



CAREER OPPORTUNITIES WITH A DEGREE IN ZOOLOGY

Choosing a career involves more than just finding out what is open to you. Knowledge about yourself is vital to the process. It is valuable to start by looking at your strengths, weaknesses, interests, abilities and skills in order to relate career options to you.

Your acquired skills and the employment market

The diverse nature of a degree in Zoology means you have a wide knowledge of the life sciences as well as many other skills that are valued by all employers. Some of the skills gained while studying for this degree include:

- Collecting and analysing data, numeracy
- Communication skills (oral and written)
- Laboratory skills & experimental technique
- Accuracy
- Writing and reporting skills
- Team work
- Problem solving

There is a wide range of opportunities within the employment market for these skills whether within scientific industries or other areas. It is a solid grounding for a variety of sciences such as marine, environmental, agriculture, wildlife and fisheries – all of which are vibrant industries in Ireland. There are various industries that employ Zoologists which include the food and drinks industry, semi-state bodies (e.g., BIM), museum, the pharmaceutical industry, education, conservation, wildlife service and health related research-based companies as well as the more obvious Zoo & animal parks and veterinary/veterinary research.

Possible Career Opportunities – previous graduates

Aquarist - Galway Aquarium

Aquaculture - Many graduates of Zoology are involved with the farming of aquatic organisms such as fish, crustaceans, molluscs and aquatic plants.

Archaeology - At least one zoology graduate is working at archaeological digs as an animal bones expert.

Art & Media - A number of zoology graduates are working as artists or as wildlife photographers and wildlife illustrators. One graduate used to produce the Late Late Show for Gay Byrne. Sir David Attenborough was a zoology graduate (not from Galway obviously).

Biodiversity Officer – All city and county councils now have a Biodiversity and/or Heritage Officer who develops and manages their Local Biodiversity Action plan.

Conservation - Many zoology graduates work in conservation, for example mammal conservation development officer for the Vincent Wildlife Trust, or as Park Rangers for the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS). Others would work in the laboratory assessing genetic diversity of threatened species.

Ecologist - NPWS recently advertised for Ecologist Officers working on various national government projects.

Environmental Management - A number of graduates of zoology at University of Galway work for government agencies in environmental management such as the Environmental Protection Agency, the Marine Institute.

Environmental Consultancy - Some graduates work as consultants reporting to government or industry and some have set up successful companies in this area, e.g. Aquafact International, MKO. Ornithological surveyors at windfarms for example are highly sought after.

Fisheries Management - A number of zoology graduates work for the Irish Fisheries board, which uses scientific research on fish populations to find ways to protect fishery resources and allow sustainable exploitation.

Forensics - Zoology graduates also have the skills (e.g. DNA analysis) to become forensic scientists. Forensic entomology is an important branch of forensic science.

Scientific Journalism – Some graduates use the writing skills and knowledge acquired in journalism. There are dedicated science publications, and most media employ a scientific correspondent.

Marine Biologist - a very common career for zoology graduates in Ireland with BIM or the Marine Institute.

Museum Curation - Many zoology graduates learn skills in the identification of animals and also the organisational skills necessary for curation.

Parasitology - Zoology graduates have become either animal parasitologists working in veterinary science or human parasitologists working in tropical medicine.

Private Enterprise - in addition to environmental consultancy firms, other initiatives include making a living out of diving, underwater photography, bee keeping etc.

Research - skills learnt during your degree in zoology also make this career possible with graduates working as lab assistants in university laboratories and in R&D for industry. Many graduates stay on and do a PhD by research in one of the laboratories of zoology academic staff at Galway or other universities both in Ireland and abroad. Some of our recent graduates are working in the UK, rest of Europe, the US and Australia.

Taxonomy; Skills in identifying animals are also useful for environmental consultancy firms, oil companies or as private consultants, as well as academia.

Teaching: Zoology graduates have gone on to follow careers at all levels of teaching; from primary school, secondary school and third level.

Veterinary: Some zoology graduates have successfully used their zoology degree to obtain a place on a veterinary science course.

Wildlife Ranger; The NPWS employs rangers to ensure compliance with wildlife legislation such as the Wildlife Act or EU Habitats Directive.

Zoo Keeper/Assistant; At least one zoology graduate of University of Galway is working as an education officer in Dublin Zoo. Another is a 'big cat' keeper at Emerald Park.

Note: Further qualifications may be needed for certain positions. This list is a sample representation of positions available.

Up to 40% of graduate employment opportunities are open to graduates of all disciplines. In most cases, however you will need further postgraduate study or professional training.

Getting work experience will greatly help your job search. The Marine Institute has many projects each summer open to students. www.marine.ie/job+opportunities/index.htm gives information on the different projects and any special requirements as well as online application forms. There are also many voluntary positions worldwide every summer – publications such as Summer Jobs Abroad, Working with Animals and Green Volunteers (available to reference at the Careers Service) give information on these organisations.

Further study opportunities

For certain career choices, employers may look for candidates with further qualifications and training. Some of the range of opportunities available in NUI Galway include:

- MSc/PhD Zoology (research)
- PDGE
- MSc Biomedical Science
- MSc Ecosystem Conservation & Landscape Management
- HDip Business Studies
- HDip Systems Analysis
- Master of Applied Science (Operations & Quality Mgt)

The Career Development Centre holds information on Postgraduate Courses in Ireland, the UK and further afield. The Information Room has sections on Ireland and the UK (including individual prospectuses), USA (with guides to applying, funding and lists of courses), studying in EU countries as well as further afield. The Information Officer will be happy to help you locate appropriate sources.

Some other courses nation-wide include:

- PGDip/MSc in Bioinformatics, UU
- MSc Science in Education, TCD
- HDip/MSc Applied Science (Biotechnology), UCC
- HDip Aquaculture, UCC
- GradDip/MSc Biological Science, DCU
- MSc Science Communication, DCU
- MSc Mammalian Cell Physiology, TCD
- Graduate Entry Medicine (UL, UCC, UCD & RCSI)

The Career Development Centre

The mission of the Careers Development Centre team is to provide a quality careers guidance and information service, focused on facilitating and empowering students of University of Galway to manage their own career development. We have valuable information resources, experienced careers advisers and an information officer on hand to help you answer your queries.

Where the jobs are...

The following is a sample of some publications that may have vacancy advertisements for Zoology graduates.

National Papers:

- Irish Times – Business Section, Friday
- Irish Independent – Business Section, Thursday
- Irish Examiner – Money & Jobs, Friday
- Sunday Independent
- Local papers – e.g. Galway Advertiser, Thursday

We have found that the following websites contain relevant and interesting information on opportunities with a degree in Zoology.

- www.universityofgalway.ie/careers
- www.universityofgalway.ie/zoology
- www.science.ie
- www.newscientistjobs.com/graduate
- www.iwt.ie - Irish Wildlife Trust

Europe

- www.prospects.ac.uk/links/ScienceSB
- www.prospects.ac.uk/links/ZoologyDeg
- www.nature.com/naturejobs/channels/lifesciences/njls_resources.html
- <http://intl-nextwave.sciencemag.org/uk>
- www.academicjobseu.com/
- www.zsl.org
- www.zoo.cam.ac.uk/ioz/

Abroad

- www.findapostdoc.com [*Find a Postdoc/PhD/MSc*]
- www.the-science-lab.com/Biology/Zoology.html
- www.mhhe.com/biosci/pae/millerharley/careers.mhtml