

WILDLIFE ECOLOGY, PH.D.

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 U.S. 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

GRADUATE SCHOOL ADMISSIONS

Graduate admissions is a two-step process between academic degree programs and the Graduate School. Applicants must meet requirements of both the program(s) and the Graduate School. Once you have researched the graduate program(s) you are interested in, apply online (<https://grad.wisc.edu/admissions>).

Requirements	Detail
Fall Deadline	August 1
Spring Deadline	December 1
Summer Deadline	February 1
GRE (Graduate Record Examinations)	Not required.
English Proficiency Test	Every applicant whose native language is not English or whose undergraduate instruction was not in English must provide an English proficiency test score and meet the Graduate School minimum requirements (https://grad.wisc.edu/apply/requirements/#english-proficiency).

Other Test(s) (e.g., GMAT, MCAT)	n/a
Letters of Recommendation Required	3

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://forestandwildlifeecology.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 processes related to funding.

PROGRAM RESOURCES

Additional information regarding funding for Forest and Wildlife Ecology graduate students is available on the departmental website (https://forestandwildlifeecology.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/#policiesandrequirements>), in addition to the program requirements listed below.

MAJOR REQUIREMENTS

MODE OF INSTRUCTION

Face to Face	Evening/Weekend	Online	Hybrid	Accelerated
Yes	No	No	No	No

Mode of Instruction Definitions

Evening/Weekend: These programs are offered in an evening and/or weekend format to accommodate working schedules. Enjoy the advantages of on-campus courses and personal connections, while keeping your day job. For more information about the meeting schedule of a specific program, contact the program.

Online: These programs are offered primarily online. Many available online programs can be completed almost entirely online with all online programs offering at least 50 percent or more of the program work online. Some online programs have an on-campus component that is often designed to accommodate working schedules. Take advantage of the convenience of online learning while participating in a rich, interactive learning environment. For more information about the online nature of a specific program, contact the program.

Hybrid: These programs have innovative curricula that combine on-campus and online formats. Most hybrid programs are completed on-campus with a partial or completely online semester. For more information about the hybrid schedule of a specific program, contact the program.

Accelerated: These on-campus programs are offered in an accelerated format that allows you to complete your program in a condensed time-frame. Enjoy the advantages of on-campus courses with minimal disruption to your career. For more information about the accelerated nature of a specific program, contact the program.

CURRICULAR REQUIREMENTS

Requirements Detail

Minimum Credit Requirement	51 credits
Minimum Residence Credit Requirement	32 credits
Minimum Graduate Coursework Requirement	Half of degree coursework (26 credits out of 51 total credits) must be completed graduate-level coursework; courses with the Graduate Level Coursework attribute are identified and searchable in the university's Course Guide (http://my.wisc.edu/CourseGuideRedirect/BrowseByTitle).
Overall Graduate GPA Requirement	3.00 GPA required.
Other Grade Requirements	The Graduate School requires an average grade of B or better in all coursework (300 or above, not including research credits) taken as a graduate student unless conditions for probationary status require higher grades. Grades of Incomplete are considered to be unsatisfactory if they are not removed during the next enrolled semester.
Assessments and Examinations	Wildlife Ecology Ph.D. students must complete a public entrance seminar, coursework certification meeting and paperwork, a qualifying exam, a preliminary exam, a public exit seminar, and a defense of the dissertation.
Language Requirements	Contact the program for information on any language requirements.
Doctoral Minor/Breadth Requirements	All doctoral students are required to complete a minor.

REQUIRED COURSES

Additional information and forms related to program-specific courses is available in the program handbook (https://forestandwildlifeecology.wisc.edu/academics/21417982244_4e0823cb05_k/wildlife-ecology-handbook).

Students must complete a total of 51 credits including two graduate-level seminars, a course in statistics, and a technical skills course. Additionally, students must complete the prerequisite courses, but it is expected that a majority of these are completed during a student's undergraduate work. Courses used to satisfy the requirements will be selected in consultation with the advisor and approved by the Graduate Programs committee. An advisor may require additional coursework.

POLICIES

GRADUATE SCHOOL POLICIES

The Graduate School's Academic Policies and Procedures (<https://grad.wisc.edu/acadpolicy>) provide essential information regarding general university policies. Program authority to set degree policies beyond the minimum required by the Graduate School lies with the degree program faculty. Policies set by the academic degree program can be found below.

MAJOR-SPECIFIC POLICIES

GRADUATE PROGRAM HANDBOOK

The Graduate Program Handbook (https://forestandwildlifeecology.wisc.edu/academics/21417982244_4e0823cb05_k/wildlife-ecology-handbook) is the repository for all of the program's policies and requirements.

PRIOR COURSEWORK

Graduate Work from Other Institutions

For well-prepared advanced students, the program may accept prior graduate coursework from other institutions toward the minimum graduate degree credit and minimum graduate coursework (50%) requirement. The minimum graduate residence credit requirement can be satisfied only with courses taken as a graduate student at UW–Madison. Coursework earned ten or more years prior to admission to a doctoral degree is not allowed to satisfy requirements.

UW–Madison Undergraduate

For well-prepared advanced students, the program may decide to accept up to 7 credits numbered 300 or above completed at UW–Madison toward fulfillment of minimum degree and minor credit requirements. This work would not be allowed to count toward the 50% graduate coursework minimum unless taken at the 700 level or above. Coursework earned ten or more years prior to admission to a doctoral degree is not allowed to satisfy requirements.

UW–Madison University Special

With payment of the difference in tuition (between University Special and graduate tuition), the program may decide to accept up to 15 University Special student credits as fulfillment of the minimum graduate residence, graduate degree, or minor credit requirements on occasion as an exception (on a case-by-case basis). UW–Madison coursework taken as a University Special student would not be allowed to count toward the 50% graduate coursework minimum unless taken at the 700 level or above. Coursework earned ten or more years prior to admission to a doctoral degree is not allowed to satisfy requirements.

PROBATION

The Graduate School regularly reviews the record of any student who earned grades of BC, C, D, F, or Incomplete in a graduate course (300 or above), or grade of U in research credits. This review could result in academic probation with a hold on future enrollment or in being suspended from the Graduate School.

ADVISOR / COMMITTEE

Every graduate student is required to have an advisor. An advisor is a faculty member, or sometimes a committee, from the major department responsible for providing advice regarding graduate studies. 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.

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.

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

CREDITS PER TERM ALLOWED

15 credits

TIME CONSTRAINTS

Doctoral degree students who have been absent for ten 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.

A candidate for a doctoral degree who fails to take the final oral examination and deposit the dissertation within five years after passing the preliminary examination may be required to take another preliminary examination and to be admitted to candidacy a second time.

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/academics/21417982244_4e0823cb05_k/application-process) for the department.

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 research problems, potentials, and limits with respect to theory, knowledge, or practice within the field of wildlife ecology and natural resource management.
2. Formulates ideas, concepts, designs, and/or techniques beyond the current boundaries of knowledge within the field of wildlife ecology and natural resource management.
3. Demonstrates breadth within their learning experiences.
4. Advances contributions of the field of wildlife ecology and natural resource management to society.
5. Communicates complex ideas in a clear and understandable manner.

6. Creates research and scholarship that makes a substantive contribution.

PEOPLE

PROFESSORS

Bowe, Scott
 Drake, David
 Karasov, William
 Kruger, Eric
 Mladenoff, David
 Radeloff, Volker
 Ribic, Christine
 Rickenbach, Mark (chair)
 Samuel, Michael
 Stanosz, Glen
 Townsend, Philip
 Van Deelen, Timothy

ASSOCIATE PROFESSORS

Lutz, R. Scott
 Ozdogan, Mutlu
 Pauli, Jonathan
 Peery, M. Zach
 Pidgeon, Anna
 Rissman, Adena

ASSISTANT PROFESSORS

Johnston, Craig
 Zuckerberg, Benjamin

AFFILIATED AND ADJUNCT FACULTY

Alix-Garcia, Jennifer (Agriculture and Applied Economics)
 Allison, R. Bruce (adjunct)
 Balster, Nick (Soil Science)
 Lindroth, Richard (Entomology)
 Marin-Spiotta, Erika (Geography)
 Meine, Curt (adjunct)
 Meyer, Michael (adjunct)
 Raffa, Kenneth (Entomology)
 Santana-Castellon, Eduardo (adjunct)

FACULTY ASSOCIATE

Berkelman, James