

WILDLIFE BIOLOGISTS IN ACTION

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What is a Wildlife Biologist? A wildlife biologist has multi-disciplinary tasks related to wildlife management including: manage wildlife habitats to help sustain wildlife populations, provide technical assistance, develop management plans, assist with wildlife research and monitoring, educate others about wildlife and associated management techniques, and help enforce rules and regulations. Biologists often collaborate with other professional disciplines in order to accomplish shared goals.



Wildlife Management It is the art and science of maintaining or manipulating natural resources (e.g. soil, water, plants, and wildlife) to benefit wildlife and the general public. These benefits may be ecological, economic, social, recreational, or scientific. Wildlife managers support nature-based tourism, promote economic opportunities, enhance biodiversity, and deal with issues like wildlife overabundance, conflicts between humans and wildlife, and disease transmission between humans and wildlife. Wildlife management provides the framework for recreational activities such as hunting, trapping, and wildlife viewing, which all positively affect the local economy throughout our state.





JOBS IN WILDLIFE

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Wildlife Science Wildlife biologists gather data on physiology, genetics, ecology, behavior, diseases, nutrition, population dynamics, land-use changes, and environmental pollution to make knowledgeable management decisions. Biologists collect, analyze, and interpret data with objectivity and proficiency and report fact-based findings to colleagues and the public.

Wildlife Education Some biologists teach wildlife ecology and management courses at colleges and universities and also conduct classes on basic wildlife science for school children. Wildlife educators provide information to: the public, school groups, landowners, industries, and civic and nonprofit groups. Natural and managed habitats at urban nature centers, parks, game lands and refuges provide an outdoor educational venue and opportunities for wildlife professionals to interpret and explain wildlife management to citizens. Environmental ethical concepts are crucial to pass onto future generations.

Wildlife Law Enforcement Enforcement officers enforce the rules and regulations designed to maintain or increase desired wildlife population levels. Conservation officers monitor animals, control wildlife populations, and enforce hunting seasons and harvest bag limits. They enlighten the public about conservation laws, ecological principles, management practices, and proper sportsmanship.

Wildlife and Public Relations Some biologists interpret research and management efforts to assist the public in understanding and accepting science-based management. This involves writing articles and news releases, photojournalism, public speaking, and working with the media.

Land Use Planning & Regulation Wildlife biologists work with local communities to plan development or other land uses in a manner that aids long-term conservation of rare plant and animal species and communities. Biologists also help develop sustainable recreational opportunities for the public to enjoy our scenic natural resources for fishing, bird watching, hiking, hunting, horseback riding, wildlife photography, and off road vehicles.

Wildlife Policy A wildlife policy analyst may work in administrative, congressional, private, or organizational settings. Jobs may include working with the environmental staff of a member of Congress, or in a policy position for a non-governmental environmental organization.

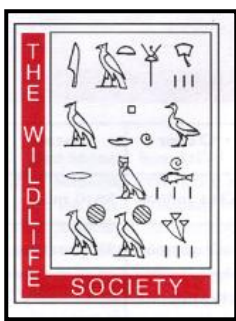
Consultant Consultants are independent wildlife professionals who make their services available to the public. Businesses, industry, and governments need experienced wildlife consultants to help them evaluate proposed projects or interpret requirements of wildlife policies such as the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Their roles may include biological assessments or opinions and evaluation of alternatives according to environmental law.

Administration These positions are highly specialized and usually open to those who have advanced through lower-level positions. Administrators must have strong leadership abilities and a capacity for working with people. Technical knowledge and a solid grasp on public relations and business management are essential. As an administrator, one must be able to effectively develop and promote sound resource management programs despite political, social, and economic controversy.

Education Requirements A bachelor's degree is essential for most wildlife management positions. A master's degree generally is required for positions in research, teaching, and certain phases of management and administration. It is important to have good science, math, communication, leadership, and public relations skills. Volunteering in the field provides practical "hands-on" experience.

Personal Requirements:

- Excellent physical condition
- Handle adverse weather, insects, and dangerous terrain
- A high degree of academic ability, initiative, and self-discipline
- Good communication skills, both oral and written
- Responsible and dependable
- Work independently and work effectively with teams



WHERE ARE THE JOBS?

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Public Agencies

Most wildlife-oriented positions are governmental.

- wildlife biologist
- research biologist
- wildlife manager
- conservation officer
- biological science technician
- park ranger
- refuge/park manager

State Government: Department of Natural Resources

- > NC Natural Heritage Program and NC Plant Conservation Program
- > NC Wildlife Resources Commission
- > NC Division of Marine Fisheries
- > NC Division of Forest Resources
- > NC Division of Parks and Recreation



Examples of Federal Natural Resource Agencies:

- > Biological Resources Division of the US Geological Survey
- > Environmental Protection Agency
- > National Park Service
- > Department of Defense
- > Public Health Services
- > Natural Resource Conservation Service
- > US Army Corps of Engineers
- > US Fish and Wildlife Service
- > USDA Forest Service
- > USDA Wildlife Services



Colleges & Universities

Colleges and universities employ wildlife professionals for their teaching and research programs. Professors specializing in wildlife biology usually perform research and teach classes. These positions require a broad academic background in science, humanities, and other technical subjects in the wildlife field. An advanced degree, usually a PHD, is required.



Private

Opportunities for private employment have expanded in recent years. Industrial, engineering and other consulting firms employ wildlife specialists. Once a biologist gains experience and reputation, he/she can become a self-employed consultant. Large firms and private landowners employ biologists to provide expertise in forest management, wetlands, endangered species, wildlife improvements, mining, or energy production. One also can earn a living as a writer, artist, or photographer specializing in wildlife.

The North Carolina Chapter of the Wildlife Society (NCTWS)
Excellence in wildlife stewardship through science and education