Wildlife Careers

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Opportunities

- Zoo/ Aquarium
- Academic/ University
- Biomedical Research Institutions/ Industry
- Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)
- Animal Sanctuaries/ Wildlife Rehabilitation
- Entertainment
Zoo

- Zookeeper
- Supervisor
- Curator/ Head of Department
- Wildlife Health
- Project Coordinators: Research/ Conservation/ Field
- Curator of Exhibits
- Curator of Horticulture
- Conservation Education
Zoo Nutritionist

- Feeding the zoo
- Formulation of diets, feeding behavior
- Diet analysis
- Field investigations
- Presentations and publications
Zoo Reproductive Biologist/Endocrinologist

- Monitor reproduction
- In-vitro fertilization
- Check hormone levels
  - Reproduction
  - Stress
- Selective breeding between groups, captive populations
- Work with SSP (Species Survival Program)
- Range of positions from B.S. level- Ph.D.
- Salary ($35,000- $80,000)
Conservation Educator

- Teaching school groups, continuing education
  - Walk in the zoo at night! Breakfast with butterflies & Private lives of primates
- Hands-on
- Immediate attention - public to conservation
- Various Positions
  - Teacher
  - Curator
  - Exhibit information
  - Curriculum design
  - Care for animals used in programs
- Salary range ($25,000-$80,000)
Academia

- **Academic/ University Setting**
  - Teaching & Research
  - Obtain outside funding for research
  - Students
  - Teach classes
  - Publish
  - At least 5 yrs additional graduate training (post-doc)

- **Positions Available**
  - Tenure: Lecturer, Assistant, Associate, Full Professor (all require PhD) - Not tenure: various research/teaching, extension and associate positions
  - Salary Range (~$40,000 to >$200,000) depends on position, level of expertise, publication record, grants obtained, type of college/university
NGO

Non-governmental organizations:
- WWF
- Nature Conservancy
- Wildlife Conservation Society
- Conservation/ environmentally oriented research institutions
- Species specific organizations (African Wildlife Foundation/ Save the Rhino/ Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund)

Positions Available
- Field Assistant (B.S.)
- Researcher (B.S. or M.S.)
- Project Coordinator (M.S. or Ph.D.)
- Technical Advisor (Ph.D.)
- Field Liaison (Ph.D.)
- Specific consultant positions (M.S. or Ph.D.)

Salary Range ($0- > $80,000) Typically ~$50,000 with M.S.
- Upper executive: >$250,000
Biomedical Research

- Examples of research organizations
  - Government (such as CDC, USDA)
  - University
  - Private

- Types of Positions
Animal Sanctuaries/ Rehabilitation

- Examples of Sanctuaries:
  - Over 50 accredited sanctuaries in USA
  - Developing countries have sanctuaries for confiscated or ‘retired’ animals

- Types of Positions
  - Similar to zoos but more general
Entertainment Industry

- **Examples:**
  - Circus, Film, Theatre
  - “Hollywood animals”

- **Very few varied positions**
  - Ethics
Relevant Animal Science Classes

- Suggested Core Courses
  - Basic class
  - Basic nutrition and reproduction classes
  - Management classes
  - Farm Animal Behavior
  - Ethics and Animal Science
Relevant Animal Science Classes

- Academia/curatorial position at zoo
- Suggested courses for exotics PLUS:
  - Basic courses in:
    - Organic chemistry
    - Biochemistry
    - Genetics
    - Anatomy or vertebrate biology
    - Ecology
    - Physiology
    - Behavior
Relevant Animal Science Classes

◆ NGO, Field Positions
  ◆ Suggested courses for academia PLUS:
    ◆ Natural resources (conservation biology, forest ecology, wildlife management, conservation and sustainable development)
    ◆ Soil and crop sciences (resource surveying, GIS, GPS)
  ◆ More ecological, less hands-on, less emphasis on practical animal management classes
How can I get experience?

- Volunteer
- Apply for student internship programs
- Read articles and approach professors
- Help one or more graduate student(s) for course credit
- Enroll in a summer field course ( $$$ )
- Study Abroad
Nutritional Ecology

Objectives- how do animals meet their nutritional goals through the environment; integrates aspects of nutrition, ecology, physiology & behavior
Mountain Gorillas in Uganda

- **Objective**: To understand the nutritional ecology of gorillas
- **Important in generating baseline data for gorilla ecology**
  - What do the gorillas eat?
  - How do the gorillas meet their nutritional needs?
Western Lowland Gorilla (Gorilla gorilla gorilla)
Cross River Gorilla (Gorilla gorilla diehli)
Grauer's Gorilla (Gorilla beringei graueri)
Mountain Gorilla (Gorilla beringei beringei)
Bwindi Mountain Gorillas

- One of two populations of mountain gorillas with only 320 individuals (~20 families) remaining

- IUCN categorizes as Red List: Critically Endangered

- Threats to survival:
  - Habitat encroachment
  - Poaching
  - War
  - Disease
Questions?