



Meet the Scientist!



<http://www.naturalinquirer.org>



A forest geneticist compares the DNA from trees growing in different forests to figure out how they may be different or whether they share a common ancestry.

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Important Scientist Characteristics:

I love to figure out how things work. I don't mind trying something over and over until I get it right. Most of actually doing science can be boring, which is sad, but true. But when you get lucky, it is also fun to discover new things.

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

If you have an unhealthy looking forest on a mountainside, would it help or hurt to plant seeds from healthy looking trees growing down in the valley?

Technology or equipment used in research:

We use lab equipment to purify DNA from trees. The lab equipment also helps us make more parts of that DNA, as well as separate and measure those parts. Then, we use computers to help us make sense of the different parts so we can answer the interesting questions.

Most Exciting Discovery

It was exciting to actually get a job doing this type of work!

When did you know you wanted to be a scientist?

I was about 8-years-old when I knew I wanted to be a biologist. I went to college to learn biology, then to graduate school to learn genetics. I didn't plan to be a forest geneticist, but lucky me, life worked out that way!

<https://www.srs.fs.usda.gov/staff/scientists/882>