



Meet the Scientist!



A wildlife biologist is a person who studies how to manage animal populations in nature. An ornithologist studies birds.

Dr. Paul Hamel
Wildlife Biologist, Ornithologist
Ph. D., Clemson University
USDA Forest Service scientist

Photo by Carl Smith



<http://www.naturalinquirer.org>

<http://www.scienceinvestigator.org>

Important Scientist Characteristics

★ Curiosity, patience, good humor, hard work, listening to people and to Mother Nature, and learning Spanish have all helped me.

Example of a simple research question I have tried to

answer: How can people make a good living in a certain place and at the same time maintain a good habitat for migratory birds like Cerulean Warblers? Working on this question has led me to meet interesting people in many countries and to appreciate the real problems that we all have in common.

Technology or equipment used in research:

I catch birds, rats, and mice in nets and traps. Next, I weigh and measure them. Then, I place identification tags and radiotransmitters on the animals. These tags and transmitters enable me to track where the animals go and therefore to guess what they are doing. I use computers to analyze data, map the animals' movements, and write my results.

Most Exciting Discovery

My most exciting discovery is that it is possible to manage forests to create the best habitat for rare birds like Bachman's Warblers, Cerulean Warblers, and Rusty Blackbirds. It's sad, too, because the last Bachman's Warbler became extinct before we could recreate the best habitat for it.

When did you know you wanted to be a scientist?

I knew I wanted to study birds when I first identified a Cedar Waxwing by myself; I was in 5th grade. In high school, I got a chance to do my first research study of the bird community in the forest near the school.

<http://www.srs.fs.usda.gov/staff/262>