



# Wildlife Protector<sup>SM</sup> Training

## Professional Certification Program

# Program Introduction

## Welcome!

Welcome to Wildlife Training Institute's online certification training for arborists, foresters, utility and vegetation management professionals.

Congratulations on taking the first steps to increase your awareness of wildlife as you work. Through this training, you will learn what it means to be a Certified Wildlife Protector<sup>SM</sup>. You will become familiar with wildlife protection laws, learn where and how to look for wildlife as you work, and know what to do when you encounter wildlife.

Protecting birds and other animals while you work isn't just about complying with the law – it shows you care about wildlife. Trees in urban parks and backyards are becoming increasingly important to bird survival as development continues to expand into their native habitat.

No one welcomes more regulation, but wildlife protection laws are here to stay, and tree care professionals often work in the public eye. Wildlife protection is important to many citizens; there are now over 46 million bird watchers in the U.S. and that number increases each year - chances are your clients are among them.

*To avoid citizen reports that can lead to agency involvement and possible fines, it is essential for arborists to know how to minimize wildlife encounters during tree care and vegetation management activities.*

By demonstrating to your clients that you are aware of wildlife issues and are taking steps to be 'wildlife friendly' you can stand out from your competitors.



# Program Introduction

## Course Organization

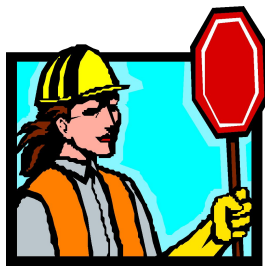
This course is divided into three lessons, an exam, and a green marketing discussion:

- I. Laws that Protect Wildlife
- II. Looking for Wildlife as You Work
- III. When You Encounter Wildlife
- IV. Certification Exam
- V. Green Marketing & Resources

## Navigation and Other Tips

From this page you can click on any link above to go directly to that particular session.

Items of special importance will be marked with the “stop” icon:





# Laws that Protect Wildlife



# Laws that Protect Wildlife

## Introduction

Certified Wildlife Protectors<sup>SM</sup> are familiar with a variety of wildlife laws. Almost all birds and many other types of wildlife are protected under federal, state and local regulations. It is in the best interest of arborists and other vegetation management professionals to be aware of and comply with these laws.

Tree care and vegetation management activities are high-profile: birdwatchers (there are over 46 *million* in the US!), the general public and agencies may be monitoring your activities. Every year agencies receive thousands of calls from citizens concerned how tree care activities impact wildlife.

## Learning Objectives

1. Understand how federal and state wildlife laws apply to tree care and vegetation management activities.
1. Research your state's wildlife laws.
1. Become aware of how these laws are enforced and their penalties.



# Federal Wildlife Laws

## Migratory Bird Treaty Act

The federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) has been amended several times since it was first passed in 1918. There are currently 1,007 bird species protected by the MBTA, a list which includes not only ducks and geese but woodpeckers, hawks, owls, herons, cormorants, doves, many songbirds and even the American crow.

Under the MBTA, it is illegal to kill, capture, or possess any of the listed adult birds, their eggs, young, or active nests without a permit. An active nest contains young (nestlings or fledglings) or eggs. Federal and state permits to move active nests can sometimes be obtained in extreme situations. Contact a qualified biologist for help getting a permit.

Only a very few birds are *not* listed under the MBTA. We don't expect you to be an expert at identifying birds, so assume every bird you encounter will be protected by the MBTA.

The MBTA carries a fine up to \$15,000 and 6 months in prison. (*P.L. 105-312; 1998*)

## U.S. Forest Service

The U.S. Forest Service has requirements including buffer zones around active raptor nests or nesting territories. Buffer zones are defined as seasonal or spatial areas of inactivity. Buffer zone requirements vary by location. Contact a biologist before working on U.S. Forest Service lands.



Even American crows and their active nests are protected under the MBTA.



# Federal Wildlife Laws

## **Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act**

The Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (BGEPA) was first passed in 1940 and has been amended several times. It protects eagles, their nests and eggs from harm or disturbance.

*Disturbance includes any activity that causes an eagle to abandon its nest or interferes with its normal behavior.* Inactive nests are also protected, as are perching trees in the eagles' territory. Protective buffer zones can be up to one mile from the nest tree.

Eagle nests are large platforms several feet across and are often easy to spot atop trees.

The BGEPA carries a fine up to \$100,000 and a year in prison. (*Criminal Fines Improvement Act P.L. 100-185; 1987*)



An active bald eagle nest. Do not start work around a large platform nest without contacting a biologist.



Stop and contact a qualified biologist if you are working anywhere near a large platform nest – it could be an eagle's. Trees with eagle nests and additional nearby trees are protected even when eagles are not present.



# For More Information

[Click here to register for our complete Wildlife Protector Certification training.](#)



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