



(Bat) Conservationist

JOB OUTLOOK

The number of conservationist jobs will grow slightly more than the average, at 8 percent through the year 2026 compared to 7 percent for all occupations.

Conservationists may face strong competition when looking for employment because most job funding comes from governmental agencies, which will be limited by budgetary constraints.

Conservationists holding advanced degrees will have the greatest number of career options, especially in research and academia. Most Ph.D.-level researchers need to be familiar with computer programming and statistical software.

SALARY RANGE

\$38,880 – \$101,780

WHO ARE THEY?

Conservationists are usually zoologists and wildlife biologists who try to find the solutions to threats that affect wildlife, such as disease and habitat loss. They may specialize in a single species of animal, such as bats. They are professionals who love science, animals, and the outdoors. Many are animal keepers and curators in zoos or zoological parks.

Conservationists research animal behaviors and characteristics and how the animals interact with their ecosystems. They perform a variety of scientific tests and experiments requiring the use of technology.

They perform tasks associated with life in remote areas, including chopping firewood, swimming in cold water, navigating rough terrain in poor weather, and carrying heavy packs or equipment long distances.

Conservationists do research, write scientific papers, plan for animal management, and give educational talks to the public, policymakers, and academics to further the cause of animal welfare.

WHAT DO THEY DO?

Conservationists study the physical characteristics of animals, animal behaviors, and the impacts humans have on wildlife and natural habitats.

For example, they take blood samples from animals to assess their nutrition levels, check animals for disease and parasites, and tag animals in order to track them.

They often study characteristics such as origin, interrelationships, classification, life histories, diseases, development, and genetics. These studies include animals' interactions with other species, reproduction, population dynamics, diseases, and movement patterns.

The study of animals in their natural habitats allows conservationists to assess the effects of environment and industry on animals. Conservationists interpret findings and recommend ways to inform and respond to the public regarding such conservation issues as animal identification, hunting ordinances, and control of nuisance wildlife.



(Bat) Conservationist (Continued)

EDUCATION/ TRAINING

- Bachelor's degree: required
- Master's degree: preferred for scientific or investigative work
- Ph.D.: required for independent or university research positions

HOW DO I BECOME ONE?

Conservationists take zoology and wildlife biology courses in ecology, anatomy, wildlife management, and cellular biology. Courses that focus on a particular group of animals, like bats, are included, along with botany, chemistry, and physics. These courses are important because conservationists must have a well-rounded scientific background. Given that these scientists must be able to do complex data analysis, courses in mathematics and statistics are highly recommended.

Conservationists may need to have well-rounded outdoor skills. They may need to be able to use a generator, provide for themselves in remote locations, or drive a tractor, boat, or ATV.

Many students gain practical experience working with animals through internships, volunteer work, or other employment.

Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, Occupational Outlook Handbook. <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/life-physical-and-social-science/zoologists-and-wildlife-biologists.htm>.