



Meet the Scientist!



Foresters study many aspects of trees and forests, from traditional silviculture to carbon storage to the relationship between humans and trees. My research concentrates on the ecology and management of pine forests in the southern United States.

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<http://www.naturalinquirer.org>

Important Scientist Characteristics

My ability to communicate using written or spoken words has helped me in my career. Scientists must be able to inform their colleagues, resource professionals, and the general public about their discoveries. Without the ability to communicate research, our work will benefit no one!

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

How does silviculture affect goods and services provided by the environment, like wood products, carbon storage, wildlife habitat, water quality, and recreation? Recently, our research on the Crossett Experimental Forest shifted away from focusing solely on traditional timber management issues. Our new questions ask how silviculture, the science of growing trees to meet society's needs, affects other parts of the environment.

Technology or equipment used in research:

We use hand-held lasers to estimate tree heights. Tree height is often time-consuming and difficult to measure. Data from the hand-held lasers enable scientists to develop mathematical equations to predict tree height using other easier ways to gather data, like stem diameter.

Most Exciting Discovery

So much of science is the result of carefully planned, cautiously observed, and thoroughly analyzed research. True moments of excitement are rare in my work. However, it has been thrilling to uncover information lost for decades, or even centuries, in some historical forest reconstructions. It's also exciting to measure spectacularly large or unexpectedly old trees.

When did you know you wanted to be a scientist? I became interested in being a scientist in college. My professors taught me how exciting it was to learn about new species, ecosystems, and landscapes, and that the thrill of discovery stays with you throughout your life!

<https://www.srs.fs.usda.gov/staff/scientists/767>