THE CORPORATION

1937 Biological Explorations. On 25 March 1937, Richard Archbold founded Biological Explorations, a nonprofit corporation, in Philadelphia, under the laws of Pennsylvania. Purposes: “To finance ... and conduct scientific expeditions, ... making biological, ethnological, geological and geographic investigation of ... little known regions; ... for the purpose of advancing ... and improving ... the biological, ethnological, geological and geographical knowledge and information now available relating to said regions.”

1940 Archbold Expeditions. On 11 July 1940, The Corporation was renamed Archbold Expeditions, again in Philadelphia, because of confusion among agencies granting permits with the similarly named U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Bureau of Biological Survey (1905-39). Archbold Expeditions was authorized to operate in Florida on 20 March 1941.

THE EXPEDITIONS

All 11 Archbold Expeditions (listed next page) were conducted in collaboration with the American Museum of Natural History (AMNH) in New York City. Richard Archbold was a Research Associate of the Museum’s Department of Mammalogy (1931-76). In 1935 he became a Benefactor of the AMNH.

Expedition Leaders

Richard Archbold: Photographer and assistant mammalogist on the Madagascar Expedition (1929-31). He organized, funded, and led three New Guinea Expeditions (1933-39) and the Arizona Expedition (1940). He chose New Guinea for his expeditions on the advice of Dr. Ernst Mayr, AMNH ornithologist, who had conducted much research across all of northern New Guinea (1928-29).

Dr. Leonard J. Brass, Archbold Botanist: Leader of the Australia Expedition (1948) and of three New Guinea Expeditions (1953-59).

Hobart M. Van Deusen, Archbold Assistant Curator of Mammalogy, AMNH: Leader of the seventh New Guinea Expedition (1964).

Dr. Guy G. Musser, Archbold Curator of Mammalogy, AMNH: Leader of the Sulawesi Expedition (1973-76).

The Eleven Archbold Expeditions


1933-1934  **First Archbold Expedition** to New Guinea. Papua New Guinea; A transect from coast to summit of Mt. Albert Edward, 13,100 feet.


1938-1939  **Third Archbold Expedition** to New Guinea. Irian Jaya; Northern slopes of the Snow Mountains from Biami River to Lake Habbema, 10,580 feet, and Mt. Wilhelmina, 15,585 feet. A joint project with the government of Netherlands Indies. Basic transportation was by a PBY-2 (Catalina) flying boat, the Guba. The large, densely-populated high valley of the Baliem was discovered and explored.

1940  **Archbold Expedition to southern Arizona.** Tanque Verde Ranch; Foothills of the Rincon Mountains, near Tucson.

1948  **Archbold Expedition to Cape York Peninsula.** Northern Queensland, Australia.

1953  **Fourth Archbold Expedition** to New Guinea. Papua New Guinea; Eastern Papua on Cape Vogel Peninsula and Goodenough Island.

1956  **Fifth Archbold Expedition** to New Guinea. Papua New Guinea; Eastern Papuan islands.

1959  **Sixth Archbold Expedition** to New Guinea. Papua New Guinea; Eastern Highlands, including Mt. Wilhelm, 15,000 feet.


1973-1976  **Archbold Expedition to Sulawesi.** Central highlands of Sulawesi; Areas remote from human settlements and including many comprehensive altitudinal transects.
EXPEDITION ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The first three Archbold Expeditions to New Guinea were notable for their geographic scope, meticulous preparation, and support by airplanes on the second and third expeditions. The Archbold Expeditions after World War II were less ambitious in scope and did not use airplanes. Nonetheless, the combined results of the 11 Archbold Expeditions were remarkable for the great number of specimens of plants, invertebrates, and vertebrates they collected, and for the detailed ecological and geographical information, photographs, and chromosomal preparations (Sulawesi) that accompanied the specimens. These collections included many new species in almost all taxa collected.

The vertebrate specimens, records, and photographs from Archbold Expeditions to New Guinea, Australia, Arizona, and Sulawesi were donated to the AMNH. The plant specimens were donated to the Arnold Arboretum (Harvard Univ.), and to several other major collections (5th New Guinea Exp. to Rijksherbarium, Leiden, 6th to U.S. National Herbarium, Washington, D.C.).

EXPEDITION ACCOLADES

In 1941, Ernst Mayr (Mayr 1941) published his book, “List of New Guinea birds.” On a copy he sent to Archbold ornithologist Austin L. Rand, he inscribed the following,

"Without the Archbold collections this list would be just a torso."

In 1982, Guy Musser (Musser 1992) described a new species of Philippine Shrew Rat, naming it Archboldomys luzonensis in honor of Richard Archbold.

"... The late Mr. Richard Archbold. His interest in adventure and natural history stimulated him to share his resources for expeditions to the Far East and research in museums, usually associated with the New Guinea Area. Richard Archbold, through the auspices of Archbold Expeditions, never imposed geographic limits or a particular focus on his associates. Naming a Philippine endemic after him points up the past breadth of his patronage and commitment to indifferent inquiry of whatever and wherever" (page 31).


"The patronymic honors Richard Archbold, sponsor and early leader of a series of seven expeditions to New Guinea (1933-1964) that contributed immeasurably to knowledge of the biota of that island. Profitable mining of the collections for material of value to systematic biology will doubtless continue for decades.”
EXPEDITION PUBLICATIONS

Collections and activities of the 11 Archbold Expeditions contributed entirely, or substantially, to, at least 326 publications about taxonomy and systematics, and about natural history and ecology.

- Botany 127
- Invertebrates 64 (includes insects 60)
- Vertebrates 135 (fishes 5, amphibians 11, reptiles 5, birds 26, mammals 88)

Also published were 8 official summaries of, and 23 general interest articles about, the expeditions.

The Numbered Results of the Archbold Expeditions

BOTANY
- Numbered “Botanical Results of the Richard Archbold Expeditions,” no. 1-58, 1933-1952: Published either by the NY Botanical Gardens or by the Arnold Arboretum (Harvard Univ.).
  - No.1-10, 1936-1938, Brittonia (New York Botanical Gardens)
  - No 11-58, 1938-1954, Journal of the Arnold Arboretum
  - Parts 1-21, 1939-1953, Plantae Papuanae Archboldianae in J. Arnold Arboretum

Other botany papers were published in 15 other scientific journals, including Nova Guinea, New Series (8), Philippine Journal of Science (8), and Blumea (National Herbarium of Netherlands) (4).

ZOOLOGY-INVERTEBRATES
- Of the 64 invertebrate publications, 36 were titled “Results of the Archbold Expeditions,” without a numbered sequence, and published in:
  - Nova Guinea, New Series (27) during 1945-1965
  - Treubia (9) during 1948-1955

The remainder were published without the ROTAE phrase in 10 journals.

ZOOLOGY-VERTEBRATES

A few other vertebrate papers were published in Journal of Mammalogy (6) and Natural History (2).

Expedition Publications - The Sulawesi Squirrels, A Long History

In 1931, Richard Archbold became a Research Associate of the AMNH Department of Mammalogy. That same year, he purchased many specimens of small mammals from Celebes (now Sulawesi) from the professional scientific collector Gerard Heinrich (Heinrich 2007).

In 1935, the first numbered “Results of the Archbold Expeditions,” by Richard Archbold and G.H.H. Tate, was a description of a new genus and species of Sulawesi ground squirrel, Hyosciurus heinrichi, based on specimens from that 1931 purchase.


In 2010, one of Guy Musser’s last publications about Sulawesi mammals (of 34, 1969-2015), published 8 years after he retired (2002) from the AMNH as the Archbold Curator of Mammalogy, included a taxonomic revision of the 8 endemic species of Sulawesi squirrels.

EXPEDITION SUMMARIES
Formal summaries were published for all 7 New Guinea Expeditions and the Cape York Expedition.

Madagascar, 1929-1931

First Archbold Expedition, 1933-1934

Second Archbold Expedition, 1936-1937

Third Archbold Expedition, 1938-1939

Archbold Expedition to Southern Arizona, 1940

Archbold Expedition to Cape York Peninsula, Australia, 1948

Fourth Archbold Expedition, 1953

Fifth Archbold Expedition, 1956

Sixth Archbold Expedition, 1959

Seventh Archbold Expedition, 1964

Archbold Expedition to Sulawesi, 1973-1976
No expedition summary was published, perhaps because the expedition was focused on small mammals. Two publications (below), of many, contain: maps, photos, habitat and habits of species, habitat descriptions and photos, and photos or paintings of species -- all giving some idea of expedition activities.
LITERATURE CITED* and MAJOR SOURCES


Archbold Expeditions, corporate notebook.

Archives, Archbold Biological Station.


Lohrer, F.E. 2008. Richard Archbold (1907-1976), Explorer and Patron of Science: CURRICULUM VITAE. link

Lohrer, F.E. 2014. Leonard John Brass (1900-1971), Botanical Collector and Explorer: CURRICULUM VITAE. link

*Mayr, E. 1941. List of New Guinea birds: A systematic and faunal list of the birds of New Guinea and adjacent islands. American Museum of Natural History. link


