



Reed Bowman

ARCHBOLD MARCH 2016 NEWSLETTER

for curious minds



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Acorn Gardeners



Archbold Biological Station

Federally Threatened Florida Scrub-Jay with oak acorn.

Florida Scrub-Jays bury thousands of acorns each fall to ensure a dependable food supply during winter. But, this story is more complicated especially because cached acorns are critical to survival. Jays prefer to cache red oak over white oak acorns because they have more tannins, which increase their 'shelf life'. **Throughout the winter, jays return to their caches**



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for quality control. They discard bad acorns (e.g., rotten), eat those that are just beginning to go bad, and re-cache the good ones in a new, drier site to ensure the acorn will still be good to eat in a month or two. Jays also are aware of who is watching when they bury acorns. If it is an older, dominant jay, they become secretive, flying farther to bury acorns out of sight of potential thieves. Some of this work was published by two previous interns in the [Avian Ecology Program](#), [Matt Toomey](#) and [Ipek Kulahci](#). Do jays learn their caching preferences from their older group members? That is the focus for one of this year's interns, Matt Fuirst.

Agro-Eco-Philes Unite



80 scientists from 18 USDA sites.

Archbold and our partners at the [University of Florida Range Cattle Research and Extension Center](#) at Ona hosted the 2016 Annual Meeting of the [USDA Long-Term Agro-Ecosystem Research \(LTAR\) network](#) on February 22-26. **We are one of 18 sites selected nationwide** by USDA for the LTAR network. **80 scientists from 18 LTAR sites attended as well as Dr. Cathy Woteki, Under Secretary of Agriculture** and senior staff from USDA, Beltsville. Hilary Swain (Executive Director) said, 'There were exciting discussions about how the LTAR network will transform existing long-term research infrastructure to address all components of sustainability from productivity, economics, environmental quality, ecosystem services, to human and social well-being.' Dr. Betsey Boughton (Archbold) said, '**The field trips at Archbold-[MAERC](#) and Univ. FL-Ona allowed us to showcase our excellent agro-ecosystem research programs.**'

"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

Position Announcement

Archbold is seeking a new Executive Assistant to support the Executive Director. Click [here](#) for more information.



Check out our Youtube Videos!



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Shane's Scrub-Jay Salute



Shane Pruett with Florida Scrub-Jay.

Dr. Shane Pruett, [Archbold Avian Ecology](#) Post-Doc, first became aware of Archbold in his Animal Behavior college class for a case study of the amazing, long-term 20 year study of the Florida Scrub-Jay. He said, 'I never would have imagined that 20 years later I would be working on the very same population as it passed 40 years of continuous, intensive study. And that I would continue to do so for 8 years! It is humbling that I was entrusted to contribute to, maintain and curate such a large, complex, and continually growing body of information. **This job has given me a greater appreciation for the complexities of data management and analysis,** skills that will continue to be an asset. I've accepted a Faculty Research Assistant position at Oregon State University where I will lead the Northern Spotted Owl Demography Study Area effort on the Olympic Peninsula. I'm looking forward to the opportunity, but I will miss the scrub and the charismatic Florida Scrub-Jay, not to mention my Archbold family.'

Upcoming Public Events

Mar 19: 8:00am-10:00am

'Natural History of the Florida Scrub-Jay'

Walking Tour

Dr. Reed Bowman, Archbold

April 2: 9:00am-11:00am

'Plants of Florida Scrub and Sandhill'

Walking Tour

Dr. Eric Menges, Archbold

April 24: 1:00pm-2:15pm

'A Walk Through Time, History Trail'

Walking Tour

Fred Lohrer, Archbold

[Archbold Facebook Event Calendar](#)

Queen of Thorns



A Florida Ziziphus population in the wild inside a protective fence and surrounded by cattle pasture. Though flowering, this whole patch is likely just one plant clone making pollination impossible.

Imagine a species so rare and endangered that the person who named it thought it was extinct. What if you were one of the scientists chosen to save it from extinction? For the last ten years, that's been the story for Stacy Smith, Archbold Plant Ecologist, and the [Archbold Plant Ecology Program](#), led by Dr. Eric Menges, with previous [guidance and mentoring from Carl Weekley](#), former Archbold Plant Ecology Researcher. **In the wild, there are just 15 populations of Florida Ziziphus** (*Ziziphus celata*), a thorny endemic shrub with tiny leaves, tiny flowers, and stunning fruit. Unfortunately, most wild plants can't produce fruit and seeds because they are geographically isolated. So, scientists are playing matchmaker by: 1) Breeding them in captivity; 2) Transferring plants to locations with existing populations; and 3) Planting new populations. So far, **Archbold scientists have created a Florida Ziziphus nursery with Bok Tower Gardens, enhanced four wild populations, and started six entirely new wild populations!** In all, they have planted more than 1,000 new Florida Ziziphus in the wild with 100 more ready to plant this summer. Read more in '[Stacy, Queen of Thorns](#)'.

Celebrating Our 75th



Did you see [Close Encounters of the Tortoise Kind](#) on our [Facebook page](#)?

It features one of the Gopher Tortoises being monitored at Archbold. Tortoises need open, sunny spots for nesting and sun-loving food plants, like grasses. This large male tortoise occupies a burrow nearby in low, open sandhill vegetation maintained by fire. He was spotted mowing the grass and eating fallen fruits, like this Hog Plum *Ximenia americana*, along a firebreak.

**Directions to Archbold
Biological Station**



Jack Archbold Hufty, Trustee, starts out the "[By The Numbers](#)" with 1941, the year his uncle Richard Archbold founded the Station. See the full Facebook album [here](#).

[Richard Archbold](#) first arrived at what would become [Archbold Biological Station](#) in February 1941. In recognition of this milestone, we held a 75th celebration in the Learning Center on February 11th, 2016. Hilary Swain said, 'We were delighted to welcome so many special guests and local dignitaries along with more than 120 friends, researchers, scientists, elected officials, and supporters who joined Archbold board members, staff, and volunteers.' Barbara Stewart, former Highlands County Commissioner and Archbold Trustee, read a proclamation in honor of the 75th from the Board of County Commissioners of Highlands County. Scientists and students presented an "[Archbold By The Numbers](#)" sketch highlighting 75 years of achievements. Guests also enjoyed a wonderful 75th cake by staff member Michelle Dent. The most memorable moment was when everyone was asked to raise their hands to show the decade they first came to Archbold. Hands were waving for every decade from the 1940s, 50s, 60s through to the 2000s, plus a few who had just arrived in 2016! Archbold is indeed an enduring organization.

Eight miles south of Lake Placid. Entrance is 1.8 miles south of SR 70 on Old SR 8.



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