



Conservation Biology

Commonly Asked Questions

As a conservation Biologist what are the job duties and responsibilities? What are some daily activities?

It depends if you are in the field, or in the office. In Denver Zoo's conservation and research department, the ratio of that is dependent on time of year and project. Often, the organization of data is a huge part of what a conservation biologist does when not in the field. Applying for grants to fund conservation work, planning trips, sometime(s) organizing students and/or volunteers are other responsibilities. If working for a university as a conservation biologist, field research AND working as a professor teaching students is part of a day's work. When in the field, conservation biologists are typically out looking for sites if one has not been identified or gathering data.

What do most people like and dislike about this occupation?

Conservation is hard physical work, which includes getting dirty, and being uncomfortable. It can also be dangerous depending on where fieldwork is occurring (animals, political clashes, remote medical issues). If working internationally there can be language barriers and challenges with being far away from home/family. Those same things can be very new and exciting. How a conservation biologist reacts to these challenges often depends on one's personality and where they are in life.

Do you need to go to college to become a Conservation Biologist?

Yes! Study topics of the most interest! Look at the courses that make up each major and choose the one that has the courses that are of interest. For a career involving fieldwork it is important to take science classes (as high a level as possible in the specific area of interest). If the area of interest is animals, take every ecology, biology, and sub group class you can like mammology, herpetology, ornithology. Field biologists inadvertently become ecologists, especially if a project requires long days in the field. The classes previously mentioned will help to prepare for that. It is also important to gain experience working with people. Communities and people within communities are a key component to conservation. This is super important but not always a common thought when interested in studying conservation biology. Gaining real world experience and learning how to be diplomatic, patient, open minded and respectful are valuable in this field, as working with people with different perspectives and backgrounds is part of the job.

