



Dr. Adams is a trained professional. The frog she is holding was not harmed and was released back in to the wild. Never approach or handle wildlife.

# Meet the Scientist!

An aquatic ecologist studies interactions in aquatic ecosystems and an astacologist studies crayfish. I often focus on interactions involving fish and crayfish.

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<http://www.naturalinquirer.org>

### Important Scientist Characteristics

Research requires many abilities. Doing research is often logical, precise, and repetitive, but a surprising amount of creativity goes into figuring out the most interesting questions to ask and the best ways to get the answers. Curiosity is critical to loving my work. Good writing skills are essential to everything!

### Example of a simple research question I have tried to answer:

How do small reservoirs on headwater streams affect crayfish communities downstream?

### Technology or equipment used in research:

We use backpacks and boat electrofishers. These tools send electricity into the water causing fish to experience galvanotaxis, in which their muscles tighten and cause them to swim toward the electricity. The fish are stunned, and we collect them in dipnets. We study them, allow them to recover, and release them.

### Most Exciting Discovery

In the Clark Fork River, Montana, biologists thought there was one species of sculpin, a small bottom-dwelling fish. My colleagues and I discovered there were really two species, and both are undescribed (meaning they are unnamed). The two species differ in behavior and where they live in the streams.

**When did you know you wanted to be a scientist?** When I was 5 or 6, my mom started a Ranger Rick Nature Club for the neighborhood kids. I think that's when I decided to become a biologist. My challenge later was figuring out exactly what kind of job I wanted and how long I was willing to go to college.

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