

BIRD TREKS

EVERGLADES NATIONAL PARK, SOUTH FLORIDA, DRY TORTUGAS & THE KEYS

Dates Tuesday, 19 April through Wednesday, 27 April 2011: 9 days and 8 nights

We'll visit Everglades National Park, the 'River of Grass', from the Anhinga Trail to the village of Flamingo, and many of the beautiful spots along the way.

The entire length of the Florida Keys, including Key Largo, Big Pine Key, and Key West, with a special day at Fort Jefferson on the world-famous Dry Tortugas.

Areas in and around South Miami and Kendall for established exotics, and great wetlands at Loxahatchee NWR and the Wikodahatchee Wetlands near West Palm Beach.

Many beautiful spots along the Gulf Coast including Marco Island, Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary, Sanibel Island, and Ding Darling NWR.

Areas near Lake Okeechobee for sandhill/piney woods specialties such as Sandhill Crane, Short-tailed Hawk, Crested Caracara, Brown-headed Nuthatch, and Bachman's Sparrow.



[Target list is on page 2]

What a great perch for
a Burrowing Owl!

- - Bob Schutsky

South Florida specialties that we will seek include . . .

American White Pelican
Brown Pelican
Anhinga
Magnificent Frigatebird
'Great White' Heron
Reddish Egret
White Ibis
Roseate Spoonbill
Mottled Duck
Wood Stork
Swallow-tailed Kite
Snail Kite
Merlin
Peregrine Falcon
Short-tailed Hawk
Purple Gallinule
Snowy Plover
Wilson's Plover
Piping Plover
Roseate Tern
Sandwich Tern
Black Skimmer



Red-shouldered Hawk
- - Bob Schutsky

Burrowing Owl
Antillean Nighthawk
Chuck-will's-widow
Gray Kingbird
Western Kingbird
White-winged Dove
Eurasian Collared-Dove
Common Ground-Dove
White-crowned Pigeon
Monk Parakeet
Yellow-chevroned Parakeet
Mangrove Cuckoo
Cave Swallow
Florida Scrub-Jay
Loggerhead Shrike
Red-whiskered Bulbul
Black-whiskered Vireo
Cape May Warbler
Bachman's Sparrow
Painted Bunting
Spot-breasted Oriole
Shiny Cowbird

A complete list of species observed on previous **South Florida Tours** is available upon request.
You can expect to see approximately 175 species on this tour.

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South Florida, Dry Tortugas & The Florida Keys

19 - 27 April 2011

Day Agenda

- 1 The tour begins at the Fort Lauderdale Airport; plan to arrive by late morning or noon. There is often a nearby rarity to go after. One year we found a **Key West Quail-Dove** in the first hour of the tour! Recently it was the increasingly rare **Smooth-billed Ani**. As we head north, our visit to Loxahatchee NWR may yield **Limpkin** and **Purple Gallinule**. **Least Bittern**, **Sora**, and many additional **aquatic species** are easily observed at the nearby Wikodahatchee Wetlands, where the *baby coots and moorhens* are perennial favorites. Our first night is in West Palm Beach.
- 2 Today we'll be in the vicinity of Lake Okeechobee, as far north and west as Lake Placid. This is the sandhill region on the prairies with lots of ponds for **waterfowl** and **shorebirds**. There is an excellent chance for **Mottled Duck**, **Sandhill Crane**, **Swallow-tailed Kite**, **Crested Caracara**, **Short-tailed Hawk**, **Red-headed Woodpecker**, and **Florida Scrub-Jay**. Overnight near Lake Placid.

[Day 3 begins on page 3]

3 We'll start the day in the Venus Flatwoods area for **Red-headed Woodpecker**, **Bachman's Sparrow**, and **Short-tailed Hawk**, then head for the Gulf Coast. Ding Darling NWR on Sanibel Island is host to **Anhinga**, **Roseate Spoonbill**, **Brown Pelican**, and flocks of **egrets** and **ibis**. We'll make our first attempt for **Mangrove Cuckoo** at Sanibel. Tigertail Beach often yields **Piping**, **Wilson's**, and **Snowy Plovers**, plus lots of other shorebirds and terns. Overnight near Naples.

4 Birding begins on the boardwalk at National Audubon's Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary to look for **Barred Owl**, **Swallow-tailed Kite**, **Painted Bunting**, and baby (and mama) **American Alligators**. The Tamiami Trail will lead us east across Big Cypress Swamp and the Everglades. The Miccosukee Restaurant is a prime location for **Snail Kite**, **Wood Stork**, and the pale south Florida race of **Red-shouldered Hawk**. While checking out **alligators**, **turtles**, **snakes**, and **gar** in the roadside canals, we'll watch for **rails** and **bitterns**. Over night in Florida City, with displaying **Common Nighthawks**, and the greatly increasing population of **Common Mynas**.



A Black Skimmer in flight is a study in beauty and grace.
- - John Puschock, tour leader

5 Homestead is a good area to look for **White-winged Dove**, **Common Ground-Dove**, **Painted Bunting**, **Scissor-tailed Flycatcher**, **Western Kingbird**, and sometimes **White-tailed Kite**. Everglades National Park has some incredible birding areas such as the Anhinga Trail for aquatic species and EcoPond for long-legged waders. There is an excellent chance of seeing **White-crowned Pigeon**, **Gray Kingbird**, **Black-whiskered Vireo**, and **American White Pelican**. Even **Mangrove Cuckoo**, **Shiny Cowbird**, **Cape Sable Seaside Sparrow**, and **Greater Flamingo** are possible. After dinner we'll look for **Chuck-will's widow** and **Barn Owl**. A second night in Florida City.

6 We'll take as much time as we need near Florida City to seek out any species that we may have missed. As we head south and west through the Keys we'll watch for **Gray Kingbird**, **'Great White' Heron**, and **Magnificent Frigatebird**. There will be excellent chances for **Mangrove Cuckoo**, **Black-whiskered Vireo**, and **Painted Bunting**. We'll look for **Burrowing Owl** at Key Colony Beach. One year they had two babies that were simply adorable! Overnight near Marathon.

7 We'll make the drive to Key West and board the *Fast Cat* for the 70-mile, 2.5-hour journey to the world-famous Dry Tortugas. From the boat we'll watch for **Northern Gannet**, **Audubon's Shearwater**, **Brown Booby**, **Roseate Tern**, and perhaps **White-tailed Tropicbird**. **Magnificent Frigatebird**, **Brown Noddy**, and **Sooty Tern** will be abundant as we approach Fort Jefferson. Our search for migrants in and around the fort may yield a

wide variety of warblers, vireos, tanagers, thrushes, buntings, and grosbeaks, plus a few Merlins, Peregrines, Ruby-throated Hummingbirds, and often a Chuck-will's-widow. We'll return to Key West at about 5 PM and, after dinner, work our way back to Marathon for the night.

- 8 Our birding continues west across the Seven Mile Bridge, from Marathon to Key West. We'll look for migrant warblers, Reddish Egret, White-crowned Pigeon, and scan the beautiful offshore waters for pelagic species. We'll see the diminutive Key Deer, look for the Cuban form of Yellow Warbler on Big Pine Key, and listen and watch for Antillean Nighthawk at the Marathon Airport. There is sometimes a really incredible bird around like Bananaquit, La Sagra's Flycatcher, Western Spindalis, or Fork-tailed Flycatcher. A third night at the same motel in Marathon.
- 9 Our final morning will give us a chance to look for all of the exotics in the Miami area, including Hill Myna, Spot-breasted Oriole, Red-whiskered Bulbul, Yellow-chevroned Parakeet, White-winged Parakeet, and Monk Parakeet. There is also a chance for a few other non-established parrots and macaws. The South Florida Tour ends early in the afternoon at Fort Lauderdale International Airport.

See a map of the tour route by clicking on this link:

<http://maps.google.com/maps/ms?hl=en&ie=UTF8&msa=0&msid=117812928873209532533.0000011290cd3b53e042c&ll=25.591994,-80.507812&spn=1.855283,3.570557&z=9>

[Final details are on page 5]

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South Florida is famous for its American Alligators, like this beauty. - - Bob Schutsky

- Leader** The **South Florida Tour** will be led by **John Puschock**. John has birded South Florida many times and knows its birds and habitats very well. He will show you an excellent time.
- Price** \$2745 per person based upon double occupancy. Single accommodations are available for an extra charge of \$545.
- Includes** Expert guide service, **ALL meals** beginning with lunch on the first day, all ground transportation within Florida, boat to the Dry Tortugas, entrance fees, and lodging for eight nights. **ALL tips** are also included in the tour fee, except for anything extra that you may wish to give to your tour leader(s) and boat crew.



John is your expert tour leader.

Does not include cost of airfare to and from Fort Lauderdale. Upon request, BIRD TREKS will help you obtain the best possible airfare. Also not included are the cost of alcoholic beverages and items of a personal nature.

Extra Services We offer the services of our exclusive Bird Treks travel agent, **Lori Heathcote**, in arranging your air travel. Lori has 25 years of experience in the travel industry and is a veteran birder. Contact Lori through Bailey Travel at **1-800-224-5399**, or you can e-mail her at **lori@baileytravel.com**. By dealing with Lori you have the security of a 24-hour toll-free telephone number in case of any travel emergency. She can also assist you with all pre- and post-tour travel plans. There may be a fee for these services.

Deposit A \$700 deposit will assure your reservation on the tour. The balance of the tour fee is payable 19 February 2011.

Refund & Cancellation With written notice more than 60 days prior to the first day of the tour, 100% of your deposit will be refunded, minus a \$75 service fee. With 30-60 days notice, you will receive a 50% refund of the full cost of the tour. No refund can be made with less than 30 days notice. You will receive a full refund if you provide a replacement for your spot on the tour. No partial refund can be given once a tour begins. We **STRONGLY RECOMMEND** that you purchase trip cancellation insurance to protect your investment. Contact Access America at **1-800-284-8300** and mention **BIRD TREKS (ACCAM # F021096)**. You can apply by phone or via the Internet at **www.accessamerica.com**.