



## 22 biodiversity scientists

From arachnologists, to primatologists, scientists working in fields related to biodiversity increase our understanding of the incredible diversity of life on Earth and the environmental challenges we face. For the International Day for Biodiversity on 22 May, we are recognizing 22 amazing scientists who have expanded our knowledge of biodiversity. We send our thanks to all the scientists included in this list, as well as the many other scientists around the world working in support of biodiversity.

### 1. **E.O. Wilson**

The late Edward Osborne Wilson was a notable American biologist who was an expert on ants. He was partially responsible for coining the term “biological diversity”. Wilson is remembered for his years of professorship, his books on evolutionary biology, and his work in advocating for biodiversity. [Read more](#)

### 2. **Thomas Lovejoy**

Often referred to as the “godfather of biodiversity”, the late Dr. Thomas Lovejoy was a prominent conservation biologist who worked at the intersection of environmental policy and science. Dr. Lovejoy was one of the first people to direct attention to the issue of tropical deforestation. [Read more](#)

### 3. **Jo-Anne Sewlal**

The late Jo-Anne Nina Sewlal was an arachnologist from Trinidad and Tobago. She was known for having discovered various new species of spiders in her country. She was also responsible for





## 12. **Guy Midgley**

Guy Midgley of South Africa is an internationally renowned biodiversity and global change science expert. Midgley has worked extensively with IPBES, contributing to the [IPBES Assessment Report on Land Degradation and Restoration](#) as well as the [IPBES-IPCC co-sponsored workshop on biodiversity and climate change](#). [Read more](#)

## 13. **Robert Scholes**

The late Robert Scholes made significant contributions to the field of biological diversity in his lifetime. He helped author the third, fourth, and fifth IPCC Assessment reports, and co-chaired the [IPBES Assessment Report on Land Degradation and Restoration](#), and the Scientific Steering Committee of the [IPBES-IPCC co-sponsored workshop on biodiversity and climate change](#). [Read more](#)

## 14. **Hans-Otto Pörtner**

A marine biologist and physician, Dr. Otto-Pörtner is well known for his groundbreaking theories on the effects of ocean warming, hypoxia, and ocean acidification on marine ecosystems and organisms. He also co-chaired the joint IPCC-IPBES Scientific Steering Committee workshop on [biodiversity and climate change](#). [Read more](#)

## 15. **Toby Kiers**

Dr. Toby Kiers is an evolutionary biologist who co-founded the [Society for the Protection of Underground Networks \(SPUN\)](#) to map Earth's fungal networks. Dr. Kiers is also a research chair and a professor at the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam. She is known for her research on the evolution of symbiotic trade. SPUN recognizes the important role fungal networks play in sequestering carbon, and in moving soil nutrients around. [Read more](#)

## 16. **Rebecca Pradhan**

Born in Taba, Bhutan, ecologist Rebecca Pradhan has always had a keen interest in local species and nature. She is a senior ecologist for the Royal Society for Protection of Nature (RSPN), a Bhutanese environmental NGO. Dr. Pradhan uses her local knowledge of Himalayan flora and fauna to develop effective conservation programs such as community level education. [Read more](#)

## 17. **Yadvinder Malhi**

Yadvinder Malhi is a professor who specialises in ecosystem science at the University of Oxford. His work focuses on the functioning of terrestrial ecosystems and the way they respond to challenges such as climate change and biodiversity loss. [Read more](#)

## 18. **Vera Imperatriz-Fonseca**

Vera Imperatriz-Fonseca is known for her extensive work on pollinators, especially bees. She worked on the São Paulo Declaration on Pollinators, which was the predecessor of the [International Pollinator Initiative \(IPI\)](#). She was also a Co-Chair of the [IPBES Assessment Report on Pollinators, Pollination and Food Production](#). [Read more](#)

## 19. **Rachel Chan**

Rachel Chan is a biochemist who hails from Argentina. She is most prominently known for her work inventing drought-resistant seeds. Among her many achievements, she was included in a list of ten most outstanding women scientists in Latin America by the British Broadcasting Corporation. [Read more](#)

## 20. **Markus Fischer**

Markus Fischer is a doctor and professor at the University of Bern in Switzerland. In addition to biodiversity, his research interests include Conservation Biology, Mountains, and Science-Policy Work. Through applied plant research across scales and environments,





A decorative border surrounds the page, featuring various nature-related icons such as a blue bear, a green tree, a brown bird, a yellow person, a blue mountain, a green leaf, a brown tree, a blue bird, a yellow person, a green tree, a brown tree, a blue bird, and a yellow person. The icons are arranged in a repeating pattern along the top, bottom, and sides of the page.

## Disclaimer

We acknowledge that there are thousands of individuals and organizations around the world undertaking extraordinary work for biodiversity each and every day.

The information provided within each list of 22 biodiversity-related items is meant to create engagement and participation in the [Biodiversity Day](#) campaign and is by no means exhaustive or fully representative of all the initiatives taking place around the globe or all the individuals, organizations, and entities that promote biodiversity. We apologize for any inconvenience or misunderstanding this could cause and we look forward to your feedback. Please [contact us](#) for any comments and suggestions to rectify any inconsistencies. More importantly, we also invite you to create your own lists of 22 biodiversity-related items, which will be more representative of your work and adapted to your topic of interest.

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