

Wildlife Management

General Information

Majors in wildlife management receive a solid background in basic biology, followed by study of natural resources and wildlife management. They study conservation of animal populations and their habitats, paying special attention to species that are hunted regularly and species that are threatened or endangered.

What the Major is Like

Wildlife management requires a knowledge of both biology and resource management. Students pursuing this major should therefore have strong scientific and mathematical aptitudes. Though most of their college courses are in the area of biology, students also acquire a foundation in chemistry, mathematics (through elementary calculus), and statistics.

In addition to biology, wildlife students study anatomy and physiology. Vertebrate zoology courses, such as ornithology and mammalogy, are also important. It is essential; however, that a wildlife biologist be able to identify plants as well as birds and mammals, so at least one plant taxonomy course is generally required. Most of the other courses in a wildlife management program are field oriented and deal with ecology.

Wildlife management involves animals living in natural environments. Students in this major therefore need to be prepared to manipulate animal populations and their habitats. As human populations continue to grow throughout the world, animal populations are inevitably affected by loss or alteration of habitat, reduction in food supply, presence of pollutants, and other human-related factors. Of particular concern are species that are hunted on a regular basis and species that are threatened or endangered, but many other species merit attention as well.

Because most wildlife courses include field work, students gain experience in identifying birds and mammals, estimating their populations, and analyzing various aspects of their habitats. Field trips also give students firsthand knowledge of the habitat preferences of the animals they study in the classroom. At many universities summer courses give students an opportunity to work full-time on field projects.

Interests & Skills

Interests: Nature, outdoors, conservation of natural resources, hunting and bird-watching.

Skills: Science, effective communication, mathematics and quantitative reasoning.

Typical Courses

Wildlife Management
Field Methods
Ecology
Mammalogy
Wildlife Behavior
Anatomy and Physiology
Ornithology
Wetlands Ecology/Management
Uplands Ecology/Management
Plant Taxonomy
Natural Resource Policy
Statistics

High School Preparation

English 4 years
Algebra 2 years
Geometry 1 year
Precalculus .5 years
Trigonometry .5 years
Biology 1 year
Chemistry 1 year
Physics 1 year
History Or Social Studies 2 years

Potential Careers

The wildlife management major may lead to jobs as a wildlife biologist/manager, environmental educator, environmental consultant, park naturalist, research wildlife biologist, research technician, water quality specialist, toxicologist, laboratory technician, zoo worker, game warden, ranch manager, high school teacher, or college professor.

Related Majors

Related majors from the *College Board Guide to 150 Popular College Majors*:

Biology, Botany, Fisheries, Forestry, Range Management, Zoology

Sources of Additional Information

The Wildlife Society
5410 Grosvenor Lane
Bethesda, MD 20814
Phone: (301)897-9770
www.wildlife.org

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Winsystems Center Bldg
711 Stadium Dr., STE 252
Arlington, TX 76011-6247
Phone: (817)277-1100
www.fws.gov

Texas Parks and Wildlife
4200 Smith School Road
Austin, TX 78744
Phone: (800)792-1112
www.tpwd.state.tx.us