

Bird TREKS

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

Dates Saturday, 22 April through Sunday, 30 April 2017: 9 days and 8 nights

We'll visit Areas in and around **South Miami** and **Kendall** for established exotics, and great wetlands at **Green Cay** and the **Wakodahatchee Wetlands** near West Palm Beach.

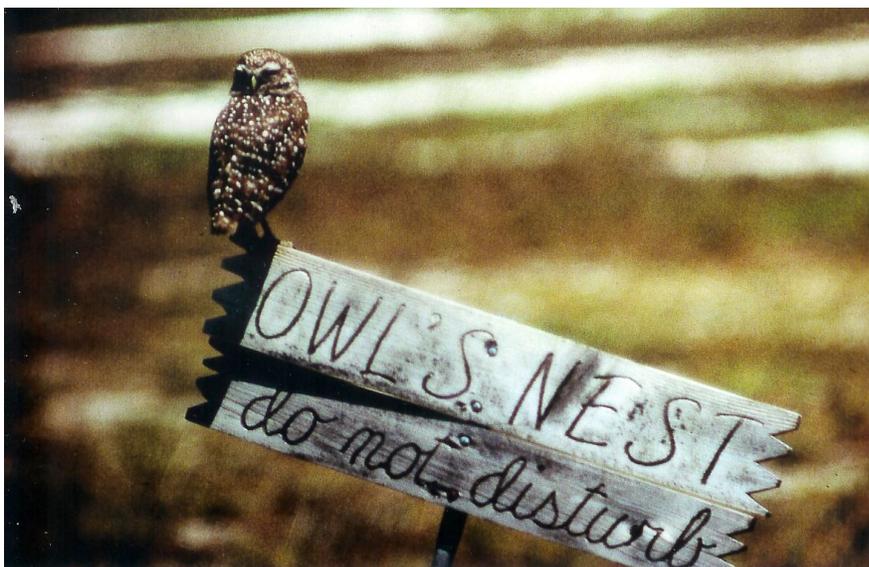
Areas near **Lake Okeechobee** for sandhill and wetland specialties including Sandhill Crane, Crested Caracara, Limpkin, and Snail Kite.

Babcock-Webb WMA, especially for the endangered Red-cockaded Woodpecker.

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

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**!



What a great perch for
a **Burrowing Owl**!

- - *Bob Schutsky*

[Target list is on page 2]

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
Purple Swamphen
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-chevrons Parakeet
Mangrove Cuckoo (difficult)
Cave Swallow
Florida Scrub-Jay
Loggerhead Shrike
Black-whiskered Vireo
Black-throated Blue Warbler
Cape May Warbler
Bachman's Sparrow
Painted Bunting
Dickcissel
Shiny Cowbird

A complete list of species observed on previous South Florida Tours is on our website.

<http://www.birdtreks.com/birds-previously-seen/FLSO.pdf>

You can expect to see approximately 150 - 180 species on this tour.

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South Florida, Dry Tortugas & the Florida Keys

22 - 30 April 2017

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 that we can attempt to see. One year we found a **Key West Quail-Dove** in the first hour of the tour! Florida Atlantic University is quite reliable for **Burrowing Owls** and a **Loggerhead Shrike** or two. As we head north, our visit to Green Cay may yield **Limpkin**, **Purple Gallinule**, and additional **aquatic species**. **Least Bittern**, **Sora**, and even more **aquatic species** are easily observed at the nearby Wakodahatchee Wetlands, where *baby Common Gallinules* are perennial favorites, and **Purple Swamphen** and **Neotropic Cormorant** have nested recently. Our first night is in West Palm Beach.
- 2 Today we'll be in the vicinity of Lake Okeechobee, and as far north and west as Lake Placid. This is the sandhill region on the prairies with lots of very productive habitat. There is an excellent chance for **Snail Kite**, **Mottled Duck**, **Sandhill Crane**, **Swallow-tailed Kite**, **Crested Caracara**, **Short-tailed Hawk** (rare), **Red-headed Woodpecker**, **Florida Scrub-Jay**, and the pale-eyed form of **Eastern Towhee**. We find one or more **Florida Gopher Tortoises** at Venus Flatwoods annually, along with **Red-headed Woodpecker**, **Eastern Bluebird**, and other interesting species. Overnight at Lake Placid.

[Day 3 begins on page 3]

3 We'll start the day at Babcock-Webb WMA, especially to search for **Red-cockaded Woodpecker**. On a previous tour we had great looks at a group of THREE! Additional target birds here include **Brown-headed Nuthatch**, **Bachman's Sparrow**, **Northern Bobwhite**, and **Pine Warbler**. Ding Darling NWR on Sanibel Island is host to **Anhinga**, **Roseate Spoonbill**, **Brown Pelican**, and flocks of **egrets**, **ibis**, and **shorebirds**. We'll make our first attempt for **Mangrove Cuckoo** at Sanibel. We may have time to visit 1 or 2 locations on the way to Naples, where we will spend the night.

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 region is reasonably good for a **Snail Kite**. We'll check out **alligators**, **turtles**, **snakes**, and **gar** in the roadside canals. We'll visit a reliable spot for Cave Swallow. Overnight in Florida City, with its greatly increasing population of **Common Mynas**, and perhaps a **Western Kingbird**.



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 Florida Bay for long-legged waders and shorebirds. There is an excellent chance of seeing **White-crowned Pigeon**, **Gray Kingbird**, **Black-whiskered Vireo**, **Shiny Cowbird**, and **American White Pelican**. Even **Mangrove Cuckoo**, **Cape Sable Seaside Sparrow**, and **Greater Flamingo** are possible. We can usually find a rare **American Crocodile** in the waters near the marina. 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**, **'Cuban' Yellow Warbler**, and **Magnificent Frigatebird**. There will be still more 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 in Key West.

7 We'll make the short drive to the dock and board the *Yankee Freedom III* 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**, **masked Booby**, **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, look and listen for **Antillean Nighthawk**. A second night in Key West.

- 8 Our birding continues back through the Keys, across the Seven Mile Bridge, through Marathon to Florida City. We'll look for **migrant warblers**, **Reddish Egret**, **White-crowned Pigeon**, and scan the beautiful offshore waters for **pelagic species**. We'll search for the diminutive **Key Deer**, look for the **Cuban form of Yellow Warbler** on Big Pine and No Name Keys, and search for **Mangrove Cuckoo**, a real skulker. There is sometimes a mega-rarity in the Keys such as a **Bananaquit**, **La Sagra's Flycatcher**, **Western Spindalis**, or **Fork-tailed Flycatcher**. We'll make a reasonable effort to find any such strays. Our final night of the tour will be back in Florida City.

- 9 This morning will give us a chance to look for some 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, and even an **Egyptian Goose**. All of this depends upon how much time we have. The **SOUTH FLORIDA TOUR** ends at about noon at Fort Lauderdale International Airport for your afternoon flight home.

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

<https://www.google.com/maps/d/u/0/edit?mid=1K3i78E0QCLZgYha2JTyEg86HiCQ>

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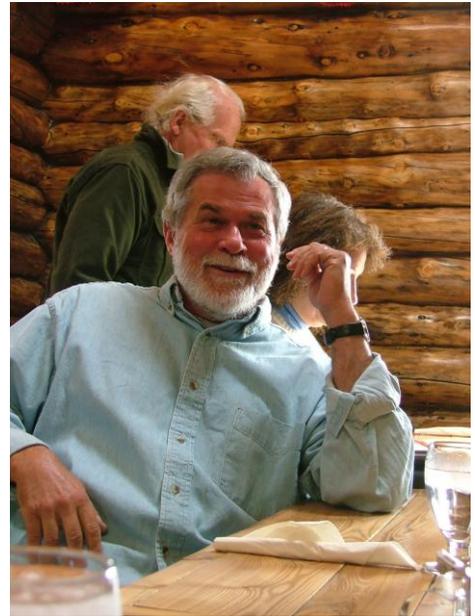


South Florida is famous for its **American Alligators**, like this beauty. - - Bob Schutsky

[Important details are on page 5]

Leader The **South Florida Tour** is scheduled to be led by **Bob Schutsky**. Bob has birded South Florida many times and knows its birds and habitats very well. He will show you an excellent time and many fine birds and great wildlife.

Price \$3265 per person based upon double occupancy. Single accommodations are available for an extra charge of \$495. We will take a maximum of seven participants. On rare occasion we may extend the maximum to ten participants.



Bob is your expert tour leader.

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.

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 32 years of experience in the travel industry and is a veteran birder. Contact her at Bailey Travel/Travel Time toll-free at **1-800-224-5399**, direct line at **717-855-2128**, or e-mail Lori at **lori@trvlttime.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 will be a small fee for these services.

Deposit An \$800 deposit will assure your reservation on the tour. The balance of the tour fee is payable 22 February 2017.

Refund & Cancellation Policy 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 the tour begins. We **STRONGLY RECOMMEND** that you purchase trip cancellation insurance to protect your investment. Please contact **Allianz Global Assistance** and mention **BIRD TREKS, ACCAM # F021096**. You can apply via the Internet at **www.allianztravelinsurance.com** or by phone at **1-866-884-3556**.