

Field Book

Just a few points at the outset. Your field book should include an index for easy reference. You should write in pencil as it will not bleed or smear should it get wet. Typically you will want a field book that is small and can fit in your pocket or pack easily. "Rite in the rain" books work well although they can be expensive.

Date:



At the top of each page include a date with year

Weather:



You should include brief weather descriptions throughout the day, and for each activity. I often include conditions at dawn, and then update at junctures throughout the day as I undertake different activities. Note cloud conditions, precipitation, approximate temperature, wind etc.

Locale:



Here you should provide the name of each locale, a physical description of the site – whether it be a village, camping site, or field locale – and include habitat descriptions. Helpful for future recollections is a simple map.

Activity:



For each activity that we undertake, you should include a purpose, description of the actual activity, species seen, or insights gained. If in a day there are multiple activities then you should include these, and you should note time at outset of each.

Species
description:



You will see many species and for some of these we will delve into some detail. For these you should be sure to list the common name, Latin name (can be added later), and any notes on its appearance or life history. You should on occasion include a sketch to help you recall important details later.

Field
observation:



We will visit a variety of sites in forest, savannah, and wetland ecosystems – here you will want to make descriptions on species assemblages, habitat structure, interactions, or conservation challenges, among other possible points that you might think of.

Talk
notes:



For all student talks or guest lectures you should include brief notes. These need not be excruciatingly detailed, but simply include overarching themes and conclusions. Also included should be the name of the speaker, affiliation, and venue.

Data:



Should we undertake independent research projects, or field practica where we collect data, then these should also be written into your field book, with relevant data, and the purpose of the exercise or hypothesis.