



An ecologist studies the interactions between living things and their environment. The environment includes the physical environment such as climate, water, and soil as well as the biological environment such as other living things.

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Important Scientist Characteristics

I think that curiosity, critical thinking, and good organizational skills have helped me the most in my scientific research. Curiosity about the natural world is what leads to interesting questions, and critical thinking guides my research into these questions. Having good organizational skills enables me to get the research done.

Example of a simple research question I have tried to answer: What is the size of the Yosemite toad's home range? What is the maximum distance this toad can travel?

Technology or equipment used in research:

I use "toad waist packs" to attach radio transmitters to the toads, and then I can track the toads. The radio transmitters enable me to track the toads as they move through the forest.

Most Exciting Discovery

I found that the toads moved farther than anyone else had previously measured.

When did you know you wanted to be a scientist?

I discovered my passion for ecology in college. If I had known more about ecology when I was in grade school — like through the *Natural Inquirer* — I probably would have become interested in it sooner.

<http://www.fs.fed.us/psw/programs/ipif/staff/cliang/>