

A Scientist just like me



Aaron Hernandez-Lee
Conservation Biologist



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Hi there! I am Aaron Hernandez-Lee – A conservation biologist



Where do I work?

I used to work in Costa Rica as a wildlife and conservation biologist. I worked with local wildlife such as sloths, monkeys and toucans. Now, I work at the Eden Project in Cornwall as the Rainforest Biome team leader.

What did I like doing when I was at school?

I've always loved nature! My favourite class was biology, and I could spend hours looking at all the jars with preserved specimens.

What do I like doing in my spare time?

I will probably be in the garden or repotting my own tropical plants.

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What do I do as a conservation biologist?

I look after our plant collection (organising and maintaining it) making sure our plants and animals are healthy and looking good. I also go to other botanical gardens to exchange or collect more plants. It's almost like being back in Costa Rica!



How does what I do make the world a better place?

I look after a rainforest in England! By showing visitors what a rainforest looks like, we can show the impact humans have on the real rainforests out there. Most importantly, we can educate and share ways that people can help conservation efforts.

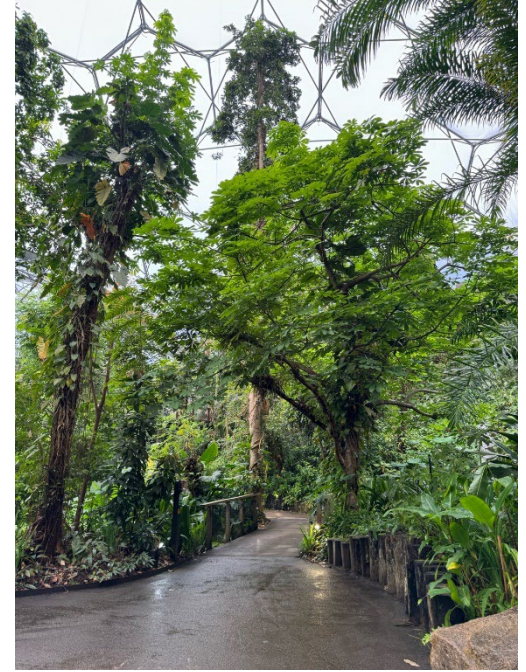
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What I like about my job

I get to work in an amazing place with an incredible collection of tropical plants. I meet lots of people from all over the world. It makes me miss the tropics a bit less. Also being on social media, news and TV shows has been a great experience!

Challenges I have faced

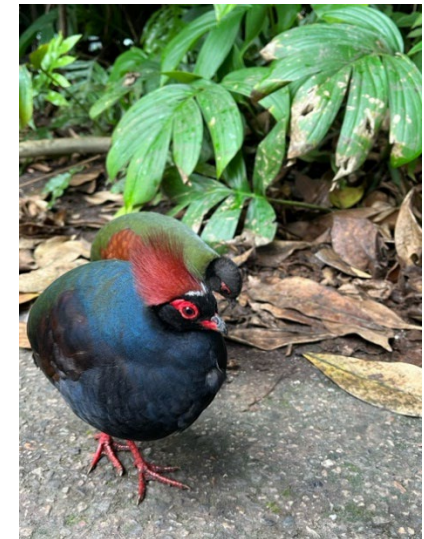
My job sometimes requires me to give tours and talk to lots of people. English is my second language. This makes it more challenging, and I often get very nervous because of this. Luckily, I work with a very supportive team and that helps getting through those times of nervousness. Also, England (even Cornwall) is not as warm as I'm used to, but that's the great thing about working in the rainforest!



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If you want to be a conservation biologist, you need:

- ✱ to love and respect nature
- ✱ **imagination** to inspire others to protect nature
- ✱ **to be curious** about plants and animals, unafraid to ask questions and learn new things
- ✱ **to pay attention to nature around you.** What can you see? What can you hear? Remember everything is connected.
- ✱ to familiarise yourself with scientific names - it may help you later!



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Discussion time

- ✦ Would you like to be a conservation biologist like Aaron Hernandez-Lee?

Why? Why not?



- ✦ What skills and interests do you already have that would help you become a conservation biologist?
- ✦ What new skills and knowledge would you need to develop?

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Free supporting resources for conservation biology

[UK Wildlife](#) – suitable for ages 5-11 years

[Why & How magazine](#) – [See issue 14](#) – resources for learning about biodiversity, climate science and raising awareness of UK animals and plants

[Science & STEM Clubs](#)– see 'Earth Explorers', aimed at children of 5-7 years

[Did you know?](#) articles use cutting-edge science research as a context for learning. Teacher Guides can be used as classroom presentations. They explain what scientists have done and suggest practical activities for children. See:

- [What is happening to our bees?](#)
- [Red squirrels adapt to the food they eat](#)
- [About biodiversity and trophic cascades](#)

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