



Jen Brown

ARCHBOLD DECEMBER 2020 NEWS for curious minds



In This Issue:

1. 2020 Archbold Science Symposium
2. State Leaders Tour Buck Island Ranch
3. Michelle's Scrub-Jay Legacy
4. 200th Newspaper Article
5. Matching Gift Challenge

2020 Archbold Science Symposium



Federico Borghesi



Allen McPherson

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Long term plant monitoring research station in the Florida scrub by Federico Borghesi.

The 5th Annual Archbold Research Symposium on December 10 will feature 16 presentations between 9:30AM-4:00PM from Archbold scientists, staff, and collaborators. Register and view the agenda for this nature-science-culture cornucopia [here](#). Dr. Eric Menges, Archbold Plant Ecology Director, will kick off the event with a reflective 'Plant Ecology Themes at Archbold 1988-2020' revealing patterns, progress, people, and publications over 32 years. From there, presentations will bob and weave between the impacts of Feral Hogs on ranchlands to solving Gall Wasp riddles to rare bee surveys and restoration lessons learned for Gopher Tortoises. Buck Island Ranch researcher Dr. Amartya Saha will share how water flow influences phosphorus and nitrogen nutrient loads which flow downstream to Lake Okeechobee. Tune in at noon to learn about the ecology of the invasive Natalgrass. Archbold Librarian Joe Gentili will dip into Archbold's fascinating cultural heritage to present 'The Richard Archbold Archive: Correspondences of a Biological Explorer'. There will be presentations about the endangered Florida Grasshopper Sparrow and endangered Florida Goldenaster. Archbold's Research Associate Dr. Evelyn Gaiser will discuss the work of her graduate student Kristy Sullivan on dissolved organic carbon as a driver of phytoplankton in Lake Annie. Dustin Angell, Archbold Education Director, will discuss lessons learned from his many virtual nature tours in 2020. **We look forward to coming together to learn from each other and celebrate discovery in the scrublands and ranchlands of Florida's heartland.**

State Leaders Tour Buck Island Ranch

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"Archbold Biological Station is one of America's iconic centers of continuous research and education in field biology. It is a prototype of what we need all across America."

— Edward O. Wilson



Gratitude for Tiny Wonders Underfoot

Watch our captivating [video](#) produced by Into Nature Films giving thanks for the tiny wonders underfoot at Archbold Biological Station.



Hilary Swain talks with Noah Valenstein, Secretary of Florida Department of Environmental Protection, and others while touring Buck Island Ranch.

On a spectacular Florida day, **Archbold recently welcomed the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Secretary Noah Valenstein, Deputy Secretary Shawn Hamilton, and Director of State Lands Callie DeHaven to showcase Archbold's Buck Island Ranch and the neighboring Hendrie Ranch, both under consideration for easement purchases through the state conservation program Florida Forever.** For Dr. Betsey Boughton, Archbold's Associate Program Director of Buck Island Ranch, there is no better place than standing knee deep in a colorful, flower-filled ranch wetland to explain the importance of conserving ranchlands for protecting Florida's precious water resources. Dr. Hilary Swain, Archbold Executive Director, said, "Sharing enthusiasm for Florida's vast, wide-open grasslands with birds like American Kestrels, Red-shouldered hawks, Crested Caracaras and Northern Harriers flying overhead allows me to describe how ranches serve as critical habitats and wildlife corridors. Ranchlands help link protection from upstream watersheds to coastal communities. Conserving Buck Island, Hendrie and many other remarkable ranches is vital to Florida's future". In a DEP press release, Valenstein shared, "A science-based approach to land management must be part of the foundation of Florida's land conservation efforts and our path forward". The release continued, "**Buck Island Ranch and Hendrie Ranch include ecologically diverse habitats as well as pasture areas, semi-native grasslands and wetlands. These ecosystems are home to plants and animals found nowhere else on Earth.** Both of these sites are proposed for easement acquisition through Florida Forever, the state's premier

In this short video, you will see graceful Tumblebugs, an industrious *Melanocanthon* species of Dung Beetle, feeding upon a mushroom and storing in the sugar sand to share with their young.

conservation and recreation lands acquisition program. Through conservation easements, the state would conserve the land in perpetuity, enabling landowners to sustain their trade, support the local economy and continue conservation stewardship".

Michelle's Scrub-Jay Legacy



Portrait of Michelle Dent as part of the Florida Stewards project by conservation photographer Dustin Angell.

Michelle Dent knows the back roads and trails of Avon Park Air Force Range better than most. She led Archbold's monitoring program for Florida Scrub-Jays on the Avon Park Air Force Range for the last 22 years. With the help of seasonal assistants, she trapped and banded all the jays, found all their nests, and watched the young birds fledge and find mates of their own. She has a genealogist knowledge of the jay's families and lineages—and she cares for their welfare like a doting mother. Dent arrived at Archbold in 1998 to work with Dr. Reed Bowman, Avian Ecology Program Director, on his long-term study of Florida Scrub-Jays in suburban habitats. Over the years working with scrub-jays at Avon Park Air Force Range, Michelle learned how to best manage their scrub home and collaborated with the US Fish & Wildlife Service and the Ridge Rangers volunteer program to remove encroaching Sand Pines. She also helped create and develop the citizen science program [Jay Watch](#) which trains citizen volunteers to monitor jays on public lands across the state. She reflected, "**Archbold is a**

Online Events

Dec 10: 9:30 AM-4:00 PM

Archbold Science Symposium

16 Presentations

Archbold staff, scientists, and collaborators

[Register here](#)

Dec 17: 3:30 PM

Archbold Intern Double Feature

'Applications of Satellite and Airborne Remote Sensing to Grazing Land Classifications'

Anna Odell, Archbold

'Burrow Site Selection by Immature Gopher Tortoises in Restored Sandhill'

Dylan Winkler, Archbold

[Register here](#)

Watch all past virtual events [here](#).

great place to work. There is so much cumulative knowledge amongst the researchers working there. It really was a privilege to observe and be a part of. It is inspiring how much people invest in their research and how visiting researchers return year after year. Archbold is like an extended family and I will really miss being a part of it". Michelle and her husband are heading for drier climes in New Mexico. She goes armed with our gratitude and eager to learn the natural history of her new home. We wish her continued success.

200th Newspaper Article



Archbold Executive Assistant Laura Reed surrounded by a selection of stories about Archbold published in the Highlands News-Sun.

Archbold shares our nature and science news through scientific publications, presentations, field trips, website, and social media. But, something more was needed to connect with the local community. Highlands County resident and longtime friend of Archbold Jane Hancock connected Archbold with her associates at the Highlands News-Sun who immediately accepted the collaboration. **The idea was to inform Highlands County residents of Archbold's interesting research about the Lake Wales Ridge and surrounding rangeland ecosystems, and to promote conservation of our incredible area. Our first article 'The Mysterious World of Ants' published nearly four years ago on January 6, 2017** and about the work of Entomologist Dr. Mark Deyrup. Since then, over 13 articles featured Deyrup with most describing fascinating local insects. 62 different Archbold staff or visiting scientists contributed



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content over the years leading up to the publication of our 200th article this month. Dr. Hilary Swain shared, "I am always touched when someone in the community comes up to me—maybe in the supermarket or at the gas station, and usually when I am wearing an Archbold T-shirt—and says, 'I really enjoy those articles about Archbold in the newspaper, it's so interesting what you all do down there, I look forward to reading them every week'. I smile and often get the opportunity for a nice extended chat". You can access and read all 200 articles [here](#). Happy Reading!

Matching Gift Challenge



Archbold's Frances Archbold Hufty Learning Center with native plant garden in full bloom this Fall.

As 2020 draws to a close, we reflect on the many things for which we give thanks: to Nature, who helps to calm in times of uncertainty; to Science, that provides answers to some of the most intractable questions; to Land, that provides critical resources for life; and most importantly, to You, for supporting our work and helping us achieve so much more than we could alone. **This year, we are honored to once again offer a [Year-End Matching Gift Challenge](#) thanks to a dedicated and generous donor. Your gifts of up to \$100,000 between now and December 31, 2020 will be matched, dollar-to-dollar, and have twice the impact.** Your gift supports the work we do to help support #WildFlorida and beyond. Re-establishing our Predator-Prey Program will couple our scientific research and conservation efforts to better understand and protect predator species and the threats to their habitats, essential in our mission to #KeepFLwild. What we learn here helps inform science in ecosystems around the globe and helps to inform decision-makers

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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.

who are working to protect Nature everywhere. Our science, conservation, and education programs do more with your support. We are so thankful to you for the many ways you help support Archbold's mission. [Give now](#) to our Year-end Matching Gift Challenge. Thank you from all of us at Archbold.

If you enjoy these stories from Archbold, please consider a gift to support our research and education programs. [Donate now](#). Your gift really makes a difference.

[Archbold Biological Station](#) | [Buck Island Ranch](#) | [Archbold Reserve](#)

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