



ARCHBOLD DECEMBER 2021 NEWS for curious minds



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Bowman Honored with Audubon Award



Dr. Reed Bowman in the Florida scrub at Archbold. Photo by Dustin Angell.

Audubon Florida awarded Dr. Reed Bowman the 2021 Guy Bradley Award for "his life's work growing our understanding of some of Florida's most imperiled bird species, guiding their conservation, and training the next generation of researchers." The [award](#) is meaningful for Bowman



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because, he said, "I came to Florida 35 years ago and began my career working at the Audubon's Everglades Science Center and I'm well versed in the legend of Guy Bradley. I've been at Archbold for the last 30 years. I've been able to devote my entire time to the study of Florida's birds and their conservation." The Audubon announcement continued, "Over the last 40 years he has studied the ecology, demography, and conservation of several threatened and endangered birds, including the American Kestrel, Common Raven, White-crowned Pigeon, Red-cockaded Woodpecker, Florida Grasshopper Sparrow, and the Florida Scrub-Jay. His primary research focuses on the comparative demography, ecology, and evolution of Florida Scrub-Jays in a variety of different landscapes using long-term data on marked populations. The study of scrub-jays at Archbold, overseen by Dr. Bowman, is the longest-running study of marked birds in North America, now entering its 52nd continuous year." Dr. Hilary Swain, Executive Director responded, "Archbold is immensely proud of all that Dr. Bowman has achieved over the span of four decades. [Audubon's award](#) is accolade for science that increased the understanding of Florida birds and also underpinned many important state conservation decisions. Congratulations, Reed."

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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

A Rare Bird



Watch [A Rare Bird](#).

Regarded as the most endangered bird in North America, the Florida Grasshopper Sparrow persists

Nature Wonder Alive

Join Dustin Angell, Archbold Director of Education, for live-streamed outdoor nature tours on the second Tuesday of every month from 9:30 AM- 10:15 AM (Eastern Time) from November through April.

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in the remaining dry prairies within the Headwaters of the Everglades.

Wearing the perfect camouflage, they spend most of their day on the open ground under a canopy of grasses and palmettos hunting bugs, hiding from predators, and being a grasshopper sparrow. During breeding season, males reveal themselves to sing buzz and warble songs from prominent perches. Archbold began monitoring the population of Florida Grasshopper Sparrows at Avon Park Air Force Range in 2003 and the newly discovered population at Destiny Ranch (now DeLuca Preserve) in 2017. Each breeding season, field researchers embark on a mission to find the secretive birds, band them, protect their nests, and record behavioral observations. Now led by Fabby Baeza, Archbold Research Assistant, this work is critical to better understanding the sparrow's steep decline. Nest video cameras reveal a host of predators and heavy rainfall events impacting the survival of this ground-nesting bird.

Rebecca Windsor, previous Archbold Avian Ecology Research Assistant, devoted herself for three field seasons to studying and protecting the second largest population of sparrows left in Florida at DeLuca Preserve. A new short film created by Jennifer Brown/Into Nature Films in collaboration with Archbold goes behind the scenes of Florida Grasshopper Sparrow conservation with Windsor at DeLuca Preserve. [Watch 'A Rare Bird' here](#) to see extraordinary biologists working as a team to recover this charming species. To support Archbold's work to help recover the Florida Grasshopper Sparrow, please click [here](#) to make a donation. Thank you.

Scrub Camp to Scrub Biologist



Austin Ritenour is the new Lake Wales Ridge Conservation Plant Biologist for the Florida Forest Service.

Austin Ritenour recalls his first experience at Archbold summer camp in 2001 as being magical.

He said, "We played the firefly game, hunted for spiders, and sloshed through a seasonal pond catching water bugs. I will never forget a night hike through the Florida scrub under the stars. Another time, we had a campfire out in the scrub and the camp counselors entertained us with skits." As a boy growing up in Sebring, Ritenour returned to Archbold's summer camp each year to learn something new and eventually became a camp counselor. He said, "**While I was always outdoorsy, Archbold fostered my strong connection with nature in my backyard.** I still get excited when I see Tarflowers blooming or a Blue Tortoise Beetle on a palmetto frond." Ritenour went on to study Environmental Biology with a concentration in Plant Ecology at the University of South Florida before returning to Archbold for a Plant Ecology Internship in 2012 with mentors Dr. Eric Menges and Stacy Smith. **Recently, in Fall 2021, he returned to his sandy home turf for a new position as Lake Wales Ridge Conservation Plant Biologist for the Florida Forest Service.** Ritenour said, "I hope to preserve our native flora and fauna and to help the public want to see more of our lands. From Gopher Tortoises to Scrub Blazing Stars, our local communities have so much to offer. I want to share this unique and special place

Online Events

Stay tuned for upcoming events in 2022!

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

with others." Congratulations Austin. Archbold looks forward to continuing our enduring partnership with you.

Congress Visits Ranch



Gene Lollis, Congresswoman Kat Cammack, and Congressman Glenn 'GT' Thompson

Gene Lollis, Archbold Ranch Manager, Dr. Betsey Boughton, Director of Research at Buck Island Ranch, and Dr. Hilary Swain, Director, hosted Representative Kat Cammack (Member House Agriculture Committee and US Representative for Florida District 3) and Representative Glenn 'GT' Thompson (Ranking Minority Member of the House Agriculture Committee and Representative for Pennsylvania District 15) for a tour of Archbold's Buck Island Ranch on November 10. Others who joined were Carlton Ward Jr. (conservation photographer), Mallory Lykes Dimmitt (CEO of the Florida Wildlife Corridor Coalition), Tori Linder (Florida Wild, Path of the Panther), Matt Pearce (Former President of the Florida Cattlemen's Association), and Mike Efenbein of Port Charlotte. **Over a quick tour, Lollis introduced the group to Buck Island Ranch operations and described the characteristics and unique nature of Florida ranching.** Swain explained the role and importance of federal programs for support of regional agriculture, with an emphasis on conservation payments, and also the major impact of USDA funding for scientific research at the Ranch, especially the Long-term Agroecosystem Research (LTAR) program. Boughton drew on extensive Archbold research to address a broad array of intense questions asked by the Representatives on everything from carbon sequestration to



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USDA

water quality and balancing economic and environmental sustainability. **The visit was a great opportunity to network and provide scientific information that may inform federal policies and priorities for working ranches.**

Gift Challenge



Florida Grasshopper Sparrow at White Oak Conservation captive breeding facility. Photo by Dustin Angell.

As 2021 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 Schellie Archbold, our dedicated and generous board member. EVERY gift will be matched, dollar-for-dollar, between now and December 31, 2021, up to \$250,000. That is a guaranteed match! Whether we meet our goal or not. But how wonderful it would be to meet our goal! Will you help us? Your [gift](#) helps us continue to protect the natural areas around us and the rare species, like the Florida Grasshopper Sparrow, that rely on those habitats. We are so thankful to you for the many ways you help support Archbold's mission to

The Scrub Blog

Nature and Science from Florida's
Heartland

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

[Archbold Facebook Event Calendar](#)



Directions to Archbold Biological Station

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

protect Florida and the world. Thank you and wishing you a very warm holiday 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.

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