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## 'Tortoise Tracker' family event in May

Special to Highlands Sun Apr 9, 2015

VENUS – Adventurous families with children ages 7-12 are invited to register for a free, fun-filled educational experience at Archbold Biological Station.

Sessions will be Satur-day, May 16 and Sunday, May 17.

Archbold research and education staff are teaming up to offer a program of hands-on games and activities, including a field demonstration by Archbold 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 animals that inhabit sandy ridges in Florida.

“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 Dr. 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 accompanying 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 pre-registration is required; register by May 1 to reserve a slot in one of the two sessions.

On Saturday, May 16, the adventure begins at 8:45 a.m. and runs until noon. The second session on Sunday, May 17, will run from 1:15 to 4:30 p.m.

Contact Archbold Education Coordinator Dustin Angell at 863-465-2571, extension 233; or at [dangell@archbold-station.org](mailto:dangell@archbold-station.org) to register or find out more.

Archbold Biological Station is located eight miles south of Lake Placid at 123 Main Drive, Venus. The entrance gate is 1.8 miles south of State Road 70 on Old State Road 8 on the west side of the road. Follow the long drive back to the visitor parking area and Learning Center.

Archbold Biological Station is an independent, not-for-profit research facility with the mission to build and share the scientific knowledge needed to understand and protect the life, lands, and waters of Florida and beyond.

Photos:

Courtesy photo/Evan Barrientos

The small radio transmitter attached to the shell behind the head of this male tortoise at Archbold Biological Station.