

## **Space Zoo Patrol Cool Science Interview**

**4-20-17**

### **What is your name and where do you live?**

I'm Valerie Kapos, and I live in Cambridge, in the United Kingdom.

### **What is your title and what do you do now?**

I have a PhD so people know me as Doctor Kapos. I help make scientific knowledge about nature (biodiversity), especially how it affects and is affected by climate change, accessible and understandable to people who make decisions that affect it, including policy makers, government agencies, land owners, and land managers.

### **What was your first job?**

Teaching at a nature study summer camp when I was a teenager. Then a lot of restaurant work.

### **What was your first science job?**

After receiving my Ph.D., I was a research associate, or post-doc researcher, investigating tropical forest ecology.

### **What is your greatest accomplishment?**

Contributing to understanding how rainforest remnants (that's the bits of forest left standing after large areas of the forest have been cleared) are different from large tracts of continuous forest and what that means for conservation (what habitat fragmentation means to the survival of animal and plant populations).

### **What was your biggest mistake or embarrassment?**

Thinking that academic research is the only way to make progress in conservation.

### **What is your goal / dream for your field of science?**

That researchers will learn to communicate what they do and the importance of the results in ways that the general public can understand, and by doing so help foster public and political enthusiasm for nature conservation.

### **What is your advice for kids?**

Pursue what interests you, ask lots of questions, and accept that you might get where you want to go by a rather roundabout route.