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# Careers and Job Opportunities for Zoologists

(Saturday, 03 July 2004) - - Last Updated (Saturday, 03 July 2004)

Because zoology is a very broad area of scientific study, careers can be defined in several different ways. For example, one person might specialise in fish (an ichthyologist) whereas another may specialise in mammals (a mammalogist). Yet another might concentrate on the development of the early stages of life in both fish and mammals (an embryologist or developmental biologist). Thus there are many different ways in which specialists can be defined. Here, we have tried to indicate the more general categories of careers for which employment may be available in South Africa. There is no special importance attached to the classification used; it simply reflects zoology in the country at present and how jobs are described by the wide variety of agencies, institutions and companies engaged in zoological research and employing zoologists. Among others, these include the National and Provincial nature conservation agencies, the South African Bureau of Standards, the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), the Medical Research Council (MRC), museums, universities, colleges, technikons, zoological gardens, fisheries institutes, the Department of Environmental Affairs & Tourism, Agriculture and Health, local authorities, game farms, firms of ecological consultants, pharmaceutical companies and many other private and state agencies.

## Job opportunities

The demand for zoologists varies widely. For example, in most parts of South Africa there are more posts than there are biology teachers so that one will almost certainly be able to get a teaching job, although this may not always be in the most convenient locality. Permanent positions are usually more easily available in applied than in "pure" fields. Openings for entomologists and fisheries biologists, for example, are fairly common whereas there are a very limited number of university teaching posts, which are highly sought after because they give zoologists an opportunity to do the research of their choice. Members of university staff are awarded research grants by outside agencies such as the National Research Foundation (NRF) to support postgraduate student research and to employ research workers in short-term non-teaching contract posts. Where possible, opportunities for employment and the sorts of jobs available are given in each of the following sections discussing types of careers.

## Types of careers

Follow the links in the navigation bar on the left to view descriptions of some of the many fields in which jobs are available for zoologists. They are in no specific order and openings are available in some fields more than in others. There is also, of necessity, a great deal of overlap between the fields. A Fisheries Biologist, for example, will probably also consider him/herself a Marine Biologist.