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## Gift to establish first endowed position at Archbold

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From left: Dr. John W. Fitzpatrick and Dr. Reed Bowman, the first John W. Fitzpatrick Director of Avian Ecology at Archbold.

COURTESY/DUSTIN ANGELL

**VENUS** — Archbold Biological Station soars to new heights with a generous \$2 million gift from philanthropist K. Lisa Yang, establishing the John W. Fitzpatrick Director of Avian Ecology.

The gift was announced to the board of directors and staff along with the appointment of Dr. Reed Bowman, who recently celebrated 30 years of service to Archbold, as its first recipient. The endowment will enhance bird research at Archbold, with a focus on the threatened Florida scrub-jay.

“Our staff, board and supporters are deeply touched by Lisa Yang’s generous gift, which establishes the first endowed position at Archbold,” said Dr. Hilary Swain, Archbold’s executive director. “Her gift builds on Archbold’s 50-year investment in Florida scrub-jay research, which has advanced studies of animal behavior and ecology around the world. It will generate annual funding that will enhance bird research at Archbold and propel our science into the future. Long-term studies of animals constantly transform, drawing from legacy data and new technologies across generations of scientists. Lisa Yang’s enduring gift will facilitate this evolution of knowledge and bear future scientific fruits we cannot possibly foresee today.”

The endowment honors Archbold’s former executive director, current board member and Research Associate Dr. John W. Fitzpatrick, who recently retired after 26 years as director of the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. His lifetime vision, passion for ornithology and conservation science, and inspired leadership have earned him global recognition and countless awards and accolades. Since 1972, a significant part of Fitzpatrick’s work has been studying the behavior, ecology and conservation genetics of the threatened Florida scrub-jay together with colleagues at Archbold. He continues actively studying scrub-jays with Bowman.

“I am thrilled and honored beyond words to have this program directorship bear my name. Archbold Biological Station is among the most important places in the world for me and my entire family,” Fitzpatrick said.

Yang visited Archbold with Fitzpatrick in 2019. Witnessing the charismatic Florida scrub-jays first-hand gave her a front-row seat to Archbold’s commitment to conservation and science and inspired her gift. She was fascinated by the enduring nature of this work, the longest continuous study of marked (banded) birds in North America.

“Traditional methods such as bird banding, combined with new technology and techniques, such as DNA sequencing and habitat mapping using drones, allow our research group to study changes over decades, enhancing conservation of this threatened species,” Bowman said. “Lisa’s generous gift will allow us to continue our cutting-edge efforts.”

Yang holds an MBA from Columbia University and a BS from Cornell University, where she serves on the board of The Cornell Lab of Ornithology, is a Life Member of the Cornell University Trustee Council and member of the Dean’s Advisory Council for Cornell’s Industrial and Labor Relations School. Yang serves on the boards of Autism Speaks, The McGovern Institute for Brain

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Research at MIT, The Devereux Foundation, the Stanford Neurodiversity Project Advisory Board at Stanford University School of Medicine, is an active ambassador of the Columbia University Graduate School of Business, and also sits on the Harvard Medical School Board of Fellows.

A native of Singapore, Yang worked primarily in finance and Wall Street before retiring in 2001 and now is a full-time private investor and active philanthropist. Investing in science, research, neurodiversity in the workplace initiatives and conservation is not new to Yang. Yang founded the K. Lisa Yang and Hock E. Tan Employment and Disability Institute at Cornell University (2015). She is the co-founder of the Hock E. Tan and K. Lisa Yang Center for Autism Research at MIT (2017) and a sister center at Harvard (2019) and K. Lisa Yang and Hock E. Tan Molecular Therapeutics Center at MIT (2020). She also founded the K. Lisa Yang Bionics Center at MIT (2021) and the K. Lisa Yang Integrative Computational Neuroscience Center (ICoN Center) at MIT (2021). This year, Yang made a transformational gift of \$24 million to the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, establishing the K. Lisa Yang Center for Conservation Bioacoustics and its John W. Fitzpatrick Directorship.

“Today, we celebrate Lisa Yang for tying together the threads of her philanthropic generosity in such a remarkable fashion,” Swain said. “She loves birds. She holds Dr. John Fitzpatrick in the highest esteem. She is committed to science and technology. And she has a burgeoning interest in the work conducted by Archbold. We offer Lisa our eternal gratitude, and we are excited that her generosity will inspire others worldwide to support and sustain Archbold’s work. Truly her gift to Archbold is a gift that will keep on giving: she couldn’t be more inspirational.”

Archbold Biological Station is an independent, not-for-profit research facility whose mission is to build and share the scientific knowledge needed to protect the life, lands and waters of the heart of Florida and beyond. Lying within the Headwaters of the Everglades, Archbold is one of the most renowned resources for field study of the natural environments in the world. For more information, visit our website, [archbold-station.org](http://archbold-station.org); follow us on Twitter and Instagram and like us on Facebook.

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