



Fish and Wildlife Management

Scouts BSA · Nature

Name _____

Started _____

Completed _____

Fish and Wildlife Management is about how people care for animals and the places they live. You'll learn about the challenges facing wildlife in your state, help improve habitat, and spend time observing animals in the wild.

Requirements

Every official requirement, in plain language. Check the official wording when you sign off (scouting.org/merit-badges/fish-wildlife-management/). Tips and examples are ideas, not extra requirements.

- ☐ **1** Describe what fish and wildlife conservation and management mean and what they're for

Tip: Think about why we protect fish and wildlife, for nature, for food, for recreation, and for future generations.

- ☐ **2** List and discuss at least three big ongoing problems threatening fish and wildlife in your state

Tip: Visit your state wildlife agency's website or call an office to learn the biggest threats where you live.

Example: Three threats might be habitat loss from new development, invasive species like carp or cheatgrass, and polluted runoff in rivers. For each one, explain which animals are hurt and what your state is doing about it.

- ☐ **3** Describe some ways anyone can help conserve fish and wildlife

Tip: List simple things anyone can do, like picking up litter, planting native plants, or following fishing and hunting rules.

- ☐ **4** List five key practices your state's fish and wildlife managers use, and describe each one

Tip: Ask a game warden or wildlife biologist which management practices your state uses and why.

Example: Five practices: controlled burns to renew grasslands, hunting and fishing seasons and limits, fish stocking from hatcheries, wetland restoration, and banding or tagging animals to track populations. Explain why each helps.

5 Habitat or wildlife project: Choose 1 of 4

Tips for this section: Pick a project like building nest boxes, putting up bird feeders, or planting native plants, with an adult's help.

Example for this section: Build and mount two wood duck or bluebird boxes with an adult, following plans from your state agency, and check them and keep written notes through one nesting season. Or plant native shrubs along a creek to shade the water and hold the bank.

- ☐ **5a** Build, put up, and regularly check at least two nest boxes (for example wood duck, bluebird, or squirrel), keeping written records for one nesting season

- ☐ **5b** Build, put up, and regularly check bird feeders, writing down each day for two weeks which kinds of birds visit

- ☐ **5c** Plan and carry out a project to improve a fishery or a backyard wildlife habitat, and share the results with your counselor

- ☐ **5d** Design and build a wildlife blind by a bird feeder, birdbath, water hole, salt lick, or game trail. From it, photograph or sketch 10 wild animals in any mix of birds, mammals, amphibians, or reptiles

6 Wildlife survey or study: Choose 1 of 3

Tips for this section: Bring binoculars and a field guide on hikes and keep a running list of species you see.

Example for this section: If you observe 25 species, keep a field notebook with the species name, date, place, and what it was doing. Include birds, fish, mammals, reptiles, and amphibians, and note which ones are game species.

- ☐ **6a** Observe and record 25 wildlife species (mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, and fish count), writing down when and where you saw each

- ☐ **6b** List your state's endangered, threatened, exotic, non-native, game, furbearer, or migratory game bird species. Discuss with your counselor the management practices used or planned for at least three of them

- ☐ **6c** Make a fish and wildlife scrapbook for North America with sections for mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, and fish. Add at least five articles per section (life history, habitat, behavior, feeding) from newspapers, science, nature, or outdoor magazines, or the internet with a parent or guardian's OK. One animal per page in A–Z order, with pictures when you can

7 Fish or aquatic study: Choose 1 of 4

Tips for this section: Choose the fish study or aquarium project that interests you most, and keep notes as you go.

Example for this section: For a fish study, help an experienced angler or biologist read the growth rings on scales from five kinds of fish to estimate their ages. Or set up an aquarium with four native plants and four native animals and keep notes on it for 60 days.

- ☐ **7a** Use scale samples to find the age of five fish species, or identify the different age classes of a single species living in a lake, and report what you find

- ☐ **7b** Run a creel census at a small lake to estimate the catch per unit of effort, then share what you found with your counselor

- ☐ **7c** Examine and record what's in the stomachs of three fish (you don't have to catch them yourself)

- ☐ **7d** Set up a freshwater aquarium with at least four native plant species and four animal species. After watching it 60 days, discuss life cycles, food chains, and management needs with your counselor. Check release laws and follow your counselor on humane disposal

- ☐ **8** Name three careers that use fish and wildlife skills. Research one: training, education, certification, experience, cost to get started, job outlook, starting pay, and advancement. Discuss it with your counselor and whether it interests you

Tip: Ask a wildlife officer, biologist, or hatchery worker about their job and training.