



Meet the Scientist!



<http://www.naturalinquirer.org>



A silviculturist is a forester who is just as concerned about what trees are left in the woods after a harvest than what products are removed from the forest.

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USDA Forest Service scientist

Important Scientist Characteristics:

My work as a scientist benefits from my ability to make connections between things, including ways for information to be applied for solving problems. That is probably a combination of curiosity and creativity. A scientist also has to be willing to fail a few (or many) times.

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

We know that fire can be beneficial to some plants. I work with ecologists, botanists, and other foresters to determine where and when controlled fire is still needed.

Technology or equipment used in research:

One of the funny things about forestry is that it can be very low tech. I like to carry an increment borer with me for taking a core sample from a tree to roughly determine its age. An increment borer is a hand-powered, hollow drill bit that enables you to take a sample of wood from a living tree.

Most Exciting Project or Discovery

I am most excited about my work with controlled or prescribed fire. As a tool for both ecosystem restoration and as a silvicultural treatment, there are so many questions to answer.

When did you know you wanted to be a scientist?

In 9th grade, I had Earth Science for my science class where we learned about rocks, minerals, fossils, the deep time of geology, and conservation of natural resources. In that class, I decided to be a scientist studying something in the natural world.

<https://www.nrs.fs.fed.us/people/mthomasvangundy>