ENGL 478: It’s Not Easy Reading Green
Special Studies in Literature and Environment

Instructor: Richard Pickard
Email: rpickard@uvic.ca
Phone: 250-721-6636

Course description:

Love for animals, anxiety about climate change, anger about pipelines....

We should be able to keep these things in mind when we read, but in English classes, somehow, we still often write and talk in traditional ways about theme, character, form, and so on. These are important elements of literary study, certainly, but what happens if we pay deliberate attention to questions of environment, ecology, and place while we’re reading? Is it the same literature? Are you the same reader?

In “It’s Not Easy Reading Green,” we’ll use ecocriticism to help us read with nature in mind. We’ll look together at two local literary works, but you’ll also be asked to look at readings for other courses, or to bring into the course books you’ve enjoyed outside school. By the end of the semester, I hope you’ll find it easier reading green!

Proposed assignments:

Short paper on ecocriticism: 20%

Reading greenly:

Book report (10%), paper (35%), and poster or presentation (10%) 55%

Exam: 25%
Proposed reading list:
Cheryll Glotfelty & Harold Fromm, eds., *The Ecocriticism Reader: Landmarks in Literary Ecology*

Jon Gordon, *Unsustainable Oil: Facts, Counterfacts and Fictions*

Theresa Kishkan, *Winter Wren*

Rita Wong, *undercurrent*