

# Wildlife Leadership Academy Instructor Directory



**Mark Banker**

Mark Banker Certified Wildlife Biologist and Certified Prescribed Burner. Mark has worked for both state agencies and non-profit wildlife organizations since graduating with a Master's Degree in Wildlife Science from VA Tech in 1994. Most recently, Mark was Director of Development with the American Chestnut Foundation's Northern Appalachians Field Office, and Senior Biologist with the Ruffed Grouse Society.

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**Justin Brown**

Dr. Justin Brown is the wildlife veterinarian for the PA Game Commission. Dr. Brown received his Ph.D. in Veterinary Pathology from the University of Georgia. He has worked as a wildlife disease diagnostician and research scientist at the Southeastern Cooperative Wildlife Disease Study. He has experience with paramyxoviruses and influenza viruses in wild birds, avian retroviruses in wild turkeys, and parvoviruses in carnivores.

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**Ron Burkert**

Ron Burkert received his bachelor's degree in Forest Science from Penn State, and his master's degree in Wildlife Management from West Virginia University. He worked for a number of years at the University of Arkansas-Monticello in wildlife field research and Department of Forestry administration. He has worked for the Ruffed Grouse Society for over thirty years, and is currently the Manager of Public Education.

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**Tammy Colt**

Tammy Colt is a Regional Wildlife Diversity Biologist with the Pennsylvania Game Commission and is responsible for 10 southwestern counties in PA. Tammy has a bachelor's in Animal Biosciences from Penn State, and a master's in biology from Indiana University of Pennsylvania where she focused on ecological herpetology. She has worked at Powdermill Nature Reserve as an environmental educator and at Loyalhanna Watershed Association as a field biologist.

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**Lucas DeGroot**

Luke is the Avian Ecologist and Bird Banding Program Manager at Powdermill Nature Reserves bird banding station, home to the Powdermill bird migration research program and one of the longest continually running bird banding program in the United States.

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**John Edwards**

Dr. John Edwards is an assistant professor of wildlife and fisheries resources at West Virginia University. He graduated with a degree in Wildlife Management from West Virginia University, and then received his Master's in Forest Resources at Clemson University. Edwards holds a doctorate from Clemson University in Forest Resources. He has researched a variety of topics related to wildlife including Ruffed Grouse chick survival, predator ecology, gray bat ecology, and mast availability for wildlife.

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**John Eichinger**

John received his Bachelor's degree in Biology and his Master's degree in Business Administration from Central Michigan University. He has been a volunteer for many conservation organizations, including holding officer positions with the Michigan United Conservation Clubs, Michigan Wildlife Foundation, and National Wildlife Federation. He has worked primarily in the office furniture industry within leading companies. John is the current President and CEO of the Ruffed Grouse Society.

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**Tim Flanigan**

Tim Flanigan is a fulltime freelance writer and photographer with a number of top notch organizations including the Ruffed Grouse Society, Buckmasters, Upland Almanac, PA Outdoor News, North American Whitetail Magazine, PA Game News, and numerous calendars. Tim was a wildlife conservation officer with the PA Game Commission for thirty years.

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**Bob Frye**

Bob Frye is the outdoors editor of the Tribune-Review newspaper in Pittsburgh and Greensburg. He graduated with a degree in English Writing from the University of Pittsburgh and since has worked full time for several newspapers. Mr. Frye has also written several books and writes for various regional and national magazines.

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**Bonnie Issac**

Bonnie Isaac is the Collection Manager of Botany at the Carnegie Museum of Natural History in Pittsburgh. Bonnie received a B.S. and an M.S. in Biological Sciences from Youngstown State University, and an International Diploma in Herbarium Techniques, from the Kew Royal Botanical Garden. Ms. Isaac is currently serving as the Chairperson for the Pennsylvania Vascular Plant Technical Committee of the Pennsylvania Biological Survey and as President of the Botanical Society of Western Pennsylvania.

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**David Jackson**

Dave Jackson is a Regional Forest Resources Educator with Penn State Cooperative Extension. His primary responsibility is to provide educational programs for private forest landowners and youth. Dave earned his B.S. from The College of Environmental Science and Forestry at Syracuse, NY in forest resource management and forest biology and a Master's of Forest Resources from Penn State University. Dave has worked in various positions with the U.S. Forest Service, Forest Industry, State Forestry, and Private Forestry Consulting before coming to Penn State.

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**Michele Kittell**

Michele Kittell is the Executive Director of the Pennsylvania Institute for Conservation Education and Director of the Academy. Michele has led the Wildlife Leadership Academy for the last 5 years. She earned her bachelor's from Penn State in Biology and her master's in Zoology from Clemson University. She leads the Institute in coordinating, administering and creating partnerships to ensure the success of the Wildlife Leadership Academy. Contact email: [mkittell@picweb.org](mailto:mkittell@picweb.org)

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**Dr. Linda Ordiway**

Dr. Linda Ordiway is the newly hired Mid-Atlantic/Appalachian Regional Biologist for the Ruffed Grouse Society. Prior to employment with RGS she worked for the Northeastern Forestry Sciences Laboratory as a wildlife biologist. Linda Ordiway has a BS in biology and chemistry from Lock Haven University, and an MS in biology from Marshall University. She received her doctorate in Forest and Natural Resource Management from SUNY ESF.

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**Doug Oster**

Doug Oster is an Emmy Award winning producer, television host, and writer. He works for the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette as the Backyard Gardener and the co-host/producer of the Organic Gardeners Radio Show on KDKA radio. Doug's documentary he produced for the PBS affiliate WQED won an Emmy Award.

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**Wayne Sierer**

Wayne Sierer is a retired science teacher in Wilson School District in Berks County. He holds a B.S. in biology from Albright College. Mr. Sierer worked as a post-grad at Kutztown University and LaSalle University. An avid birder for over 30 years, Wayne has been associated with the Pennsylvania Chapter of the Audubon Society, as well as the Important Bird Area Program sponsored by the Audubon Society.

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**Kim VanFleet**

Kim VanFleet is the Important Bird Area Coordinator in the central region for Audubon Pennsylvania. She specializes in the study of migration routes of raptors across Pennsylvania's Ridge and Valley Province. Kim leads the Kittantiny Conservation Partnership. She has served as adjunct faculty in the biology departments of Shippensburg University, Penn State University, and Dickinson College, teaching courses including ornithology, ecology, and environmental science.

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**Lisa Williams**

Lisa Williams is the PA Game Commission's species specialist for ruffed grouse, woodcock, mourning doves and webless waterfowl. Lisa received her B.S. in Ecology/Environmental Studies at Juniata College and her M.S. in Wildlife and Fisheries Sciences at Penn State University. Her particular interest lies in the restoration and management of early succession habitats because of the critical role these areas provide as habitat to many declining species.

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