First Essay, EEB 5322, Cognition & Evolution

In chapter 1, Shettleworth advocates a research program that views "cognition as adaptation." You first essay should answer the question: ***How should the 'cognition as adaptation' research program proceed?***

Guidance: I expect you to give your personal view of this (i.e. not just repeat what Shettleworth says), marshalling your personal interests and whatever supporting material you can dig up. When I've read your essay I should know exactly what types of experiments (or observations) you think are important in this research program; what you think this program's strengths and weaknesses are, and how this approaches contributes to our understanding of cognition and behavior.

Some points to think about (for discussion on Tuesday)

What the hell is a research program? (Is it different from a project, or an experiment?)

What is cognition, how do we usually study it?

What is adaptation.

How do people study morphological adaptations?

What are the alternatives to an evolutionary approach?

What are the important topics/questions in the study of cognition as adaptation?

EEB 5322 Essay Rubric

I grade essays on an A+ to B- scale. If your essay falls below this range I will return it to you for revision. I will grade the revision on an A+ to F scale (so it's one shot deal).

The default essay grade is B+. A B+ essay has the following basic properties.

1) Logical argument, clearly presented.
2) Mechanically competent writing: including
   a. Minimal use of the passive voice
   b. Grammatically correct
   c. Sources properly acknowledged and cited

Additions or subtractions for these basic expectations will more you up or down the scale.

Additions:

1) Creative, novel argument that is well supported (this can move you right up to the top)
2) Use of sources, examples and so on that go beyond the text (again this can be a big gain if it's significant enough)

Subtractions:

1) Errors in logic. Things to watch for: proximate/ultimate confusions; uncritical anthropomorphism; uncritical use of empirical evidence.
2) Poor mechanics; general sloppiness and so on.

Name:	
Argument (comments)	
Mechanics	
Additions	
Subtractions	