

An Average Day – What to Expect

(a) Daily timeline	Typical day: 7:00 breakfast. 8:00 meeting to discuss objectives and to organize field gear for the day. 8:30-noon in the field. 12:00-13:00 lunch. We return to the field station for lunch many days, but we will eat a bagged lunch in the field on a couple of days. 13:00-17:30 field work. 17:30-18:30 supper. 19:00-21:00 evening activities (e.g. student presentations, sorting and databasing samples in the lab, data analysis, guest lectures). On a severe weather day, we would sort samples in the lab and also use the time for a tutorial on ecological data analysis. You will contribute to cooking and cleaning using a daily chores rotation schedule. So bring at least one yummy recipe!
(b) Work habitat & Physical exertion	This course involves about 7 hours of field work per day. At some locations, we may have a short hike of up to half an hour to an hour prior to reaching the site. It is important to have good treads on your footwear. This may include rubber boots, due to working at the edges of ponds and in water-logged environments. Please make sure that your boots are worn in before you go. Breaking in new boots while on the course is a bad idea.
(c) Common activities	Common activities include collecting samples in the field (e.g. collecting invertebrates) and collecting data in the field (e.g. identifying and recording plant species in quadrats). You will also spend time making your own observations and writing in your field journal. We will have breaks for meals and to consume water. A main risk is slipping and falling (e.g. into a pond). To mitigate this, bring rubber boots with good treads and exercise caution.
(d) Weather, dehydration, & biting insects	The Cambridge region in June can experience wide fluctuations in temperature, depending upon the direction of the wind. On a typical day, the temperature is about 11° C with lows of about 3 °C. It is very important to bring warm clothing, which you can wear in layers for flexibility, as well as rain gear. They have seen snow in June. Biting insects (particularly mosquitoes and black flies) are present in extreme abundance at certain sites. It is absolutely essential to bring a <u>high-quality bug jacket</u> as well as pants that insects can't bite through (e.g. field pants with tight weave or breathable rain pants). Some field researchers prefer a hat plus head net.
(e) Sleeping, washroom & laundry facilities	Accommodation for this course will be comfortable. Sleeping quarters will be in the form of dormitories, which means multiple people per room. Linens are provided.
(f) Meal plans & food allergies	Currently it will be expected that you and your fellow students will prepare most of the meals. Each person will prepare their own bagged lunch for any day excursions. Student with dietary restrictions or allergies can be accommodated within the limitations of what is available at the local grocery store. If you require special food, please arrange to bring it with you.
(g) Non-academic responsibilities	At CHARS, everyone pitches in with washing dishes. We will have a sign-up sheet for rotations. You are also responsible for following all rules at the field station regarding noise levels, safety protocols, etc.
(h) Degree of isolation	You should be able to recharge your laptop, phone, camera, etc. in the evenings at CHARS (except in case of an occasional power outage). There is usually internet connectivity, but it is very slow. You are requested not to try to watch videos online, etc. There is a medical facility and pharmacy in the town of Cambridge Bay. CHARS is located about 1 km from the centre of town. Please note that Cambridge Bay is a remote community. It is essential that you bring a more than adequate supply of any medications that you require.
(i) Alcohol & drugs	For field and lab safety, participants must abstain from alcohol and recreational drug consumption during the hours of our course activities. After hours, consumption of alcohol may be permitted however only under the permission of the CHARS director. The course is intense, and we have a full day of activity every day.
(j) Vaccinations/ Insurances	You should be up to date on the regular course of vaccines recommended for all people living in Canada. No additional special vaccines are required. It is also recommended to purchase cross-province medical insurance in the case of an unforeseen event (e.g. ambulance fees aren't covered through OHIP). Some students already have insurance through their parents' plans (so check), while others can purchase additional insurance through a student travel agency. If you are booking travel to and from our departure city, please make sure that your tickets are flexible or have cancellation insurance. Travel in the north can be unpredictable and tight connection times are not always possible.
(k) Social Situations	The course involves some group work as well as living in close quarters. For refuge, we will try to incorporate a variety of activities, including quiet time to allow individuals to 're-charge'. We ask that people are respectful of other's needs.
(l) Final comments	This course offers the opportunity to conduct field biological studies in a unique setting and to experience part of northern Canada. This opportunity would not be available without the initiative and support of CHARS. A key for this experience is the relationship building between northern and southern students.