A plant ecologist studies plants and how they function on the landscape.

Dr. Qinfeng Guo
Plant Ecologist
Ph.D., North Carolina State University
USDA Forest Service scientist

Dr. Qinfeng Guo

Important Scientist Characteristics

★ Curiosity

★ Broad training and background

★ Strong interests in how nature works

Example of a simple research question I have tried to answer:
Why are some introduced species invasive and others are not? Why are some habitats more vulnerable to species invasions than others?

Technology or equipment used in research:
I use geographic information systems (GIS) technology to locate and map the distribution of invasive species. I also use GIS to map the projected spread and distribution of many invasive species in the future using various climate change models.

Most Exciting Discovery
I recently completed a study reporting the richness and distribution of invasive and other documented hybrid plants in the United States. The results show that human disturbances create novel niches for newly formed hybrid species to establish and persist. This is similar to factors controlling the richness and distribution of exotic species. This is the first such report at the national level for hybrid plants in the United States.

When did you know you wanted to be a scientist?
I've known I wanted to be a scientist since high school when I learned about some big names in science and their stories.