



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.

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### 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.