Bridging the gap between the history of art and the history of science, the manuscript and the print age, the medieval and early modern periods, this seminar interrogates the creative ways in which the writing of natural history was entwined with visual representation. It focuses on four areas of descriptive knowledge, incubators of modern disciplines: bestiaries (zoology); herbals (botany); lapidaries (geology); alchemy (chemistry). This course includes fieldtrips (to the Mortimer Rare Book Room, the Botanical Gardens, a regional museum of natural history). It welcomes students interested in art history, the history of science, the history of ideas, medieval and Renaissance studies. Open to juniors and seniors only. No prerequisite but permission by the instructor. A/H 4 credits