

# Career Opportunities in the Wildlife Division



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## Career positions most often available in the Wildlife Division include:

**The Wildlife Division** of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department offers a variety of fulfilling careers for dedicated people seeking challenging positions in wildlife science, conservation ecology, resource management and related disciplines. Wildlife Division employees receive a very good benefits package and high level of job satisfaction.

The mission of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department is to manage and conserve the natural and cultural resources of Texas and to provide hunting, fishing, and outdoor recreation opportunities for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations.

To achieve this goal, the Department's Wildlife Division professionals coordinate and conduct wildlife research, inventory and monitor wildlife species, evaluate habitat and recommend hunting seasons for game species. Other activities include providing technical assistance to private landowners, conservation of nongame and rare resources, habitat improvement, land acquisition and management, and wildlife restoration. Additionally, the Wildlife Division utilizes wildlife management areas (WMAs) as sites to conduct wildlife research, field tours, seminars, and habitat management demonstrations. Public access is provided to these lands for other appropriate uses such as hunting, fishing, nature study, camping and hiking.

Programs administered by the Wildlife Division include Big Game, Small Game and Habitat Assessment, Private Lands and Public Hunting, and Wildlife Diversity. Programs are implemented in the field via a Regional Director in each of four administrative regions. Each region is divided into two districts each consisting of a District Leader and their staff of wildlife biologists and wildlife technicians who conduct biological surveys and provide assistance to private landowners. In addition, 10 Project Leaders and their staff of wildlife biologists and wildlife technicians operate and manage 51 wildlife management areas totaling approximately 730,000 acres.

The activities of Texas Parks and Wildlife professionals are vital as expanding urbanization and population growth put unparalleled pressures on Texas' natural and cultural resources.

### Fish and Wildlife Technician (Wildlife Technician)

Wildlife technicians perform skilled field and maintenance work in the development of wildlife resources. Wildlife technicians may work independently or be under the supervision of a wildlife biologist. They perform technical functions including surveys, data collection and records maintenance. They also perform repairs and maintenance activities involving power tools, lawn equipment, farm machinery and heavy equipment.

This position requires graduation from a standard high school or possession of a General Equivalency Diploma (GED). Preference is given to applicants with relevant experience and knowledge in farming, ranching, construction, plumbing, welding, electricity and vehicle maintenance. The current salary, as of September 2008, for wildlife technicians ranges from \$30,573 to \$40,146 annually.

### Natural Resources Specialist (Wildlife Biologist)

Wildlife biologists design and conduct studies on the wildlife resources of Texas. Wildlife biologists manage wildlife in a specified region and may work with big game, small game, birds and nongame, and/or urban wildlife. Wildlife biologists conduct surveys of wildlife species and their habitats, formulate recommendations for hunting seasons and bag limits, analyze data, prepare reports, act as professional witnesses during public hearings and supervise wildlife technicians. Wildlife biologists frequently assist landowners with the conservation, management and development of wildlife habitat and the proper management of the various wildlife populations which utilize that habitat. Wildlife biologists also directly manage wildlife habitat and conduct research and public hunts on 51 wildlife management areas across the state.

This position requires a degree in wildlife science, wildlife management or a closely-related field. Possession of advanced degrees in these fields is an asset, but is not required for entry-level positions. An extensive knowledge of wildlife ecology and basic statistics is essential. Familiarity with wildlife literature and proficiency in the use of computer software for word-processing and data analysis are necessary. Good communication skills and an ability to work with diverse groups are required. The current salary, as of September 2008, for Wildlife Biologists ranges from \$33,234 to \$50,133 annually. This is for the NRS I – V levels and does not include the NRSVI supervisory positions.

### Program Specialist

Program specialists are responsible for the coordination of program activities within the agency and between other state or federal agencies. They are trained in a specific discipline, such as wetlands, migratory birds, upland game birds, white-tailed deer, mule deer, big horn sheep, archeology, botany, conservation biology, ecology, interpretation, range science, habitat assessment, data management, and computer science. Resource specialists conduct field work and provide support for other field staff in their particular areas of expertise. They also ensure that the Department's activities on public lands comply with all state and federal regulations.

These positions often require either an advanced degree or several years of specific job-related experience. The current annual salary, as of September 2008, for Program Specialists in the Wildlife Division ranges from \$36,767 to \$61,200.

**All job vacancies**, including skill and educational requirements, are listed with the Texas Workforce Commission ([www.twc.state.tx.us](http://www.twc.state.tx.us)), and the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department ([www.tpwd.state.tx.us](http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us)) web pages. Applications are accepted only for positions currently vacant. Texas Parks and Wildlife is an equal opportunity/affirmative action employer.

