



Jessica Greer

# ARCHBOLD FEBRUARY 2019 NEWS for curious minds



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## The Original EBAY



Reed Bowman

A Florida Scrub-Jay from the EBAY territory takes refuge under the Spanish moss in the bayhead that forms part of its home territory.

**EBAY has been the name of a territory of Florida Scrub-Jays at Archbold for 37 years predating the online company of eBay by 13 years.** Dr. Reed Bowman, [Archbold Avian Ecology Program](#) Director, said 'In 1983, a new jay territory formed that included the eastern-most of two bayheads, thus we referred to the territory as East Bayhead, or EBAY.' Scrub-jays pair for life. Over the past 37 years, Archbold Avian Ecology monitored seven different breeding pairs at EBAY, but only 5 different males and 5 different females. **Only 2 different pairs of breeders lived at EBAY from 1983 to 2004 with one pair persisting for 10 years and another for 11!** But some pairs lasted only 1-2



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"Archbold Biological Station is one of America's iconic centers of continuous research and education in

years, and birds sometimes had multiple mates, re-pairing if their mate died. Over the years, birds in the EBAY territory produced 56 fledglings, but life for these young jays is tough and only 8 eventually became breeders themselves. Bowman added, 'We track life history changes for the 75-80 total jay territories in our long-term study, and we can assess how different environmental or periodic events, such as storms or fires, can influence survival and reproduction. From this big picture, we can achieve a better understanding of what influences the success of Florida Scrub-Jays. These insights have led to successful conservation actions, like how management can meet the scrub-jay's need for high-quality scrub that is burned every 10-20 years.' Read the full story [here](#) on Archbold's Scrub Blog.

## Partnership for Protection



Florida Goldenaster flowers have one of the longest flowering periods of any Florida wildflower.

[Archbold's Plant Ecology Program](#) and [Bok Tower Garden's Rare Plant Conservation Program](#) recently **teamed up to study the federally endangered Florida Goldenaster (*Chrysopsis floridana*), a bright yellow flowering species found only in four west-central Florida counties.** Katherine Charton, Archbold Plant Ecology Research Assistant, said 'Development depleted this beautiful plant's native upland habitat. However, since being listed as endangered in 1988, the Florida Goldenaster recovery plan has made substantial progress including public land acquisition where the plant occurred, beneficial controlled burning, and reintroducing seeds to protected areas.' The noticeable recovery of the species led the

field biology. It is a prototype of what we need all across America."  
— Edward O. Wilson

## Public Events

**Feb 16:** 9:00-11:00 AM

Archbold Mini Film Festival

Archbold Staff

**Feb 23:** 9:00-11:00 AM

'How Your Photography Can Help Protect Florida's Wildlife & Wildlands'

Dustin Angell, Archbold

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to recommend downlisting Florida Goldenaster from endangered to threatened in 2009. However, data-driven evidence is needed to assure the species is thriving. Now in the second year of the study, a field crew led by Charton and Bok Tower Gardens Rare Plant Curator Phil Gonsiska visited 18 populations and more than 4,000 individuals last November and December. Plants are tagged in permanent plots to evaluate long-term survival, growth, and reproductive status. Archbold and Bok Tower Gardens will return to the field to monitor the yellow-flowering plant in the fall of 2019.

## Sparrow Watch



Greg Thompson uses a tank for cover as he monitors a pair of Florida Grasshopper Sparrows nesting in well-managed, beautiful Florida Dry Prairie at Avon Park Air Force Range.

**Greg Thompson started working for [Archbold Avian Ecology](#) as a seasonal biologist on the Florida Grasshopper Sparrow project at Avon Park Air Force Range (APAFR) back in the spring of 2013.**

Thompson shared, 'As fortune would have it, I was kept on as a permanent research assistant, launching my career in earnest. As a native Floridian, I had a strong desire to stay in Florida. And here I was... I had arrived! It didn't take long for the sparrows to win me over. They're fantastic little birds. But starting my career working with the most endangered bird in North America, which also happens to be a particularly cryptic and puzzling species, was a real challenge. **I felt a strong responsibility to do everything I could to ensure that the tiny population at APAFR would persist.** There were many great moments: finding new birds, locating nests, resighting the previous year's chicks the following spring. But there were also some

**Mar 10:** 1:30-3:00 PM

Digging Deeper: The Secret Lives of Gopher Tortoises

Betsie Rothermel, Archbold

**Mar 16:** 9:00-11:00 AM

Family Nature Day

Archbold Education

**Mar 23:** 9:00-11:00 AM

A Walk Through Time

Walking Tour

Joe Gentili, Archbold

**Mar 30:** 8:00-10:00 AM

'Rare Plants & Fire: A Hike through Rosemary Scrub'

Eric Menges & Kevin Main, Archbold

**April 6:** 8:00-10:00 AM

painfully frustrating aspects: nests that failed in spite of all my efforts to protect them, the total wild population continuing to decline year after year, and the challenge of finding consensus on conservation strategies. This experience opened my eyes to the complexities of saving endangered species.' After six seasons leading the sparrow crew in the 'best chapter of his life', Thompson will shift gears to leading Archbold's Red-cockaded Woodpecker monitoring project at APAFR. Thompson knows 'the sparrows will be in very good hands' with Chelsea Wisner. Wisner is returning to lead Archbold's FGSP project after thriving as Thompson's field assistant in 2017.

## Bugs, Critters, & Creepy Crawlers



Dr. Mark Deyrup concludes an amazing morning in the Rosemary scrub with a grateful public.

**Despite cool, overcast conditions, a dozen folks gathered at Archbold on the last Saturday of January for the 'Bugs, Critters, & Creepy Crawlers' walking tour with Dr. Mark Deyrup, Emeritus Research Biologist.** After driving to Archbold's biggest Rosemary scrub bald, Deyrup said, 'This is a very exciting habitat and a very old one'. Rosemary is uncommon in swampy Florida today and restricted to relict sandy ridges. Back during the Pleistocene epoch (30-40,000 years ago), Rosemary was dominant. Deyrup continues, 'Bit of a vanished habitat. Florida Rosemary has all its own insects, like the Rosemary Grasshopper (way down in middle of clump hiding out from the cold), two of its own beetles, a moth, sapsucking bugs that feed only on male flowers, among others. And the reason Rosemary has its own insects is because it was once a more abundant plant.' A trip to a Rosemary bald also features many rare plants that

Natural History of the  
Florida Scrub-Jay

Walking Tour

Reed Bowman, Archbold



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occur nowhere else on earth like Papery Nail Wort (*Paronychia*) and Wedgeleaf Button Snakeroot (*Eryngium cuneifolium*) often surrounded by a 'forest of flags' from the careful monitoring work of Archbold's Plant Ecology program. Walking into the Rosemary bald behind Deyrup, he jokes, 'We are sort of stepping on the rare insects but they don't care because they are unaffected under the sand.' Deyrup describes the curious life of the flightless Pygmy Mole Cricket (*Neotridactylus archboldi*), another Pleistocene relict which he described as a new species. Just 1/4 inch long, the little crickets spend their whole lives under the sand feeding on soil crust cyanobacteria. 'Males can sing like other crickets, but they sing underground with solid sand carrying the song'. At the end of the fascinating morning in the ancient Rosemary, **Deyrup concluded, 'I really love it out here in the Rosemary bald. Just amazing to see once you know what you are looking at.'**

## Giving Roundup



Wetland and bayhead within the Florida scrub at Archbold. Photo by [Dustin Angell Photography](#).

Nature has the answers. Archbold discovers them. YOU make it possible. Thanks to all of you who contributed to Archbold's Year-end Matching Gift Appeal. **We are happy to announce that we received over 230 gifts from 30 states—from here in Florida all the way to Alaska—our impact is felt nationwide!** We met our generous Matching Gift Goal and raised just over \$200,000 which will help Archbold as we discover answers in nature. We received every one of your personal notes, stories, and remembrances, and treasure each shared for they tell us a bit about why

## The Scrub Blog

Nature and Science from Florida's  
Heartland

Explore [The Scrub Blog](#) by  
Archbold creative staff.

## Directions to Archbold Biological Station

Eight miles south of Lake  
Placid. Entrance is 1.8 miles  
south of SR 70 on Old SR 8.



you give to Archbold. We also enjoyed speaking with you personally as you called to make your gifts. Archbold is strong because of the community we keep, and that includes you. We are so very grateful, and we thank you for your ongoing and dedicated support—it truly does mean everything to us.

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