



Meet the Scientist!



An ecologist studies how organisms interact with each other and the environment. I use genetic tools to answer ecological questions related to plants and invasive species.

Dr. Rima Lucardi Plant, Molecular, and Invasion Ecologist

Ph.D., Mississippi State University
USDA Forest Service scientist



<http://www.naturalinquirer.org>

Important Scientist Characteristics

I have always been eagerly curious. Discovering why something works the way it does is the best feeling in the world, especially when you learn a little bit more about how it works.

Example of a simple research question I have tried to answer: What makes a weed a weed? What role does genetics play in making some plants weedy?

Technology or equipment used in research:

I use a lot of different and exciting technologies in my research. For example, I use a robot with magnets and specially-coated beads to remove DNA from plants and insects.

Most Exciting Discovery

One aspect of my research that I find most intriguing is how plants use human-created environments, like roads, cars, and trucks, to get around and find new places to live.

When did you know you wanted to be a scientist?

I have always been naturally curious about my environment and everyone got tired of me asking them "why?" all the time. I started to figure things out myself through consistent observation and trying to figure out patterns.

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