



Research Wildlife Biologist

Scientists study wildlife as a part of their United States Geological Survey (USGS) work at many places throughout the world. Through many cooperative meetings and programs and with many federal agencies and state governments involved, the employees of this USGS division fulfill their mission of providing the scientific technology and understanding required to support management of sound conservation of biological resources. This can be done through applied and basic research in the field and at laboratories.

Wildlife biology is a multi-disciplinary advancement into the deep study of wild animals and their habitats. Technical investigations and research are done by [scientists](#) educated in wildlife—zoology, biology, chemistry, botany, mathematics, or various numbers of these disciplines. The professional [career](#) title for these scientists is “wildlife biologist.”

Qualifications and Education for Research Wildlife Biologists

The basic qualifications or education to become a wildlife biologist, GS-486, in non-research areas consists of a degree in the biological sciences with: at least nine semester hours in such subjects in wildlife as mammalogy, animal ecology, ornithology, wildlife techniques, wildlife management, or some associated courses in the field of wildlife biology; and at least twelve semester hours of zoology in such subjects as invertebrate zoology, general zoology, comparative anatomy, vertebrate zoology, genetics, physiology, cellular biology, ecology, entomology, parasitology, or some informative research courses in such subject matters (some extra courses in the subject of wildlife biology may be used to consider the requirements of zoology where required); and at least nine semester hours in botany or some associated plant sciences. Students may also meet the basic and initial requirements at all levels with a combination of course work and experience as given above.

For some positional research programs, the requirement is that of a bachelor’s degree with a major in wildlife zoology, biology, or botany that contains at least thirty semester hours in course load of work in biological science and fifteen semester hours in the mathematical, physical, and earth sciences.

This type of course work must consist of at least nine semester hours of training needed in wildlife biology in such subjects as ornithology, mammalogy, wildlife management, animal ecology, principles of population dynamics, or linked

course [work](#) in the related fields of wildlife biology; and at least twelve semester hours in zoological subjects such as vertebrate zoology, invertebrate zoology, vertebrates comparative anatomy, animal physiology, embryology, herpetology, entomology, parasitology, and genetics; and at least nine semester hours in the areas of botany and associated plant science; and at least fifteen semester hours in any of two or more of the following: physics, chemistry, statistics, mathematics, soils, and geology.

Candidates or students who achieve the basic requirements will also be eligible at the level of GS-7 if they meet the criteria for Superior Academic Achievement*. Otherwise, applicants for places at the level of GS-7 and above must have some directly related graduate education or additional professional experience. The USGS is an equal chance employer and does not distinguish based on color, race, national origin, religion, gender, non-disqualifying conditions of handicap, age, or any other factors.

- Superior Academic Achievement needs a membership in a national academic amateur people society above the level of freshman; or standing in the class of upper third; or a complete CGPA of 3.5 or higher; or a CGPA of 3.0 or higher for all the work and experience in the major as computed on the education of four years or during the final two years of the syllabus.

Career of a Research Wildlife Biologist

Many people think wildlife biologists fight large game animals to the ground, slapping collars around their necks, and then wading through the forests for weeks or months on end to work and study different types of creatures. According to the research of Mariko Yamasaki, wildlife biologist for the Agriculture Department of the United States Forest Service, there is much more to wildlife biology than that.

According to Mariko, “nature is charming on several levels



Scientist Career Feature

from the tiniest ant all the way up to charismatic and wild animals such as wolves and bears. We have to move away from the notion that animals having fur or feathers and big brown eyes are considered more important than scaly, slimy living things with beady eyes. All organisms and creatures play a vital role—we must be convinced that their role and donation to the immense picture is accepted.”

There’s an old typecast that a biologist of wildlife spends a solitary and friendless life studying every time of nature. This clearly is not true—it is important and good to know how to work and live with people and how to understand, communicate, and deal with a range of opinions or viewpoints.

Someone asked Mariko the question “Do you ever meet with crises and difficult situations?”

He replied, “Not actually, but I do see many of controversy, particularly associated to wildlife and the use of natural assets and resources. My work has frequently become the object or topic of heated debate. Some people will support and agree with my findings wholeheartedly, while others call them useless or worthless. There are many numbers of methods of handling with this type of pressure. . . . It’s also important and useful to realize that everybody is allowed to give an opinion.

EmploymentCrossing is the largest collection of active jobs in the world.

We continuously monitor the hiring needs of more than 250,000 employers, including virtually every corporation and organization in the United States. We do not charge employers to post their jobs and we aggressively contact and investigate thousands of employers each day to learn of new positions. No one works harder than EmploymentCrossing.

Let EmploymentCrossing go to work for you.