

**Archbold Biological Station (ABS)
Proposed Gradient Site
Southeast Domain (Domain 3)**

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Location: The Archbold Biological Station is located in south central Florida and is the southernmost site of the proposed southeastern national ecological observatory gradient. It lies near the southern end of the Lake Wales Ridge, a north-south oriented sandy upland at the center of the Florida peninsula.



History: Archbold Biological Station was established in 1941 is owned and operated by Archbold Expeditions, a non-profit organization dedicated to long-term ecological research and conservation. Roughly 2,100 ha is in pristine natural condition, and the original parcel (405-ha Roebling Red Hill estate) was never logged. An additional 1,476-ha parcel was acquired in 2002, consisting of natural pinelands and highly degraded grazing lands.

Key Characteristics: ABS is 3,578 ha in size, is privately owned, managed for research purposes, and is fenced and gated with only limited public access to a small area for education. ABS currently has an active fire management program, in which prescribed fire is used to help maintain and restore ecological health of the site and to investigate questions related to fire ecology. ABS is comprised of slash pine/wiregrass communities, sand pine scrub, scrubby flatwoods, and pine flatwoods. Wetland habitats are abundant including bayheads, evergreen forests of mixed bay-tree species, and grassy seasonal ponds and seepage slopes.

Facilities and Existing Infrastructure: ABS has modern laboratories, a library, GIS capability, and an existing computer network, as well as housing, dining facilities, and a vehicle fleet. Extensive databases, many spanning 30-75 years, and covering climatic conditions, biodiversity, biological collections, plant and animal populations, water tables, and water chemistry are available to augment research projects. Easy access to all research sites is provided by an extensive network of paved and unpaved roads. ABS is fenced and gated, with only limited public access to a small area for education. ABS has 3 meteorological sites, 2 with real time data, and maintains a network of groundwater and surface water monitoring sites including Lake Annie, one of the most important lakes in the south-east with a 25 year record of monthly limnological sampling, and a 50,000 year paleo record.