

Waterfowl Professional Credentials

The information below was selected from results of a survey of waterfowl professionals attending the 6th, 7th, and 8th North American Duck Symposia and responding to a survey administered by Ph.D. candidate, Lauren Senn, of Clemson University. Response rate to survey was 52% of 690 delivered surveys. Information reported here are highlights from the Senn dissertation (in preparation).

Table 1. Academic courses, technical skills, personality traits, and other factors ranked important or extremely important for acquiring employment in the waterfowl profession. Courses, skills, traits, and other factors are not listed in any direct or implied order of importance.

Academic courses	Technical/practical skills	Personality traits	Other factors
Biology	Science aptitude	Team player	Previous employment
Ecology	Computer competence	Collaboration	M.S./Ph.D.
Wildlife	Waterfowl identification	Dedication	
Statistics/modeling	Wildlife identification	Ambition	
Writing	Scientific writing	Determination	
	Oral communication	Integrity	
		Diplomacy	
		Patience	
		Leadership	
		Humility	
		Adaptability	

Other characteristics were written in and scored as important or extremely important by one or more individual respondents:

- Academic courses – human dimensions, specialized laboratory sciences (e.g., DNA, isotopes, eDNA), soils, personnel management
- Technical/practical skills – leadership, critical thinking, law enforcement
- Other factors – conflict management, partnering/negotiating, work ethic

Other survey highlights to consider for planning of university/college waterfowl programs:

- 85% of respondents indicated that the financial contribution of their assistantships or fellowships were either important or extremely important to their pursuit of a graduate degree.
- 74% of respondents indicated that the assistantship or fellowship positions they received were either important or extremely important to their professional development.