Degree Information

The Department of Wildlife and Fisheries Sciences (WFSC) offers a wide range of choices for those planning careers in research, teaching, or natural resource management. The department offers the following graduate degrees: a traditional thesis-based Masters of Science (M.S.); and a doctoral (Ph.D.) degree in Wildlife and Fisheries Sciences; two non-thesis master degrees - a Masters of Wildlife Science (MWS) and Masters of Natural Resource Development (MNRD). Emphasis areas for these degrees can be in aquaculture, biodiversity and systematics, conservation biology, human dimensions of fish and wildlife resources, vertebrate biology, or wildlife and aquatic ecology and management.

Disciplinary focuses include anatomy and morphology, behavior, conservation, ecology, ecological modeling, evolution, genetics, nutrition, parasitology, physiology, quantitative ecology, and systematics. Some faculty members also serve on intercollegiate faculties which offer graduate degree programs in areas such as genetics, nutrition, and toxicology.

Scholarly research is the hallmark of studies leading to the Ph.D. and thesis-option M.S. degrees. Each candidate must propose and conduct an original scientific investigation, which becomes the basis for a Ph.D. dissertation or an M.S. thesis. This research and writing experience, together with appropriate course work, prepares graduates for careers in research organizations, higher education, consulting firms and resource agencies.

For those not seeking research careers, the MWS and MNR degrees offer broad academic training to sharpen problem-solving and management skills. Candidates are required to write a professional paper in lieu of a thesis which is usually based on experiences obtained through an internship, employment, and/or volunteer activity.

These non-thesis degrees are offered via distance education and designed for mid-career natural resource professionals who want additional education while fulfilling on-the-job obligations. A certificate in Military Land Sustainability is also available.

AGRICULTURE & LIFE SCIENCES
TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

Graduate Studies in

Wildlife & Fisheries Sciences

Wildlife Science

Natural Resource Development

MS
MWSC
MNRD
PhD

Department of Wildlife & Fisheries Sciences

Admission

Applications may be obtained online at **applytexas.org**. Applications are judged on the basis of academic record, letters of recommendation, and scores on the GRE General Test. Texas A&M University has a strong institutional commitment to the principle of diversity in all areas.

Admission to the graduate program depends on acceptance by a member of the graduate faculty. Applicants are urged to contact a member of the graduate before starting the application process. Faculty information can be obtained from **wfsc.tamu.edu/people**.

Programmatic Areas of Interest

Wildlife Ecology, Conservation and Management

Observational and experimental approaches are used to study resource-use behavior, wildlife habitat relations, population and community ecology and conservation. Basic research on genetics, behavior, biogeography and ecology provides a foundation for answering complex questions about the ecology, conservation and management of wildlife populations. Research results provide knowledge for reducing losses of wildlife habitat, understanding patterns of species distributions, and managing vertebrate populations.

Fisheries Ecology and Management

Research in this area extends from finely focused studies of physicochemical and biological mechanisms to ecology, conservation, and management-oriented investigations of entire aquatic ecosystems.

Biodiversity and Systematics

Systematics deals with the evolutionary relationships of populations, species, and higher groups; the processes involved in evolutionary diversification; and the construction of classification systems. Research in these areas incorporates morphometric, cytogenetic, biochemical, and molecular studies conducted within the framework of phylogenetic and evolutionary theory. Understanding the genetic and evolutionary relationships of species provides a basis for implementing conservation programs; thus, systematics provides some of the basic principles and tools for preserving biological diversity.

Aquaculture

Aquaculture research encompasses both basic and applied efforts to solve problems that inhibit the prudent exploitation of captive aquatic organisms for commercial and recreational use.

Human Dimensions of Fish and Wildlife Resources

The social effects of environmental change and the way goals are developed by society are important aspects of resource management. Research in this area focuses on the public's knowledge levels, expectations, attitudes, and activities concerning fish and wildlife resources and associated habitats.

Financial Support

Financial support is offered in the form of teaching and research assistantships. Students also may be nominated for university and national fellowships. General grants and scholarships are also available through the department and Scholarships and Financial Aid. More information can be obtained from the graduate faculty member in whose program you are interested.

Contact

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