

Opportunities for Ecologists

The Biological Resources Division employs a large number of Ecologists at our Science Centers throughout the United States.

Ecologists investigate patterns of interaction between organisms and environmental factors primarily at the levels of individuals, populations, communities, and ecosystems. Regardless of the level of study, ecologists must relate their understanding of particular processes or components to the structure and functional dynamics of the total system. Ecology is concerned with effects and processes that originate from organisms, physical forces, and human activities that strongly influence ecological relationships in ecosystems. Ecologists study the distribution and density of organisms that live in ecosystems and changes that occur over time in this distribution and density. They study numbers of organisms, their demographic characteristics, factors limiting growth and development of species, allocation of resources, and the survival and adaptation of organisms in ecological systems.

Qualifications for Ecologists, GS-408: A degree in biology or a related field of science underlying ecological research that includes a least 30 semester hours in basic and applied biological sciences. These hours must include at least 9 semester hours in ecology and 12 semester hours in physical and mathematical sciences.

For nonresearch positions, at the GS-7: applicants must have 1 full year of graduate

level education or superior academic achievement or 1 year of specialized experience equivalent to the GS-5. Candidates who meet basic requirements will also qualify at GS-7 if they meet the criteria for Superior Academic Achievement*. Otherwise, applicants for positions at GS-7 and above must have additional professional experience or directly related graduate education. For GS-9, 2 full years of progressively higher level graduate education or master's degree, or 1 year of specialized experience equivalent to the GS-7. For GS-11, 3 full years of progressively higher level graduate education or Ph.D, or 1 year of specialized experience equivalent to the GS-9. At the GS-12 and above, 1 year of specialized experience equivalent to the next lower grade level. **For research positions,** (positions that primarily involve scientific inquiry or investigation, or research-type exploratory development of a creative or advanced scientific nature, where the knowledge required to perform the work successfully is primarily acquired through graduate study) GS-11, a master's degree or 1 year of specialized experience equivalent to the GS-9. For GS-12, Ph.D, or 1 year of specialized experience equivalent to the GS-11. At the GS-13 and above, 1 year of specialized experience equivalent to the next lower grade level.

The USGS is an equal opportunity employer and does not discriminate based on race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, non-disqualifying handicap conditions, or any other non-merit factors.

*Superior Academic Achievement requires: membership in a national scholastic Honorary Society above the freshman level; or standing in the upper third of the class; or an overall GPA of 3.0 or higher; or a GPA of 3.5 or higher for all the work in the major as computed on 4 years of education or during the final 2 years of the curriculum.