



Meet the Scientist!



<http://www.naturalinquirer.org>



Dr. King is a trained professional. The animal pictured was not injured and was released back into the wild. Never handle or approach wild animals.

Wildlife biologists study animals and how animals interact with their environment. My research is directed at what resources bird and other wildlife populations need to continue into the future.

Dr. Dave King
Research Wildlife Biologist
Ph.D., University of Massachusetts, Amherst
USDA Forest Service scientist

Important Scientist Characteristics:

I am observant, creative and hard working, which makes it possible for me to develop new and interesting research projects to promote the conservation of wildlife and their habitats.

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

Are Neotropical migrant birds picky about habitat on their wintering grounds? Do these habitat choices by Neotropical migrant birds promote their survival during the winter? Neotropical migrant birds are birds that breed in North America and spend winter in Mexico, Central and South America, and the Caribbean.

Technology or equipment used in research:

Radio-telemetry is a method we use to track birds on the wintering grounds. It is an important method because the birds do not sing on their wintering grounds, so they are hard to find. Radio transmitters for radio-telemetry are tiny. The radio transmitters are attached to birds with leg-loop harnesses. Birds are tracked using a hand-held antenna that beeps louder when the antenna is pointed at the bird. Gradually, you are able to find the bird's location.

Most Exciting Discovery

Birds appear to select shade-grown coffee farms on their wintering grounds. However, their use of shade-grown coffee farms can hurt survival rates. Shade-grown coffee may be an ecological trap. Ecological traps are changes in the environment that lead animals to believe a habitat is good when it is actually not good.

When did you know you wanted to be a scientist?

I have always enjoyed logic, or reasoning, and organizing information in systems. In college, I learned that I could apply these tools to the study of wildlife in graduate school.

<http://www.nrs.fs.fed.us/people/dking>