



State Wildlife Officers & the Ohio Division of Wildlife



If you are interested in a career in law enforcement, wildlife conservation, and public service, consider becoming a State Wildlife Officer with the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Division of Wildlife. The Division of Wildlife is the oldest state agency with law enforcement officers and the position is one of the most demanding in the wildlife and law enforcement field. Opportunities are limited and competition is intense for this challenging job but it may be the right choice for you if you have what it takes.



The Division of Wildlife is responsible for management of fish and wildlife resources as mandated by Ohio law such as Ohio Revised Code Sections 1531 and 1533, and the Ohio Administrative Code. The Division of Wildlife holds ownership to all wild animals in trust for the benefit of Ohio's citizens and is funded primarily from revenue collected from the sale of licenses and permits.

Wildlife Law Enforcement

Wildlife and natural resources management requires effective enforcement of laws and regulations. This enforcement responsibility is assigned to Ohio's wildlife officers whose duties are to protect the wildlife resource, ensure fair and equitable use, protect state property, and enforce other statutes such as litter, pollution, and firearms regulations. **Wildlife law enforcement is a unique area of law enforcement that blends criminal justice and law enforcement duties with wildlife conservation and education.**



Wildlife Officers

A state wildlife officer is assigned to each of Ohio's 88 counties. A wildlife officer supervisor oversees the routine activities of several officers in a unit. Wildlife investigators are assigned to each district and handle criminal investigations and other law enforcement duties. Law enforcement supervisors oversee all law enforcement operations on a district level, including the Lake Erie Enforcement Unit. Wildlife Headquarters in Columbus administers the law enforcement program including policy, procedures, regulation development, special operations, permitting, advanced training, recruiting, the Wildlife Officer Training Academy, and professional standards.



The job of a wildlife officer requires a variety of skills and knowledge. The wildlife officer is quite often the only contact the public has with the Division of Wildlife and the acceptance of conservation programs and regulations can often be enhanced by the actions of the wildlife officer. Therefore, it is imperative that individuals with a high work ethic, outstanding knowledge and of unquestionable character be selected for these positions.



Annually, wildlife officers contact thousands of sportsmen and women in the field; patrol over 190,000 acres of wildlife lands, Lake Erie, and thousands of miles of inland streams and lakes. They issue and inspect wildlife related permits, conduct criminal investigations, handle numerous violation reports, and make thousands of arrests. As state law enforcement officers they contribute to public safety in their local areas and in Ohio's great outdoors. They also speak to hundreds of clubs and groups about conservation and wildlife programs, perform fish and wildlife surveys, and provide technical advice and instruction about wildlife management issues, hunting, fishing and trapping.



Duties of Ohio Wildlife Officers

- **Law Enforcement:** Wildlife officers are commissioned state law enforcement officers who enforce the Ohio Revised Code and Administrative Code relative to wildlife resources, property owned or administered by the Division of Wildlife and Ohio Department of Natural Resources, stream pollution and littering, firearms regulations, and all other areas of responsibility of the Division of Wildlife. Officers are empowered to investigate violations, make arrests, and testify in court on behalf of the Division of Wildlife. They also serve a very important role as a point of contact with law enforcement and other agencies on topics of mutual interest and provide assistance and expertise due to their skills, training, specialized equipment and knowledge of the areas in which they work.
- **Wildlife Conservation:** Wildlife officers have a working knowledge of current fish and wildlife management projects and provide technical expertise for a range of situations. They often work directly with fish and wildlife biologists on a variety of projects and collect information by surveys and specimens.
- **Public Service:** Wildlife officers are often well known in their communities and are frequently asked to speak at public functions and keep people informed of current wildlife activities and programs. They actively work together with Division of Wildlife communications specialists and education staff.

Minimum Qualifications for Employment

- ✓ Applicants must be a United States Citizen and possess a valid driver's license
- ✓ Applicants must be 21 years of age upon successful completion of peace officer training
- ✓ Applicants must have a minimum of an associate degree or completed undergraduate core course work in wildlife, fisheries, forestry, natural resources management, environmental science, ecology, biology, criminal justice, law enforcement or related fields
- ✓ Applicants must successfully complete an intensive background investigation
- ✓ Applicants must pass a drug screening, psychological and physical exams, and polygraph test
- ✓ Applicants must meet physical fitness and swim standards that include upper body and core strength, aerobic exercise, distance running, swimming and treading water
- ✓ An interest in hunting, fishing, boating, wildlife conservation, and law enforcement is helpful

Benefits

- ✓ The starting pay for cadets in the academy is \$17.68/hr. without any prior state service
- ✓ Upon successful completion and graduation from the academy, cadets are promoted to wildlife officers earning \$46,155.00/year as the base salary excluding supplements and overtime
- ✓ Home office, uniforms, and physical fitness supplements
- ✓ Members of the Law Enforcement Public Employees Retirement System
- ✓ Medical insurance, dental and vision coverage
- ✓ Vacation, sick, and personal leave allowances
- ✓ Regular training, uniforms, and equipment provided including a fully equipped patrol vehicle
- ✓ Excellent advancement opportunities to the supervisor, investigator, and administrative ranks

If you are up for the challenge, think about joining the wildlife officer team and a rewarding career with the Division of Wildlife!

For questions and to be added to a recruiting list, contact Law Enforcement Program Administrator Jim Quinlivan at jim.quinlivan@dnr.state.oh.us or (614) 265-6314.