Meet the Scientist!

Dr. Arendt is a trained professional. The bird is not harmed and will be released back in to the wild. Never approach or handle wild animals.

> As an ornithologist, I study disturbance ecology, climate change, conservation and management of Neotropical resident and migratory bird communities and invasive species.

Dr. Wayne J. Arendt
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Important Scientist Characteristics

To competently carry out quantitative research using the scientific method, scientists must have and demonstrate critical thinking, curiosity, creativity, careful observation, good record-keeping, mathematical prowess and, especially, logic.

Example of a simple research question I have tried to answer:

What life history traits does the Pearly-eyed thrasher have that make it successful in predation of and competition against the endangered Puerto Rican parrot? My study of a Caribbean predatory bird, the Pearly-eyed thrasher, revealed that the thrasher is an example of an ecological generalist. An ecological generalist is successful due to quick dispersal, wide distribution, and lack of special needs for food and shelter.

Technology or equipment used in research:

I use Swavorski SLC 10x42 binoculars for avian surveys and species identifi-cation. I use a Bushnell Scout DX Laser Rangefinder, which uses a laser beam, to determine distance to an object. I also use various graphics and software programs to analyze and present the results derived from data collected in the field.

Most Exciting Discovery

During a two-decade study of the effects of ectoparasites on birds, I revealed several parts of the life cycle of a tropical fly. I found out about host-parasite interactions, impact on nestling bird growth and development, and the physical effects of larvae on the nestling birds' internal tissues stemming from the disease it carries.

When did you know you wanted to be a scientist?

I knew I wanted to study birds from early childhood. While I was in middle school, I was encouraged to become an ornithologist by my biology teacher, Mr. Ted F. Platt.