

FLORIDA CHAPTER THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY

Herbert W. Kale, II Award

The Florida Chapter of The Wildlife Society is pleased to announce that **Dr. Hilary Swain** is the recipient of the 2024 Herbert W. Kale, II Award.



Scotland native Hillary Swain, nee Dow, had a childhood immersed in nature. She earned degrees at the University of Newcastle upon Tyne in Northeast England. After a post-doc at University of Aberdeen in her hometown, and a return to England with The Nature Conservancy Council, in 1986 she moved across the pond to Florida Institute of Technology. During the next decade, she moved up the ranks from adjunct to assistant, then associate professor, and finally Executive Director at [Archbold Biological Station](#).



Archbold is an independent facility which conducts extensive ecological research on its 8,800-acre scrub preserve on the Lake Wales Ridge and at its 10,500-acre working cattle ranch, Buck Island Ranch. Hilary helped neighbors and state agencies establish 53,000 acres of contiguous conservation lands around the Station, with more acres targeted for the future. Hilary supervises 60+ staff, plus graduate students, and interns.

Emphases include:

The application of the scientific principles of conservation biology to reserve design and management, and planning for endangered species.

Research for local and state agencies on ecosystem analysis, conservation biology, including endangered species management and design of protected areas, and the utilization of computer geographical information systems for natural resources management.

Education program activities that serve K-12 students, college classes, early professionals, lifelong learners, and draw from decades of ecological research and education to build scientific knowledge, connect with wild Florida, and inspire careers in science.

Hilary is powerful advocate for science-based conservation for a wide variety of Florida ecosystems. She builds enduring relationships among scientists, environmentalists, local, state, and federal agencies, and Florida landowners. She plays a major role in the conservation implementation for the Florida Wildlife Corridor.

Since Hilary arrived at Archbold in 1995, more than 1,300+ scientific papers have been published, ~400 grants awarded, and ~400 college classes hosted.

Hilary is an excellent communicator and is regularly an invited speaker at both technical and popular conferences related to conservation. She also has established an excellent working relationship with many stakeholders in Florida, particularly the ranching community.

Hilary sees her legacy as a living legacy with “generations of students who have received training at Archbold and gone on to have great careers; land management that has been transformed, and environmental areas that been acquired and protected.”

She reflects on how much progress women have made: As an undergraduate, she was one of two or three women in her class. Upon graduation, she applied for a research assistantship with the British Antarctic Survey and was informed via letter that she was not eligible...because she was female. She is happy about the positive change in opportunities since then, observing that now undergraduates in biology are 60+% female and are without a doubt contributing significantly to the profession.

Her recent awards were a decade ago: Florida Wildlife Federation Conservationist of the Year 2013, Maker, Women Who Make America & Guardian of the Everglades, both in 2012. She is thus overdue for additional recognition. For her almost 30 years directing Archbold's science, conservation, and education, Dr. Hillary Swain deserves to be the first-ever female recipient of The Herbert W. Kale, II Award.

Meet her here:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=55s78ELEW_0&t=17s

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TGwnIECDto8>