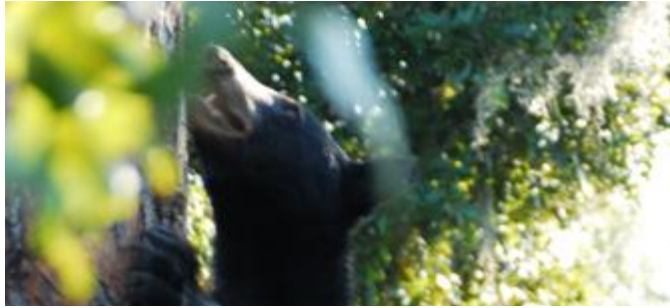


https://www.midfloridanewspapers.com/highlands_news-sun/around_town/archbold-wins-2nd-place-for-bear-necessities-story-map/article_318872da-1cca-11ed-b1f5-b30d61e1f396.html

Archbold wins 2nd place for Bear Necessities story map

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VENUS — Last month, Archbold Conservation Cartographer Angeline Meeks attended the Esri User Conference, the largest GIS (geographic information system) mapping conference in the world. Held in San Diego, thousands of cartographers and GIS professionals from around the globe attended the conference to learn, reconnect, and discover the latest advances in GIS technology. Conference attendees were able to submit their mapping products under various categories in the official Map Gallery to be judged by experts in the field.

Angeline Meeks submitted her story map, 'Bear Necessities,' to the Education Category and won second place. Story maps combine text, media and maps to tell an engaging and interactive story.

The 'Bear Necessities' story maps tells the tale of a young male Florida Black bear named M34.

In 2009 working with a research team from the University of Kentucky, Joe Guthrie, now Archbold Predator-Prey Program director, radio-collared a two-and-half-year-old male Florida Black bear in a small nature reserve outside of Sebring, Florida. Named M34 by the biologists, the movements of the young bear were tracked via a satellite transmitter mounted on a collar that was programmed to drop off after nine months of collecting data.

Based at Archbold Biological Station, the biologists received hundreds of text messages from the radio collar, transmitting M34's location, from which they could review and map the locations of M34 over the nine months.

For the first seven months, M34 roamed along the edge of the Lake Wales Ridge, east of Sebring. In 2010, early in the breeding season, M34 made an abrupt exit from his home range and crossed the 106,000-acre Avon Park Air Force Range in a matter of hours. Over the next two months, M34 travelled hundreds of miles, making multiple attempts to cross I-4 near Orlando, down the Kissimmee River to Lake Okeechobee, west nearly to Fort Myers and then he ultimately returned to the Highlands-Glades bear population of his birth.

'Bear Necessities' brings M34's story to life by animating the movement data from his collar, allowing you to follow along as he travels through Florida's Heartland.

M34's journey became a crucial piece of evidence just at the point when National Geographic photographer Carlton Ward, Jr., Tom Hoctor of the University of Florida, and Richard Hilsenbeck of The Nature Conservancy were taking the first steps to unveil the Florida Wildlife Corridor vision. Inspired by M34's movements, over the last decade Carlton Ward, Jr., Joseph Guthrie, and Mallory Lykes-Dimmit set out on a series of expeditions to share the concept and vision of the Florida Wildlife Corridor.

In 2021, the Florida Wildlife Corridor Act formally recognized the geography of the Florida Wildlife Corridor. The realization of the Florida Wildlife Corridor dream is due in no small part to M34, the young Florida black bear that set out on a journey to find his home, and in doing so, inspired a movement to protect wild Florida.

Congrats to Angeline and Joe for so wonderfully illustrating the epic journey of M34. The full interactive 'Bear Necessities' Story [Story](#)

Map can be viewed online at <https://arcg.is/1viiC80>