

HAIDA GWAII

A large evergreen tree stands on a dark, rocky cliff edge, its branches reaching towards the sky. The background shows a vast, calm ocean under a sky filled with soft, white clouds.

April 27 -May 22, 2026

FACULTY OF NATURAL & APPLIED SCIENCE

Students will spend a portion of the course on TWU's campus, preparing for fieldwork before travelling to the village of Masset in Haida Gwaii, where they will stay together while exploring the island's beaches, woodlands, and cultural sites. Field activities include hiking through different forest ecosystems (including a visit to the Golden Spruce sapling) to study terrestrial ecology in the temperate rainforest, as well as exploring the diverse freshwater and coastal ecosystems found throughout Kiis Gwaay (Graham Island). Students will also visit the Haida Heritage Centre and other places of cultural significance to engage with Haida perspectives on stewardship and relational ecology. Together, these experiences provide both practical field training and an integrated understanding of Haida Gwaii's natural and cultural heritage.



TRINITY WESTERN UNIVERSITY

HAIDA GWAII TRAVEL STUDY

PRIMARY OBJECTIVES

1. Develop hands-on ecological field skills through daily investigation of Haida Gwaii's marine, intertidal, and temperate rainforest ecosystems, including species identification, ecological sampling, and independent research design.
2. Build an integrated understanding of ecological relationships by examining biodiversity, community structure, nutrient cycling, and the interconnectedness of land and sea systems unique to Haida Gwaii.
3. Engage deeply with both Christian stewardship perspectives and Haida knowledge, exploring Indigenous relational ecology, cultural teachings, and ethical care for creation while cultivating humility, respect, and responsibility as emerging scientists.

COURSES

BIOL 400 TR - ECOLOGY OF HAIDA GWAII

Immersive and field-based exploration of the ecology of the rich terrestrial and marine ecosystems of Haida Gwaii. Emphasis is placed on understanding the archipelago's unique biodiversity, complex food webs, and nutrient cycling (from the alpine zone to the seas below), as well as the integration of Indigenous knowledge and Haida perspectives on stewardship and relational ecology. Fieldwork takes place on Haida Gwaii. **Prerequisites: none**

INSTRUCTORS

ELIZABETH ZWAMBORN, PH.D.



Elizabeth Zwamborn is a professor of Biology at Trinity Western University. A former TWU alum, she completed her graduate studies in Nova Scotia before returning to teach here full-time in 2023.

Dr. Zwamborn's research is focused on the behavioural ecology of whales and dolphins, including decision-making and other elements of group life.

APPLY HERE



Contact: Anna Ogden
E: anna.ogden@twu.ca

P: 604-513-2067
E: TDGLOBAL@TWU.CA

twu.ca/travel

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