



Meet the Scientist!



A plant ecophysiolgist studies the ways in which plants interact with the environment.

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<http://www.naturalinquirer.org>

Important Scientist Characteristics

I love to figure things out. I like to look at a landscape for patterns and then unravel the processes that shape plant communities. It is like a puzzle and the puzzle pieces like plants can only fit in a predictable pattern.

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

How do you effectively restore native dominated ecosystems and the services that they provide? The answers must be adaptive because the world is always changing.

Technology or equipment used in research:

I like to measure how plants perform in different environments so I use a machine called a portable gas exchange system (Li-Cor 6400) which measures how much carbon dioxide a plant takes up and converts to plant productivity.

Most Exciting Discovery

A decade ago, people thought we were crazy to attempt restoration in Hawaii's dry forests because they had been completely invaded by a nonnative grass. Much to our surprise when we first removed fountain grass in areas where goats were kept out—native species flourished while the fountain grass took a long time to recover.

When did you know you wanted to be a scientist? As an undergraduate I loved to scuba dive and volunteered at the Seattle Aquarium where I interacted with the staff scientists. I couldn't believe how dedicated they were and that they actually made a career out of something they loved. It empowered me to really think about my natural interests. Science allows us to ask questions and challenge ideas.

<http://www.fs.fed.us/psw/programs/cb/staff/scordell/>