WILDLIFE ECOLOGY, M.S.

The Department of Forest and Wildlife Ecology offers graduate education and training in a number of areas leading to the master of science and/or the doctor of philosophy degree in Wildlife Ecology. The department takes pride in its program’s outstanding research reputation and the success of graduates working throughout the world. The Wildlife Ecology program was founded by Aldo Leopold in 1939, and the program has maintained his vision and legacy of excellence in our current research and graduate training activities.

Master’s and doctoral work in wildlife ecology typically focus on areas of wildlife ecology that reflect the expertise of the faculty, including but not limited to: behavioral ecology, physiological ecology, population dynamics, wildlife disease, community ecology, landscape ecology, wildlife management, wildlife-habitat linkages, molecular ecology, human dimensions, species distribution modeling, climate change, endangered species recovery, conservation biology, toxicology, and wildlife damage management.

The department is home to the US Geological Survey, Wisconsin Cooperative Wildlife Research Unit. In this program, research in support of state and federal wildlife conservation programs are given priority.

In recent years, annual research support for the department’s programs has averaged between three to four million dollars drawn from an array of federal, state, and conservation organizations and private donors. Competition for admission is very strong and not every admissible student can or will be offered financial support. Graduate assistantships and/or fellowships may be available for a limited number of well-qualified students. Before submitting an application for admission, interested students should contact individual faculty to determine whether an assistantship or other financial aid might be available. Once admitted, students work closely with major professors and an advisory committee to develop a research program.

ADMISSIONS

Please consult the table below for key information about this degree program’s admissions requirements. The program may have more detailed admissions requirements, which can be found below the table or on the program’s website. Graduate admissions is a two-step process between academic programs and the Graduate School. Applicants must meet the minimum requirements (https://grad.wisc.edu/apply/requirements/) of the Graduate School as well as the program(s).

Once you have researched the graduate program(s) you are interested in, apply online (https://grad.wisc.edu/apply/). The Graduate School sets minimum requirements for admissions (https://grad.wisc.edu/admissions/requirements/). Academic program admission requirements are often more rigorous than those set by the Graduate School. Please check the program’s website (https://forestandwildlifecology.wisc.edu/academics/21417982244_4e0823cb05_k/application-process/) for details.

FUNDING

GRADUATE SCHOOL RESOURCES

Resources to help you afford graduate study might include assistantships, fellowships, traineeships, and financial aid. Further funding information (https://grad.wisc.edu/funding/) is available from the Graduate School. Be sure to check with your program for individual policies and restrictions related to funding.

PROGRAM RESOURCES

Additional information regarding funding for Forest and Wildlife Ecology graduate students is available on the departmental website (https://forestandwildlifecology.wisc.edu/academics/21417982244_4e0823cb05_k/current-employment-opportunities/).

REQUIREMENTS

MINIMUM GRADUATE SCHOOL REQUIREMENTS

Review the Graduate School minimum academic progress and degree requirements (http://guide.wisc.edu/graduate/policiesandrequirementstext), in addition to the program requirements listed below.

MAJOR REQUIREMENTS

MODE OF INSTRUCTION

Mode of Instruction Definitions

Accelerated: Accelerated programs are offered at a fast pace that condenses the time to completion. Students are able to complete a program with minimal disruptions to careers and other commitments.
Every graduate student is required to have an advisor. To ensure that students are making satisfactory progress toward a degree, the Graduate School expects them to meet with their advisor on a regular basis.

An advisor generally serves as the thesis advisor. In many cases, an advisor is assigned to incoming students. Students can be suspended from the Graduate School if they do not have an advisor. An advisor is a faculty member, or sometimes a committee, from the major department responsible for providing advice regarding graduate studies.

A committee often accomplishes advising for the students in the early stages of their studies.

CREDITS PER TERM ALLOWED
15 credits
TIME CONSTRAINTS
Master’s degree students who have been absent for five or more consecutive years lose all credits that they have earned before their absence. Individual programs may count the coursework students completed prior to their absence for meeting program requirements; that coursework may not count toward Graduate School credit requirements.

GRIEVANCES AND APPEALS
These resources may be helpful in addressing your concerns:

- Bias or Hate Reporting (https://doso.students.wisc.edu/bias-or-hate-reporting/)
- Graduate Assistantship Policies and Procedures (https://hr.wisc.edu/policies/gapp/#grievance-procedure)
- Hostile and Intimidating Behavior Policies and Procedures (https://hr.wisc.edu/hib/)
  - Office of the Provost for Faculty and Staff Affairs (https://facstaff.provost.wisc.edu/)
- Dean of Students Office (https://doso.students.wisc.edu/) (for all students to seek grievance assistance and support)
- Employee Assistance (http://www.eao.wisc.edu/) (for personal counseling and workplace consultation around communication and conflict involving graduate assistants and other employees, post-doctoral students, faculty and staff)
- Employee Disability Resource Office (https://employeedisabilities.wisc.edu/) (for qualified employees or applicants with disabilities to have equal employment opportunities)
- Graduate School (https://grad.wisc.edu/) (for informal advice at any level of review and for official appeals of program/departmental or school/college grievance decisions)
- Office of Compliance (https://compliance.wisc.edu/) (for class harassment and discrimination, including sexual harassment and sexual violence)
- Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards (https://conduct.students.wisc.edu/) (for conflicts involving students)
- Ombuds Office for Faculty and Staff (http://www.ombuds.wisc.edu/) (for employed graduate students and post-docs, as well as faculty and staff)
- Title IX (https://compliance.wisc.edu/titleix/) (for concerns about discrimination)

College of Agricultural and Life Sciences: Grievance Policy

In the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences (CALS), any student who feels unfairly treated by a member of the CALS faculty or staff has the right to complain about the treatment and to receive a prompt hearing. Some complaints may arise from misunderstandings or communication breakdowns and be easily resolved; others may require formal action. Complaints may concern any matter of perceived unfairness.

To ensure a prompt and fair hearing of any complaint, and to protect the rights of both the person complaining and the person at whom the complaint is directed, the following procedures are used in the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences. Any student, undergraduate or graduate, may use these procedures, except employees whose complaints are covered under other campus policies.

1. The student should first talk with the person at whom the complaint is directed. Most issues can be settled at this level. Others may be resolved by established departmental procedures.

2. If the student is unsatisfied, and the complaint involves any unit outside CALS, the student should seek the advice of the dean or director of that unit to determine how to proceed.
   a. If the complaint involves an academic department in CALS the student should proceed in accordance with item 3 below.
   b. If the grievance involves a unit in CALS that is not an academic department, the student should proceed in accordance with item 4 below.

3. The student should contact the department’s grievance advisor within 120 calendar days of the alleged unfair treatment. The departmental administrator can provide this person’s name. The grievance advisor will attempt to resolve the problem informally within 10 working days of receiving the complaint, in discussions with the student and the person at whom the complaint is directed.
   a. If informal mediation fails, the student can submit the grievance in writing to the grievance advisor within 10 working days of the date the student is informed of the failure of the mediation attempt by the grievance advisor. The grievance advisor will provide a copy to the person at whom the grievance is directed.
   b. The grievance advisor will refer the complaint to a department committee that will obtain a written response from the person at whom the complaint is directed, providing a copy to the student. Either party may request a hearing before the committee. The grievance advisor will provide both parties a written decision within 20 working days from the date of receipt of the written complaint.
   c. If the grievance involves the department chairperson, the grievance advisor or a member of the grievance committee, these persons may not participate in the review.
   d. If not satisfied with departmental action, either party has 10 working days from the date of notification of the departmental committee action to file a written appeal to the CALS Equity and Diversity Committee. A subcommittee of this committee will make a preliminary judgement as to whether the case merits further investigation and review. If the subcommittee unanimously determines that the case does not merit further investigation and review, its decision is final. If one or more members of the subcommittee determine that the case does merit further investigation and review, the subcommittee will investigate and seek to resolve the dispute through mediation. If this mediation attempt fails, the subcommittee will bring the case to the full committee. The committee may seek additional information from the parties or hold a hearing. The committee will present a written recommendation to the dean who will provide a final decision within 20 working days of receipt of the committee recommendation.

4. If the alleged unfair treatment occurs in a CALS unit that is not an academic department, the student should, within 120 calendar days of the alleged incident, take his/her grievance directly to the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs. The dean will attempt to resolve the problem informally within 10 working days of receiving the complaint. If this mediation attempt does not succeed the student may file a written complaint with the dean who will refer it to the CALS Equity and Diversity Committee. The committee will seek a written response from the person at whom the complaint is directed, subsequently following other steps delineated in item 3d above.

OTHER
Additional information for students in the Department of Forest and Wildlife Ecology can be found on the Graduate Programs page (https://forestandwildlifeecology.wisc.edu/)
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

GRADUATE SCHOOL RESOURCES

Take advantage of the Graduate School's professional development resources (https://grad.wisc.edu/pd/) to build skills, thrive academically, and launch your career.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. Articulates, critiques, and elaborates the theories, research methods, and approaches to inquiry and practice in the field of wildlife ecology and natural resource management.
2. Identifies sources and assembles evidence pertaining to questions or challenges in the field of wildlife ecology and natural resource management.
3. Demonstrates understanding of the field of wildlife ecology and natural resource management in a historical, social, and global context.
4. Evaluates and synthesizes information pertaining to questions or challenges in the field of wildlife ecology and natural resource management.
5. Communicates clearly in ways appropriate to the field of wildlife ecology and natural resource management.
6. Selects and utilizes the most appropriate methodologies and practices.

PEOPLE

FACULTY

Bowe, Scott
Burivalova, Zuzana
Drake, David
Hart, Sarah
Karasov, William
Kruger, Eric (chair)
Lutz, R. Scott
Ozdogan, Mutlu
Pauli, Jonathan
Peery, M. Zach
Pidgeon, Anna
Preston, Daniel
Radeloff, Volker
Ribic, Christine
Rickenbach, Mark
Rissman, Adena
Stanosz, Glen
Townsend, Philip
Van Deelen, Timothy
Zuckerberg, Benjamin

AFFILIATED FACULTY

Balster, Nick (Soil Science)
Lindroth, Richard (Entomology)
Marin-Spiotta, Erika (Geography)

FACULTY ASSOCIATE

Berkelman, James