



Meet the Scientist!



Ecologists study the relationships among organisms and between organisms and their environment.

Dr. Eileen H. Helmer

Ecologist
Ph.D., Oregon State University
USDA Forest Service scientist



<http://www.naturalinquirer.org>

Important Scientist Characteristics

Curiosity and the challenge to be creative are what motivate me in my research. Logic is crucial to being a scientist, but imagination and exercising the mind through math and study, are the source of creativity.

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

When forests grow back after people have cleared them for farming or pasture, how do the new forests differ from the forests that were there originally?

Technology or equipment used in research:

Satellite images are digital photos from space that we use to track and map forest clearing, regrowth, and other characteristics of forests.

Most Exciting Discovery

Forest area has been expanding on many Caribbean islands, rather than only in Puerto Rico. Forests are growing back where people used to farm sugar cane, coffee or cocoa, because farming these crops on Caribbean islands is no longer very profitable.

When did you know you wanted to be a scientist?

In 7th grade I realized that science was the class that interested me most. It sparked my curiosity, and it was exciting to me that science can help solve some of the world's most difficult problems.

http://www.fs.fed.us/global/iitf/sci_bio.html#eileen_h