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May in the Field

Spring Migration in South Florida is typically known not for the birds we expect to see at this time of year, but for those sightings that are completely unexpected. That is the case again this spring, as just a few mega-rarities have completely dominated the local birding headlines.

In late April, birders rushed to Highland Oaks Park near Aventura to see a Kirtland's Warbler (*pictured above*), a bird recorded in Miami-Dade County on only two previous occasions. The other rarities were all spotted earlier in the month in the Key West area: Piratic Flycatcher and Fork-tailed Flycatcher, native to Central and South America, and

Pearly-eyed Thrasher, native to a few islands in the Caribbean. The Pearly-eyed Thrasher sighting was the first for North America!

As Spring Migration winds down this month, and before this warm, breezy weather yields to sweltering summer heat, join us on May 4 at [Key Largo Hammocks State Botanical site](#) for a chance to spot Mangrove Cuckoo, White-crowned Pigeon, Gray Kingbird and Black-whiskered Vireo.

Global Big Day, a.k.a. World Migratory Bird Day, takes place on Saturday, May 11. The 24-hour event challenges birders the world over to submit their bird sightings to [Cornell University's Lab of Ornithology](#). Conceived by the esteemed Ornithology program in 2015, [Global Big Day](#) is intended to inspire more participants to contribute their observations to [Cornell's global bird database](#). Multiple checklists may be submitted on Global Big Day via the [eBird website](#) or the eBird Mobile app. Birding time must be at least 10 minutes for each checklist submitted.

Please note that [REGISTRATION](#) is required for all trips.

Share your sightings on our [Bird Board](#) and [Facebook Bird Board](#).

***Banner Photo:** Kirtland's Warbler by Brian Rapoza*

RSVP for our May Field Trip

[Key Largo Hammocks State Botanical Site: Birds, Butterflies and Native Plants](#)

Saturday, May 4, 7am-2pm



RSVP for an International Field Trip

[Spain - Extremadura, Doñana and Sierra de Gredos](#) | April 28 - May 12, 2025

[Birds and Marsupials of Northern Australia - Darwin, Cairns and Brisbane](#)

August 3 - 16, 2025

Photo: European Roller

Featured Events

Take the last Doc Thomas House Tour
of the Spring 2024 season!
Saturday, May 4, 1 & 3pm



Enjoy a captivating, 1-hour docent-guided tour of our charming 1932 home, which underwent extensive restoration and repair from 2020-2021 (with additional work scheduled for later this year). Learn about TAS patron and area pioneer Arden Hayes “Doc” Thomas and Architect Robert Fitch Smith, who designed the charming Florida vernacular cottage, distinguished by its native woods and limestone features. Hear about the Tropical Audubon story and other local history.

To complement the indoor talk, the tour will include an outdoor walk to view the structure's unique exterior features.

Bonus: Stroll our society's Bird-friendly pollinator gardens and wooded Steinberg Nature Center campus.

Our October 2024 - May 2025 tour schedule is pending due to the next phase of scheduled restoration work. We will provide an update in the Fall.

Tours are FREE and open to the public. [Donations](#) are welcome.

5530 Sunset Drive, Miami, FL 33143; limited onsite parking via the SW 55 Avenue auto gate.

RSVP

Volunteers Needed

Help Stage & Host our Go-Native Plant Sale!



We're recruiting volunteers for our annual **Go-Native Plant Sale**, where you can learn about individual plants from our resident Master Gardeners.

We need your help setting up, unloading plants and watering on May 30, 10am to Noon; arranging plants, placing signage and watering on May 31, 10am to 3pm; and June 1 day-of set up, sales, watering, assisting customers, sales and securing plants after the event based on your timeframe availability between 8am-5pm.

Contact Amy Creekmur at volunteer@tropicalaudubon.org. Please include your name, phone number, date and time available and preferred tasks! Thank you.

Conservation News

Biscayne Bay Rookery – TAS Bird Survey Results



TAS and our partner conservation groups continue to lobby for better protections for an established Biscayne Bay marine bird nesting rookery on Mangrove Island, located off of Morningside Park.

Our team has been surveying Mangrove Island each month, and reporting the data to relevant government agencies, including the City of Miami, which owns the island. In our March survey, TAS identified 18 bird species and recorded 477 individual birds roosting here, among them one state-threatened Tricolored Heron (*pictured*) and two immature state-threatened Little Blue Herons. Most notable are the Brown Pelicans and Double-crested Cormorants actively nesting here.

Because Mangrove Island is a lifeline and literal oasis for birds and other wildlife, and to prevent nest abandonment caused by human disturbance, we must all continue to advocate for more aggressive and meaningful action to protect the island's avian residents and migratory visitors.

Photos: Tricolored Heron (top photo); City view from Mangrove Island. By Sandy Moise

Chirping About

South American wine icons wow

Walk in the Woods with Wine & Whisk patrons



Our Spring 2024 New World Spring edition of “Walk in the Woods with Wine & Whisk” delighted patrons with the culinary artistry of *Whisk Gourmet* chefs Michelle Minotti and Jonathan Fisher paired with stunning South American vino donated by Republic National Distributing Company and presented by Wine Fairy Roxana Garciga.

The enchanting alfresco evening was also made possible thanks to the extremely generous support of A Joy Wallace Catering, Keez Beez, Misha's Cupcakes, Whole Foods Market Coral Gables and gracious volunteers.

Net proceeds from the biannual dinner party series help us steward our 2.2-acre wooded grounds and keep it humming with engaging conservation activities.

Birdstock ConCon Finale & Members Migration Celebration cap off Earth Month





On the final weekend of Earth Month 350+ TAS members and friends perched with the Birds on our 2.2-acre Steinberg Nature Center grounds.

A captivating playbill of musical acts headlined **Birdstock** on April 27: (*band images, pictured above clockwise from top left*) Acoustic Anarchy, solo singer-songwriters LEVI and Danny Rein, and Scott Katz & Company. All of these generous-spirited musicians lent their beautiful musical talents to our conservation cause.

The guys from Nacho Bizness (*above, bottom right*) made sure Birdstock patrons enjoyed delicious Mexican fare. Hospitality sponsor [Republic National Distributing Company](#) stocked our Bird Bar to overflowing on Saturday and Sunday.





Zoo Miami Goodwill Ambassador Ron Magill delivered a heartfelt keynote speech on April 28 at our annual **Members Migration** meeting, sponsored by **Leica Store Miami**. His inspiring talk focused on preserving Miami Pine Rocklands and critical wildlife habitat in South Florida, emphasizing the crucial roles played by Tropical Audubon Society staff and members, Mayor Daniella Levine Cava and MDC commissioners in advocating to protect Globally Critically Endangered Pine Rocklands and the endangered species that rely on it to survive. He underscored his point by telling the more than 150 TAS members and friends gathered: "Most of all thank you. It's grassroots people like yourselves who are able to change the world."

Next, three South Florida conservation heroes were honored in an awards ceremony that recognized them for making extraordinary efforts to protect and preserve area wildlife, critical habitat and/or our region's natural resources.

Pictured above, clockwise from upper left:

Zoo Miami Goodwill Ambassador and Keynote Speaker Ron Magill (photo by Martin Morcillo).

MDC Mayor Daniella Levine Cava (far left) and Katy Sorenson (third from left) presented the Daniel Beard Government Conservation Award posthumously to Sean McCrackine's family. Sean's daughter Olivia holds the award, Sean's son Brandon stands behind her, TAS President José Francisco Barros (right).

TAS Senior Conservation Director Lauren Jonaitis (left) presented the Polly Redford Citizen Conservation Award to Sandy Moise.

TAS Education & Advocacy Director Stephanie Clements presented the Tropical Audubon Society Board Appreciation Award to Grant Livingston.

Doc Tonic Punch.

Amy Donner (right) and Susan Gerrish welcome visitors at Presenting Sponsor Leica Store Miami table.

Members also voted in four new board members: Michael Aronsohn, Miriam Avello and David and Teri Marshall.

Attendees of the meaningful afternoon were also treated to a concert by folk artist/awardee Grant Livingston, *Sports Grill* sliders, Doc Tonic Punch, a Bird Walk and a lively Silent Auction.

Net proceeds from the jam-packed weekend will help protect our region's precious wildlife, their habitats and our crucial water resources.

Plants for Birds

Bird-Friendly Gardening Day @TAS!
Dig in Saturday, May 18, 9am-Noon



Help steward our Bird-Friendly Demonstration Garden and near-native Steinberg Nature Center grounds! Get hands-on experience creating wildlife habitat under the expert guidance of our resident Master Gardeners. Learn how to establish a Bird-

Friendly garden in your own yard, patio or balcony, and get familiar with the principles of Florida-Friendly Landscaping.

Volunteers are needed to help remove invasives and tidy the grounds (rake leaves, wrangle fallen branches and clear our network of trails).

[Sign Up!](#)

Photo: TAS Master Gardener and Events/Grounds Director Amy Creekmur by Federico Acevedo.

Save the Date

Go-Native Plant Sale @TAS
Saturday, June 1, 9am-4pm



Our annual **Go-Native Plant Sale** makes it easy to nurture and shelter birds, bees and butterflies, and to create your own Bird-Friendly habitat at home. Select from hundreds of native plants — which can include slash pine, coontie, peperomia, bird and butterfly attractors, and more — and get cultivation tips from experts. Learn how to transform your yard, balcony or patio into a hospitable oasis for indigenous and migrating birds, other pollinators and area wildlife. Find inspiration in our pollinator gardens and our Pine Rockland and Tropical Hardwood Hammock demonstration forests.

Net proceeds help support our bird-friendly gardens and grounds.

Bonus Activities:

- Learn about “Lights Out Miami” and how to make your windows bird-safe
- Explore our 2.2-acre Steinberg Nature Center campus
- Pack breakfast or lunch and perch in our oak-shaded picnic grove

The Birds Thank ...



The Birds thank our extraordinarily generous, inordinately talented bands for staging four fan-tabulous 2024 Conservation Concerts, filling the night air with an eclectic mix of memorable music.

Take Sixx inaugurated our signature concert series in January for the 15th straight year with a compelling mix of classic and contemporary hits. Their volunteerism always sets the tempo for the season. Standing O for members Dr. Steve Chavoustie, Dr. Enrique Hernandez, Dr. Manuel Melo Bicchi, Harold Norman, Dr. Ron Sancetta and Gaby Yidi.

The beat went on in February when **Plan B** delivered its riveting repertoire of classic and contemporary Rock ‘n’ Roll standards. Standing O for members Alvaro Gomez, Dr. Scott Kenward, Al Larcada, Alex Leeds and Al Roque.

Hard-driving **Been There Done That** filled the night air with enduring classic rock covers in March. Standing O for members Phil Allen, Jose Arencibia, Burt Bruton, Noel Cleland, Jerry Cohn and Denise Margolesky, Joel Plattor and Tony Sinatra.

April's much-ballyhooed **Birdstock** jam showcased original music, and featured four distinctive acts. Standing O for solo artists LEVI and Danny Rein; Scott Katz & Company; and Acoustic Anarchy's Phil Allen, Burt Bruton, Larry Misrahi and Tony Sinatra.

But that's not all! Heartfelt thanks to folk artist and iconic South Florida "Historian in Song" **Grant Livingston** for graciously opening our Sunday April 28 **Members Migration** with his signature environmental story-telling.

The season's net proceeds will help fund our ongoing restoration and conservation efforts.

Support Birds

Become a Member

www.tropicalaudubon.org



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