What Can I Do With a Major In...

Bio Sciences-Fish & Wildlife Biology?

Fish & Wildlife Management programs[1] teach science of living systems by observing the structure, function, reproduction, growth, evolution, and behavior of living organisms and their relation to their natural environments. Many teach conservation and management of wilderness areas, the flora and fauna therein, and how to manage wildlife reservations and zoological facilities for recreational, commercial, and ecological purposes. Individuals will study wildlife biology, environmental science, natural resources management and policy, outdoor recreation and parks management, marine/aquatic biology, freshwater and saltwater ecosystems, water resources, fishing production operations, fishing policy and regulation, and the management of recreational and commercial fishing activities. Additionally, the design and operation of natural and artificial wildlife habitats, applicable law and regulations, and related administrative and communications skills may be taught. Fish and marine/aquatic product processing to ensure adequate conservation and efficient utilization are often emphasized. Individuals will be able to focus on different areas of wildlife and wild lands management; you may want to do research, concentrate on ecotourism issues, or specialize in aquatic wildlife. Finally, students may address problems such as scarcity of resources, endangerment, and preservation of natural resources.

Programs at Montana State University offer[2] a professional degree for those students who have an interest in employment in these fields. Study leading toward a bachelor's degree emphasizes basic principles of animal ecology, with considerable work in related fields. Students graduating with a bachelor's degree will be qualified for entry-level positions in natural resource management. However, the four-year option primarily provides prospective fish and wildlife biologists an adequate background for graduate work, which is required for most professional positions in natural resource agencies.

Characteristics associated with success[1] include a strong interest in the outdoors and in nature, wildlife, fishing and fisheries.

A student should[1]:

- be interested in improving the quality of life for all creatures on the earth
- be creative and enjoy solving problems in new ways
- have good computer skills
- be able to communicate well, both orally and in writing
- be interested in natural resources development and their impact on society and the environment

Occupations in this field require ability to[1]**:** be able to organize, analyze, and interpret data which you have collected in the field.

Related occupations include[1]**:**

- Fish and Game Warden
- Animal Scientist
- Park Ranger
- Wildlife Biologist
- Soil Conservationist
- Environmental Analyst
- Range Manager
- Forest Ecologist
- Park Naturalist
- Biochemist

MSU graduates (Bachelor's degree) were hired in the following selected fields:

Animal Nutritionist- Bridger Feeds
Accounting Associate - Montana State University
Deputy Sheriff- Gallatin County Fisheries
Horse Program Manager- Blue Valley Ranch Biological
Wildlife Biology Technician-Bureau of Land Management
Directional Driller-Baker Hughes INTEQ
Purchasing/Receiving Technician-Lattice Materials Corp.
Research Associate-Montana State University
Water Outer Proofer-Water Foundation Proofer
Insurance Agent- DiMarco-Diercks Insurance
Technician-US Fish, Wildlife & Parks

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MSU graduates Continued:

Administrative Assistant- Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks
Assistant Wildlife Biologist- Ducks Unlimited
Athletic Marketing Coordinator-Athletics
Biologist- US Fish and Wildlife; US Forest Service; Montana Wildcare
Biological Science Technician- National Park Service
Conservation Technician- South Dakota Game Fish and Parks
Fish and Game Biologist– US Fish and Wildlife Service
Fisheries Technician- Montana Fisheries Co Op Unit
Biological Aide- Idaho Fish & Game
Biological Technician- US Forest Service ; USDA Forestry Science
Biological Science Technician- National Science Foundation; US Fish and Wildlife Service, US Geological Survey
Clerk-Berge Park RV
Biologist- Wyoming Game and Fish Department
Fishing Guide- Upsetter Lake Lodge
Foreman- Trinity Contracting
Forest Tech- US Forest Service
Inspector- US Fish and Wildlife Service
Utility Driver – UPS
Ski Shop Management- PHD Skis
Service Rider- St. Boni Motor Sports Waiter-McKenzie River Pizza Co.
Warden Trainee- Oregon State Police
Wildlife Conservationist—US Department of Agriculture
Veterans Service Representative- Veterans Administration
Volunteer- Peace Corps

Salary averages of survey respondents: (# of respondents in parentheses)

2007: MT: $ 31,312 (4)   Out of State: $ 29,108 (4)
2006: MT: $ 31,420 (4)   Out of State: $ 34,000 (2)
2005: MT: $ 21,693 (9)   Out of State: Insufficient Data
2004: MT: $ 26,130 (4)   Out of State: $25,265 (3)

Graduates from this program entered programs of further education at these institutions:

Central Michigan University
Montana State University
Pennsylvania State

Other Sources of Information:

US Fish and Wildlife Service: www.fws.gov
National Wildlife Federation: www.nwf.org
Wildlife Management Institute: www.wildlifemanagementinstitute.org
Wildlife Society: http://joomla.wildlife.org
Native American Fish & Wildlife Society: www.nafws.org
American Institute of Biological Sciences: www.aibs.org
Department of Ecology, Montana State University: www.montana.edu/ecology

For more information contact:

MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY | Career, Internship & Student Employment Services

Montana State University
177 Strand Union Building
Bozeman, MT 59717
(406) 994-4353
www.montana.edu/careers

[1]University of Oregon. 2007. Created by intoCareers, a unit of the University of Oregon. Montana information Montana Career Information System. Discover: 2008 by ACT, Inc.
[2] Montana State University Department of Biological Sciences
[3] Montana State University Career & Internship Services
Number of graduates/number of respondents: 2004: 24/13; 2005: 24/18; 2006:28/17; 2007: 18/10