



ARCHBOLD MAY  
2024 NEWS  
for curious minds



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### Woodpecker Warriors



Archbold's Greg Thompson and Mary Marine capturing a Red-cockaded Woodpecker at Osceola National Forest for relocation to Avon Park Air Force Range. Photo by Jen Guyton.

The [April/May 2024 issue](#) of the **Smithsonian Magazine** features a dazzling portrait of Archbold's work managing endangered Red-cockaded Woodpeckers (RCW) at Avon Park Air Force Range. The story begins with author and photographer Jen Guyton alongside Archbold's Greg Thompson at dusk in the Longleaf Pines of Osceola National Forest. They hear the tell-tale 'squeaky duck' call of woodpeckers returning into their tree cavities for the night. Thompson is one of twenty biologists, including Sarah Lauerman, in position to capture and relocate ten RCWs to their new home at Avon Park Air Force Range. Guyton writes, "**The Longleaf Pine forests on southeastern military lands are among the last high-quality habitats the woodpeckers have left.** The project at Avon Park is a partnership among the Air Force, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Conservation of Military Landscapes program at Archbold Biological Station." Lauerman is the founder and leader of Osceola National Forest's RCW relocation program. She says, "We've known for a long time what to do to recover this species." The lack of available cavities from the 97% loss of Longleaf habitat is the primary factor limiting the growth of RCW populations. Installing artificial cavities, either cavity inserts or drilled cavities, is a game-changer for this Federally Endangered woodpecker. Thompson and the Archbold team use the utmost care when transporting the woodpeckers. Additional biologists representing the U.S. Air Force, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and Colorado State University await the team to help with the final stages of the relocation. At daybreak, in the beautiful, fire-maintained Longleaf Pines of Avon Park Air Force Range, the team releases the woodpeckers into their new home. Thompson tells Guyton this is his favorite part and says, "I feel like a real estate agent and a matchmaker at the same time." Guyton adds, "70 percent of Red-cockaded Woodpeckers translocated to Avon Park do stay." See her full story [here](#) with stunning photographs.



"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

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## Honors for Hilary



Dr. Hilary Swain receives the Herbert W. Kale II Award at the Florida Chapter of The Wildlife Society banquet. Photo by Joe Guthrie.

**The Florida Chapter of The Wildlife Society selected Dr. Hilary Swain, Archbold's Executive Director, to receive its highest honor, the Herbert W. Kale II Award.** The award recognizes individuals who balance effective wildlife advocacy with the practice of wildlife biology and who have significantly contributed to the conservation of Florida's natural resources. In their [official announcement](#), they write, "Hilary is a powerful advocate for science-based conservation for a wide variety of Florida ecosystems. She builds enduring relationships among scientists, environmentalists, local, state, and federal agencies, and Florida landowners. She plays a major role in the conservation implementation for the Florida Wildlife Corridor." They also recognize her excellent communication skills and role in leading Archbold's science, conservation, and education powerhouse. Archbold Board of Directors Chair Lela Love says, "Hilary says YES to whatever is needed, arriving with a big smile and much to say. **During her nearly 30 years here, she catapulted Archbold into state and national prominence.** On top of all her accomplishments, she never loses sight of having fun and being responsive to friends and colleagues. Congratulations Hilary!" Swain accepted her award at The Wildlife Society Spring Conference evening banquet in Coral Gables on April 25. She says, "I am delighted and truly honored to receive this award. My successes stem from working for Archbold, an organization that enables its staff and leadership to seize opportunities and to flourish." **Swain is the first-ever female recipient of The Herbert W. Kale, II Award.**

## Zoom Queen



Laura Reed in the Florida scrub at Archbold. Photo by Zach Forsburg.

In late 2019, Laura Reed was looking for a change from her agricultural research job in Felda, Florida. The Archbold Executive Assistant position caught her eye. She says, "The first time I saw Archbold was for my job interview. **I remember driving in, eyes wide, awe-struck by the beauty of the landscape and the historic buildings. I still feel that way.** You never know what you will see along the Main Drive!" She began her new job in February 2020, during the very beginning of the pandemic. Archbold offices partially shut down, and there was a rapid emphasis on remote work. She says, "I had never used Zoom—then, during my second week, I had to host an international Zoom meeting. I managed, although it went less-than-perfectly. I had a lot to learn as Archbold pivoted quickly to virtual meetings, seminars, and even summer camps." Now, Reed is known as the 'Zoom Queen' for her leadership in running our hybrid (Zoom and in-person) meetings and seminars. Zoom queening is just one of her many responsibilities. **She plays a critical role in keeping the wheels of Archbold's multi-faceted organization running smoothly,** including being the director's assistant, managing the Board, scheduling endless contracts and agreements, and making arrangements for VIPs and other visitors. She is also getting an education on the nature and science of the Florida scrub. She is first in line to join wildlife researchers in the field studying Eastern Indigo snakes, Gopher Tortoises, and Florida Scrub-Jays. She reflects, "Archbold is truly a special place, and in four short years, it has become home to me." Executive Director Hilary Swain added, "**Archbold is so lucky to have Laura working here.** She does so much, so well, and so unobtrusively that many are unaware of her tireless work effort, unflappable personality, intelligence, and multiple skill sets. I am grateful for her every day!"

## Job Announcements

[Communication Specialist](#)

[Project Technician](#)

[Plant Ecology Internship](#)

## Public Events

[Watch past public events here.](#)

## Archbold & the Florida Wildlife Corridor



Screenshot from the video [Archbold and the Florida Wildlife Corridor](#). Photo by Dustin Angell.

Dustin Angell, Archbold Education Director, has more than a decade of experience passionately communicating the nature and science of Archbold to various audiences. **With many of Archbold's staff working on the Florida Wildlife Corridor, he wanted to share their story. His six-minute video [Archbold and the Florida Wildlife Corridor](#) begins with Angell enveloped by the scrub and telling us about animal tracks. He reveals that Black Bear tracks increase at Archbold in the Fall when bears forage for seasonally available hickory nuts and palmetto berries. Angell asks, "How much room to roam do animals like bears and panthers need? And how can we use science to figure it out?" Angell joins Joe Guthrie, Archbold Predator-Prey Program Director, at a camera trap in the scrub to discuss the Corridor Observatory. Next, Angell highlights the importance of organizing data in maps with Vivienne Sclater, Archbold Data & Technology Director. Finally, Angell meets with Dr. Josh Daskin, Archbold Conservation Director, who says, "Florida's population is growing by over 1,100 people per day for the last 18 months. That is equivalent to adding almost Miami's worth of people every single year. We have to find places for all those people. The Florida Wildlife Corridor provides a blueprint for how to do that. **At Archbold, we do the science for how to turn that Florida Wildlife Corridor vision into conservation on the ground.**" Watch the full video [here](#).**

## Research Alliance Addressing Climate Change



Scientists and cowboys work side-by-side at Archbold's Buck Island Ranch. Photo by Carlton Ward, Jr.

**In 2019, Archbold and Alltech formed a strategic Research Alliance to jointly assess cattle and pasture management approaches, specifically to understand the relationship between beef production in subtropical regions while maintaining and enhancing the environment.** The Archbold-Alltech Alliance brought together scientists from two different disciplines — ecologists from Archbold and ruminant nutritionists from Alltech — to understand the coupling between production and the environment. This includes the impacts of cattle production on the ecosystems at Archbold's Buck Island Ranch and the impact of these ecosystems on cattle production. Over the past five years, the Research Alliance developed a model for estimating the Ranch's carbon footprint. On average, Buck Island Ranch sequesters more carbon each year than it emits. It is a net-carbon sink. This research shows that grazing ruminant animals on land benefits the environment and improves carbon cycling. The results confirm that carbon-neutral — and even net-positive — beef production in cow calf operations is possible at Buck Island Ranch. **For more information please watch Archbold's contributions to the six-part [Planet of Plenty™](#) video series about cattle grazing, the carbon cycle, and climate change.** This innovative project at Buck Island is one example of Archbold's efforts to address climate change. To support impactful science like this at Archbold, please consider [making a gift](#) today.



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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.