

My education and experience have prepared me well for a future teaching K-12 biology. I have spent the last three decades working in a conservation-oriented career; however, my undergraduate degree in biology was well rounded and I have continued to pursue my fascination with the natural world at every level throughout my life.

I graduated Kenyon College magna cum laude with a Major and High Honors in Biology in 1993. My primary interest was in organismal biology and ecology, but I also completed coursework in chemistry, molecular and cellular biology, genetics, plant physiology and other general biology subjects. For my Honor's Thesis, I spent my Junior and Senior year studying ant-mediated seed dispersal in woodland flowers and its chemical connections to corpse-carrying behavior in ants.

After Kenyon, I spent about a decade working for the National Park Service and US Fish and Wildlife Service in wildlife management with species including Yellowstone bears, three species of Alaskan marine mammals, ravens and seabirds. This culminated in my returning to graduate school at the University of Arizona to pursue a Master's in wildlife management. My Master's thesis looked at raven predation on an Alaskan seabird colony over the course of four summers, and other coursework included biostatistics, population dynamics, research design, wildlife habitat analysis, and range science. I also worked as a graduate teaching assistant, teaching introductory biology laboratories.

Over the last 20 years, I have moved into an adjacent career pathway as a Federal Wildlife Officer with the US Fish and Wildlife Service and Law Enforcement Ranger with the National Park Service. My background in wildlife management has continued to serve me well, particularly in my interactions with sport hunters and members of the public interested in wildlife. I have also had numerous opportunities to assist research staff in projects like mist netting harlequin ducks in Glacier National Park, rehabilitating elephant seals and sea lions at Golden Gate, conducting necropsies of dead manatees in the Everglades, and the recent removal of mountain goats from Olympic National Park, where I work currently.

I have also volunteered in environmental education since 2007 as a member of the senior staff at the Oglebay Nature Camp in West Virginia, teaching sessions on topics including bird adaptations, geology, mammalogy and more. I continue to volunteer each year at this camp, but in the last two years I have also begun volunteering teaching similar content to school groups that visit Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge in Olympia.

As I prepared for the NES-305 test, I had occasion to reflect on the fact that my biology coursework is now several decades old. A lot has changed in that time, but I was pleased with my performance on the exam despite the many advances in the field. There is a lot of coursework I would enjoy pursuing beyond the requirements of your program, particularly in evolution, psychology, and geology/paleobiology. If there were opportunities at Evergreen to audit classes like this, or even just a current Intro to Biology, I would be very enthusiastic to refresh and expand my knowledge.