

Photo courtesy of NEON, Inc.

### Dr. Courtney Meier

Plant Ecologist

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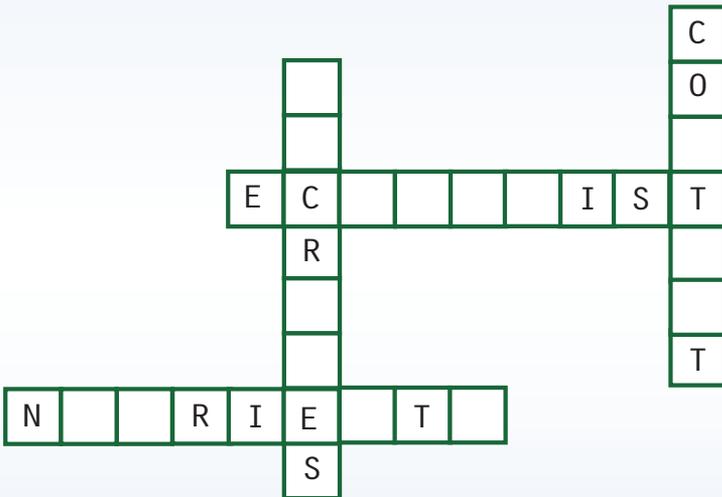
## Meet a Plant Ecologist!

Dr. Courtney Meier is a plant ecologist at the National Ecological Observatory Network. He investigates links between plants, soil microbes, nutrients, and plant growth within the context of environmental change.



## Word Game

Correctly fill in the boxes so they spell four of the words from the information used in the "Meet a Scientist" section above.



Learn more about the natural world:

<http://www.naturalinquirer.org>

## Be a Plant Ecologist...

**Plant ecologists** study the locations and types of plants in an area, the effects of the environment such as soil and climate on plants, and interactions between plants and other organisms.

Can plants talk? Even though plants can't speak, they can tell us stories about changes in our environment. Plant ecologists listen to the stories plants tell by watching for changes in plant leaves, flowers, and fruit. Choose a tree or shrub near you to observe and find out what your plant is telling you about its environment.



### Today is:

Month      Day      Year

### My plant is a:

- Tree                       Wildflower  
 Shrub                     Grass

### Today my plant has:

(Check all that apply!)

- No leaves                       Leaves falling  
 A few leaves                       Flowers  
 Many leaves                       Fruits or seeds  
 Leaves changing color

### Here's what my plant looks like now:



*Draw a picture of your plant here.*

Plants change with the seasons. How do you think your plant will look a few months from now? Explain why.



### Outdoor Tip:

What are the plants at your home or school doing now? Scientists at Project BudBurst want to know. Become a citizen scientist with Project BudBurst. Learn more at [www.budburst.org](http://www.budburst.org).

**Project BudBurst**  
Timing is everything!