

WILDLIFE SALARIES IN THE SOUTHEAST

By LESLIE L. GLASGOW
L. S. U. School of Forestry

Before discussing salaries it is necessary to have a foundation from which to speak. In this particular discussion a review of the educational qualifications of wildlife workers provides at least half the background for my talk.

Each year a committee from the Wildlife Society surveys educational institutions to determine the number of wildlife students graduating, the degree received and the type of employment accepted. The committee reports show the following statistics for the United States.

TABLE I
NUMBER OF STUDENTS ENROLLED IN WILDLIFE CURRICULA

Year	Undergraduates	Graduates		Total	Average Per School
		M.S.	Ph.D.		
1950	1,420	359	99	1,787	42
1951	1,271	345	141	1,757	42
1952	1,358	308	126	1,792	38
1953	1,216	301	176	1,693	33
1954	1,211	260	148	1,619	36
1955	1,740	306	164	2,210	40

From the figures in Table I, it would appear that there was a downward trend in enrollment in wildlife curricula from 1950 to 1953, but since 1953 the trend has been upward and in 1955 the enrollment equalled or surpassed the highest previous enrollment.

EMPLOYMENT OF GRADUATING STUDENTS

It is interesting to learn how many of these graduates actually secure employment in the wildlife field.

TABLE II
PERCENT OF STUDENTS GAINING EMPLOYMENT

Year	B.S.	M.S.	Ph.D.
1950	50	89	90
1951	40	72	73
1952	35	55	35
1953	34	64	23
1954	28	66	91
1955	30	73	60

The percent of students receiving BS. degrees and obtaining wildlife employment varied from a low of 28 to a high of 50. In the six-year period, there was never more than 50 percent of the BS. graduates that received wildlife employment. This is far below the 80 percent for some fields.

Students receiving Master's degrees fared much better than those with BS. degrees. Fifty-five to 89 percent were successful in finding employment in the wildlife field. Comments to a questionnaire circulated by Turner in 1946 left little doubt that many employers prefer to hire a student possessing a Master's degree and one year of experience.

Graduates receiving Ph.D. degrees are more highly specialized than either of the other two groups and are therefore hardly comparable to them. The percent of these men entering the wildlife field varied markedly from year to year. During the six-year period from 1950 to 1955 it was as low as 23 percent and as high as 90 percent. Many of these students enter other fields by choice.

SALARIES

The remainder of my material was obtained through a salary survey of state fish and game departments in January, 1956. All states were contacted and only one, South Dakota failed to reply. Because of the lack of standardization of information supplied by California, Utah and New York, data from these states could not be incorporated in this report. Keep in mind that throughout the remainder of this talk that these states are not included. California and/or

New York probably employ more biologists than any other individual state; therefore quite a hiatus occurs in data from Regions one and five.

Region 4, which is frequently referred to in this report, includes the 12 southeastern states of Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Tennessee, Kentucky, Georgia, Florida, South Carolina, North Carolina, Virginia and Maryland.

The salary survey covers only technically trained wildlife employees of state fish and game departments. It does not include employees of federal agencies.

GAME EMPLOYEES

Since there is a greater amount of money available to states through the P-R program than through the D-J funds, there are more game biologists than fisheries biologists on state payrolls. There was a total of 150 game biologists employed in Region 4 and a total of 782 for all states covered by this report. It is estimated that there was at least 200 additional technically trained men in the fish and game departments in the states of California, Utah, South Dakota and New York.

Fifty-five percent of the employees in Region 4 have a B.S. degree, 44 percent an M.S. degree and 0.7 percent a Ph.D. degree. One-half the men in this region receive between 4 and 5,000 dollars, 27 percent 3 to 4,000 and 16 percent 5 to 6,000. This is slightly below the national average where 52 percent receive 4 to 5,000, 20 percent 3-4,000, and 16 percent 5-6,000. In Region 4 as well as in the U. S. men with Master's degrees receive more pay than those with B.S. degrees. Up to 8 or 10 years of experience the difference in pay amounts to about 300 dollars annually. After 10 years there is less difference in average salaries.

The educational qualifications of employees in Region 4 are slightly higher than those for the remainder of the United States. In Region 4, 55 percent of the employees have a B.S. degree against 64% for the U. S.; 44 percent have a Master's degree against 34 percent for the United States.

TABLE III
PERCENT OF GAME EMPLOYEES IN REGION 4 BY EDUCATION,
EXPERIENCE AND SALARY

Education Yrs. Exp.	B.S.							M.S.							
	0-2	2-4	4-6	6-8	8-10	10+	%	0-2	2-4	4-6	6-8	8-10	10+	%	
Salary \$															
2-3,000	7.7						1.2								
3-4,000	69.2	75.0	12.5		16.7	16.7	29.0	80.0	47.4	17.6				12.5	25.8
4-5,000	7.7	25.0	87.5		75.0	66.7	59.0	20.0	47.4	58.8	41.7	20.0		12.5	40.9
5-6,000	15.4				25.0	16.7	10.8		5.3	17.6	58.3	40.0	25.0	22.7	
6-7,000										5.9		20.0	50.0	9.1	
7-8,000												20.0		1.5	
8,000+															
Number	13	12	24	16	12	6		5	19	17	12	5	8		
Total				83 = 55.3%								66 = 40.0%			

TABLE IV
PERCENT OF GAME EMPLOYEES IN THE UNITED STATES BY EDUCATION,
EXPERIENCE AND SALARY

Education Yrs. Exp.	B.S.							M.S.							
	0-2	2-4	4-6	6-8	8-10	10+	%	0-2	2-4	4-6	6-8	8-10	10+	%	
Salary \$															
2-3,000	7.4	1.2					1.2								
3-4,000	66.2	48.8	16.5	4.2	4.3	1.8	22.0	65.6	32.8	8.3	7.3			2.0	18.4
4-5,000	23.5	50.0	72.2	74.7	71.7	32.1	53.5	34.4	58.6	70.0	56.1	61.5	20.0	50.9	
5-6,000	2.9				10.3	20.0	15.2	14.6		8.6	13.3	31.7	26.9	32.0	18.4
6-7,000						1.1	8.7	3.8			8.3	2.4	3.8	30.0	8.2
7-8,000			1.0				14.8	3.4				2.4	7.7	8.0	2.6
8,000+							6.4	1.4						8.0	1.5
Number	68	84	97	95	46	109		32	58	60	41	26	50		
Total				499 = 63.8%								267 = 34.1%			

SUMMARY TABLES III AND IV

Salary \$	Region 4		U. S.	
	Total	Percent	Total	Percent
2-3,000	1	0.7	6	0.8
3-4,000	41	27.3	159	20.3
4-5,000	76	50.7	407	52.0
5-6,000	24	16.0	124	15.9
6-7,000	6	4.0	45	5.8
7-8,000	2	1.3	27	3.5
8,000+			14	1.8
	150		782	

FISHERIES EMPLOYEES

As of January, 1956, Region 4 employed 91 fisheries biologists while a total of 466 were employed by all states with the exception of 4 which have been mentioned previously.

TABLE V
FISHERIES EMPLOYEES IN PERCENT BY REGION AND SALARY

Region Salary \$	1	2	3	4	5	U. S.
2-3,000		4.5		4.4		1.5
3-4,000	24.5	59.7	24.0	35.2	37.6	33.9
4-5,000	38.3	20.9	51.2	44.0	40.0	40.8
5-6,000	27.8	11.9	14.0	13.2	12.9	16.1
6-7,000	7.4	3.0	3.9	2.3	5.9	4.5
7-8,000	2.1		4.7	1.1	1.2	2.1
8,000+			2.3		2.4	1.1

TABLE VI
EDUCATIONAL DEGREE IN PERCENT POSSESSED BY FISHERIES BIOLOGISTS BY REGION

Region Degree	1	2	3	4	5	U. S.
B.S.	76.6	74.6	56.6	45.1	52.9	60.3
M.S.	22.3	22.9	37.9	46.1	41.2	35.0
Ph.D.	1.1	2.5	5.5	8.8	5.9	4.7

From figures presented in Tables V and VI, it can be seen that fisheries biologists in Region 4 receive about average pay when compared to other regions. Their pay approximates that received by game employees. However the educational qualifications of these men are slightly above those of the game workers.

WILDLIFE SALARIES COMPARED TO SALARIES
OF OTHER FIELDS

The starting monthly salary for most foresters that received a BS. degree at L. S. U. in 1956 was 350 dollars. The average starting salary for engineering graduates was 405 dollars. It has been estimated that a forester who completed school 5 years ago with a BS. degree is now averaging about 375 per month and those receiving a MS. degree 5 years ago now receive an average of 400 per month. Therefore pay to wildlife employees is lagging behind other fields. At the present time the salary of foresters with a BS. degree is about equal to wildlife employees with a MS degree.

In addition to the higher salary, foresters also receive more social benefits such as better insurance and retirement plans, Christmas bonuses, better job security, and less political interference.

Wildlife salaries in nearly all brackets should be increased by one-fourth. By so doing we will attract more of the good men entering college. They in turn will improve our profession.