

Archbold holds tortoise event

Special to Highlands Today

VENUS — Adventurous families with children ages 7 to 12 are invited to register for a free, fun-filled educational experience at Archbold Biological Station the weekend of May 16 and 17.

Archbold research and education staff are teaming up to offer a program of hands-on games and activities, including a field demonstration by researchers of the methods used to study and track wild tortoises.

“The program will highlight the habitat needs and fascinating behaviors of gopher tortoises, including their interactions with the many other rare ani-

mals that inhabit sandy ridges in Florida,” according to a news release.

“We are excited to give kids a chance to be ‘tortoise trackers’ for a day and peek inside the hidden underground world of gopher tortoises using specialized equipment like burrow scopes,” said Betsie Rothermel, director of the herpetology and restoration ecology programs at Archbold.

Disney Worldwide Conservation Fund is supporting Archbold’s long-term research on gopher tortoises and is a sponsor of this special event. Youth-oriented community groups may also participate provided there is at least one ac-

companying adult for every four children.

Attendees are welcome to enjoy their own picnic lunches before or after the event. Game prizes, drinks and snacks will be provided during the activities.

Space is limited and preregistration is required; register by May 1 to reserve a slot in one of the two sessions.

The May 16 event is from 8:45 a.m. until noon. The second session, May 17, runs from 1:15 to 4:30 p.m.

To register or for more information, contact Archbold Education Coordinator Dustin Angell at (863) 465-2571, ext. 233, or dangell@archbold-station.org.