



Dustie Bourgeois, Horticulturist

1. Where did you get your BS degree from and in what major?

Southern Illinois University - Carbondale, Illinois, plant & soil science, emphasis; horticulture

2. Graduate school degree and major?

Some graduate school; micropropagation of adult white ash

3. How long have you been with the Aquarium?

December 1999; nearly 10 years.

4. Briefly describe your primary involvement with the *Restless Planet* exhibit.

I was responsible for a complete transformation of the Coastal Plains River Room and plant material for the Indonesia's Flores Island (Komodo dragon) habitat.

5. What has been your biggest challenge?

Obtaining native piedmont species for the new Upland River Room

6. What are you most excited about guests seeing?

The new Upland River Room

7. What *Restless Planet* fact would surprise guests if they knew?

The average weight on 3" diameter trees brought in is 800 – 1000 pounds! Trees are measured in caliper diameter at breast height (so, the trunks of the trees are 3" wide at about 4' off the ground).

We had to move these trees into the building and place them in the Upland River Room using a professional "tree dolly" and several strong people.

8. Once *Restless Planet* opens, how will your job differ?

I will have a new area of responsibility, the Flores Island habitat, and additional maintenance of planters in the Upland River Room.

Date: July 10, 2009