



# Meet the Scientist!



I am a tropical ecologist, and I study forests, wetlands, and cities in the tropics.

## Dr. Ariel Lugo

Ecologist

Ph.D., The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill  
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<http://www.naturalinquirer.org>

<http://www.scienceinvestigator.org>



## Dr. Ariel Lugo

### Important Scientist Characteristics

- ★ Have discipline and desire to understand how nature works.
- ★ Be systematic and comprehensive in your approach to issues.
- ★ Be relentless in the analysis of data and writing articles in scientific journals.

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

Why do mangrove trees that live in seawater along dry coastlines decline in size from the ocean to the land?

### Technology or equipment used in research:

I use electronic equipment in the field and the laboratory, but my favorite include my flip video for recording ecological systems, my GPS for keeping track of where I go in the world, and my Mac computer where I keep my videos and maps, analyze data, and write scientific articles.

<http://www.sanjuanultra.org>

### Most Exciting Discovery

I was very excited by the realization that native and introduced species are mixing and self-organizing to form new communities, called novel ecosystems. These novel communities function normally and could represent the ecosystems of the future in response to the activities of people.

### When did you know you wanted to be a scientist?

I wanted to study science since sixth grade when I learned about fossils. My desire to be a scientist developed after I graduated from college and spent a summer working with real scientists in the rain forest. Experiments in the rain forest were fun and I could learn a lot.