and mosquitoes by wearing long pants and sleeves to keep skin covered.** Tucking your pant legs into your socks gives you added protection from crawling organisms. You may also choose to use **insect repellent**, carefully following label directions.

- [DEET](#) can be applied directly to skin but do not apply over cuts, or irritated skin; do not spray near eyes or mouth (apply to hands and then rub carefully on face); do not use in excess; do not use under clothes; wash as soon as you no longer need the repellent. DEET concentrations above 50% confer no added protection.
- [Permethrin](#) is a synthetic pyrethroid that can be used to protect from mosquitoes and from ticks. It should be applied to clothing and not directly to the skin.

**Always keep up with the class.** Do not separate from the group (i.e., do not hike off for *any* reason) unless first given permission from the instructor. *Always work with someone else and be certain others know your whereabouts.*

**Collect samples carefully.** Be aware of what you are grabbing/digging through at all times.