

Morgan Karnes

931 Lake Dr. Bedford VA, 24523 | (540)-784-3272 | mkarnes97@outlook.com
<https://blogs.longwood.edu/karnesmorganbiol/>

When I was a little kid, I loved being outdoors and getting to experience all the wonderful adventures it held. However, like almost all kids in my generation, I went through a period where I stayed inside watching television or playing on the computer for hours on end. This lack of activity caused me to gain a substantial amount of weight, which led me to want to stay inside even more. In my junior year of high school I decided to take control of my health and become more active. I began to devote more time to outdoor activities and less time to television and the internet. Within months I was playing in match tennis, running 5Ks, hiking all sorts of mountains and trails, kayaking and fishing a variety of rivers, and I rarely even stayed inside other than to eat and sleep. The longer I spent outside the more my love and knowledge grew for the outdoors. Throughout my journey I have lost a total of almost seventy pounds and my entire view of the outdoors has changed and I almost feel like a little kid again, full of curiosity and questions. Because of my love for the outdoors and all the adventures it has given me, I want to pursue a career in which I educate others about nature and I help conserve and preserve the wildlife within it.

In order to pursue such a career, I decided to go to Longwood University to obtain a bachelor's degree in biology. During my time at Longwood I took many classes and participated in many activities that have helped me reach my goal. Some of the classes that really stand out to me in relation to my passion for the outdoors, are plant biology and conservation biology. In these classes I gained a lot of useful knowledge as well as gained a lot of hands-on experience that will help me to achieve my career goal.

Plant biology really helped me to develop a better understanding of the importance of nature and its complexity. I learned essential field experience such as tree, shrub identification. Using the knowledge, I gained in this classes, I was able to apply it to lectures and activities we did in conservation.

Conservation biology built a foundation of how to assess the value of plants and animals and how to manage them to help conserve them. In this class we discussed the underlying causes of why we need conservation, we learned the laws that were created through the year to help conserve species, and the types of conservation and how to implement them. Using the skills we learned in lectures, we performed hands-on conservation activities that helped us to see how management works. Some of these activities included creating refuges, and wildlife management plans.

However, the most experience I have had towards achieving my career goal has been my internship as a park guide. During my internship I learned how to communicate and interpret knowledge about nature to others and performed many helpful tasks such as GSP, proper trail management, park management (budgeting, ect.), creating interpretive programs, writing grant proposal, creating park brochures, guest-check in, and park safety. Through these experiences I have gained a working knowledge of state parks and other agencies and an even greater love for nature.

I think all these experiences make me a well-qualified candidate for a job in wildlife conservation. They have given me a wonderful foundation in starting my career and will greatly help me in a job. These experiences have only left me with a thirst for building upon my knowledge and skills of wildlife and how to conserve them.