



Wildlife Officers & the Ohio Division of Wildlife

If you are interested in a career in law enforcement, wildlife conservation, and public service, consider becoming an Ohio Wildlife Officer with the Division of Wildlife!

The Division of Wildlife

The Ohio 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 Officers

Wildlife and natural resources management requires effective enforcement of laws and regulations. This enforcement responsibility is given to Ohio's wildlife officers who are assigned to each of Ohio's 88 counties. Their 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.**

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 their actions.

Annually, wildlife officers contact thousands of people outdoors; patrol over 770,000 acres of wildlife and DNR 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 Ohio's great outdoors. They also speak to hundreds of clubs and groups about conservation programs, perform fish and wildlife surveys, and provide technical advice and instruction about wildlife management issues, hunting, fishing, and shooting sports.



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 aid 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 completed a minimum of an associate core coursework in wildlife, fisheries, forestry, natural resources management, environmental science, agriculture, ecology, biology, natural sciences, 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, moderate distance running, swimming, and treading water
- ✓ An interest in wildlife conservation, fishing, hunting, boating, other outdoor recreation, along with law enforcement & criminal justice is helpful

Benefits

- ✓ Flexible working schedule – there are no set “shifts”
- ✓ Assigned patrol vehicle and equipment is not shared – and goes home with you
- ✓ Upon successful completion of the training academy cadets are promoted to wildlife officers earning a minimum of \$26.43/hr. as the base salary excluding supplements and OT
- ✓ Home office, uniform, and available 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 all equipment provided
- ✓ Excellent advancement opportunities to the supervisor, investigator, and administrative ranks
- ✓ Additional duty opportunities as an instructor, field training officer, K9 handler, support team, or honor guard

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 the Law Enforcement Section at wildlifeofficerrecruiting@dnr.ohio.gov or 614-265-6314.

Also visit ohiodnr.gov/careers and see the *Becoming an Ohio Wildlife Officer* tab for more details.