



Meet the Scientist!



A forest ecologist studies how plants and animals interact within a forest community. Some of these scientists are particularly interested in how forests cycle carbon and work to measure how carbon moves through these systems.

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Important Scientist Characteristics

Scientists have no particular talent that makes them successful. We were taught to learn, that is the key. The talent is in the people that taught us that.

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

How are canopy shapes different over large areas? I use remote sensing (from aircraft and satellites) to measure the answer to this question.

Technology or equipment used in research:

I use technology called LiDAR (Light Detection and Ranging) that uses very fast pulses of laser light that can measure the height of trees. We strap these instruments to an airplane or helicopter and we can measure forest structure over very large areas.

Most Exciting Discovery

We have shown that we can measure how forest canopies are shaped, not just how tall trees are, using LiDAR instruments. This allows us to measure wildfire risk and enables us to examine how disturbances can be different in how they affect canopy shape.

When did you know you wanted to be a scientist?

I knew I wanted to be a scientist when I was a high school junior and lived at the Chewonki Foundation on the coast of Maine. The people and environment there taught me a deep appreciation for the natural world and opened my eyes to the changes that we are making to it.

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