

A **wildlife biologist** is a trained professional with demonstrated expertise in the art and science of applying the principles of ecology and biology to the sound stewardship and management of wildlife and their ecosystems.

Wildlife includes non-domesticated animals, notably insects, other invertebrates, fish, amphibians, reptiles, birds, and mammals.



Photo credit -- Cait Donadt

Benefits of Certification

- establishes a rigorous standard and quality control for Wildlife Biology and Management practices
- enhances the credibility of the profession of wildlife biology
- builds commitment to the wildlife profession beyond employment
- advances regulation of wildlife biology occupations
- facilitates communication and sharing of best-practices across jurisdictions
- eliminates jurisdictional barriers when working anywhere in Canada
- ensures that appropriate wildlife biology related courses and training by students/young professionals.
- provides a definite hiring asset for wildlife-related jobs
- facilitates communication with other resource-based professionals.
- provides leadership in promoting conservation of natural resources.

Canadian Section of TWS's Certification Committee

The Certification Committee was formed in 2017 to revitalize TWS's Wildlife Biologist Certification Program in Canada. The structure the committee reflects a membership intent on achieving two goals: 1) to work with TWS to see how the present certification program can be made more appealing to Canadian wildlife biologists; and 2) to work towards establishing national standards for practicing wildlife professionals across Canada.

Email contact:

CSTWSCertificationCommittee@gmail.com

For more information

[Wildlife Biologist Certification Program Policies](#)
[Procedures Manual](#)

TWS Website <http://wildlife.org>

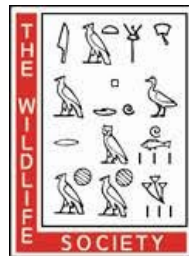


Photo credit - Brian Kiss

THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY (TWS) WILDLIFE BIOLOGIST CERTIFICATION PROGRAM



Photo credit - Katherine Conkin

Overview

Founded in 1937, The Wildlife Society (TWS) is an international network of nearly 10,000 leaders amongst wildlife science, management and conservation who are dedicated to excellence in wildlife stewardship.

In 1977, to promote and strengthen professional standards amongst wildlife biologists, TWS initiated the Wildlife Biologist Certification Program. The program judges prospective applicants based on 4 considerations:

- 1) educational depth,
- 2) experience as a practicing professional,
- 3) TWS membership, and
- 4) a commitment to TWS's [Code of Ethics](#).

To ensure the education and professional experience requirements were being met, TWS established the [Certification Review Board](#) (CRB). The CRB is an eight-member board with representation from Canada and 7 other TWS sections across the US.

TWS is the only organization providing a peer-reviewed certification for wildlife biologists. TWS has been responsible for the creation of 1,600 Certified Wildlife Biologists® (CWB®) primarily across Canada and USA.

ASSOCIATE WILDLIFE BIOLOGIST®

An individual who has met the education requirements but has not yet obtained at least 5 years of professional-level wildlife experience in the previous 10 years to qualify as a Certified Wildlife Biologist® (CWB®) can apply to be designated as an Associate Wildlife Biologist® (AWB®).

AWB® Education Requirements

Wildlife Management (6 semester hours)

Courses emphasizing the principles and practices of wildlife management; can include conservation biology courses.

Wildlife Biology (6 semester hours) – Courses in the biology birds, mammals, reptiles, or amphibians.

Ecology (3 semester hours) – Courses in general plant and animal ecology.

Zoology (9 semester hours) – Taxonomy, biology, behaviour, physiology, anatomy, and natural history of vertebrates and invertebrates.

Botany (9 seminar hours) – Courses in general botany, plant genetics, morphology or physiology. At least one course must be plant taxonomy or plant identification.



Photo credit -- Brian Hagglund

Physical Sciences (9 semester hours) – Courses in chemistry, physics, geology, or soils. quantitative science.

The educational requirements are expressed in semester hours. One semester hour is one lecture hour or 3 laboratory hours of instruction/ week/ term. Courses from technical institutions and universities are considered equivalent if the result is a Biology degree. Applicants are urged to present evidence to clear course deficiencies

Basic Statistics (3 semester hours) – A course in basic statistics.

Quantitative Sciences (6 semester hours) Courses in calculus, mathematical modeling, sampling, computer science, or other

Humanities and Social Science (9 semester hours) – Courses in economics, sociology, psychology, political science, government, history, literature, or foreign language.

Communications (12 semester hours) – Courses to improve communication skills – English composition, technical writing, journalism, public speaking, or use of mass media.

Policy, Administration, and Law (6 semester hours) – Courses that deal with natural resources policy or administration, wildlife or environment law, or natural resources/land use planning. Up to three semester hours in classes dealing with human dimension issues.



Photo credit -- Don Barnes

An **Associate Wildlife Biologist® Application** should be submitted to TWS Certification Review Board (CRB) certification@wildlife.org. Fee is \$115 (US).



Photo credit – Dr. Ryan Brook

CERTIFIED WILDLIFE BIOLOGIST®

There are several ways that TWS members can become certified:

- 1) An AWB® certification is granted for 10 years and within that time limit, the applicant is expected to obtain 5 years of professional-level experience. Only then can the TWS member apply to become a CWB®. **Note: Associate Wildlife Biologist® Extension Application.** If AWBs do not meet the 5-year experience requirement, they can apply to the CRB for a three-year extension. Fee is \$25 (US).
- 2) A wildlife biologist who has been working for a minimum of 5 years may elect to become a CWB without first becoming an AWB. In this situation, the applicant must show that his/her courses and his experience agree with TWS guidelines.
- 3) Biologists with 20 years' experience can use experience in lieu of required course work.

Submit a **Certified Wildlife Biologist® Application** to CRB. Fee is \$155 (US).

Five-year CWB® Renewal is granted if a CWB® logs 80 hours of professional activities. **CWB® Renewal application.** Fee is \$25 (US).

Upgrade (AWB® to CWB®) Application.

For those who were AWB® and have now acquired at least 5 years of professional-level experience. Fee is \$75 (US).