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## **Archbold art on display at Wild Space gallery**

Special to Highlands News-Sun Courtesy Archbold Biological Station  
Jul 20, 2022



VENUS — Archbold scientists and their collaborators provide scientific evaluation for which lands and waters are vital to connect landscapes and protect wildlife corridors – with the goal to save wildlife, wild places, and the natural ecosystems upon which the world’s future depends.

Archbold partners with The Florida Wildlife Corridor Foundation and Wildpath to preserve the Florida Wildlife Corridor, which serves as a model for other wildlife corridors worldwide. Now, the Florida Wildlife Corridor Foundation and Archbold are collaborating on a different level ... art ...? Art from a scientific research station? Yes! Several of Archbold’s staff members and volunteers are talented artists, and Archbold has hosted outside artists-in-residence over the years, resulting in an impressive gallery of works in various media. Last month, the Florida Wildlife Corridor Foundation hosted a modest exhibit of these works in the new Wild Space gallery, located at their offices at The Factory, St. Petersburg. The inaugural exhibition displayed woodcut prints of scrub plants by former Artist-in-Residence Mollie Doctrow and photographs of Archbold scientists by Archbold’s Director of Education Dustin Angell.

Inspired by Archbold's scientists, Angell has been taking photo portraits and action shots of researchers, along with other professionals and volunteers, in his ongoing Florida Stewards Project since 2014. This project, now including more than 100 portraits, aims to document the people, places and careers related to conservation in the Headwaters of the Everglades. Most are associated with Archbold, but others are with state and federal agencies, other non-profits, or work independently. Each subject is photographed in their work clothes and holding the tools of their trade. Angell seeks to highlight both researchers and the habitats where they work.

Doctrow is curator emerita at the South Florida State College Museum of Florida Art & Culture in Avon Park, Florida. She created a series of classic black and white prints during her artist residency at Archbold Biological Station. She chose woodblock, the oldest printmaking process, in which the artist carves the image directly from a block of wood. The sharp contrasts of light and dark, and the twisting, graphic quality of Doctrow's lines, express both the harshness and the beauty of Florida's ancient terrain.

From the Corridor Foundation: "Wild Space is dedicated to showing visual art that focuses on Florida's rich and diverse natural environments and the people who caretake its lands and waters. Exhibitions will feature artists whose work addresses the conservation of species and habitat, the understanding and promotion of the importance of nature, and its connections to our collective wellbeing."

Archbold staff attended a reception showcasing the first Wild Space exhibit and a screening of the newest Florida Wildlife Corridor film, Home Waters, at the gallery on June 9. The office and gallery space are still under construction, with the official opening to display a larger selection of Archbold artworks expected in late 2022 to early 2023.

Wild Space is a project of the Florida Wildlife Corridor Foundation in collaboration with Genevieve Lykes Dimmitt, and is curated by Noel Smith.