**Attention Beachgoers!**

When we’re at the beach this summer, let’s remember to share the sand with the shorebirds who nest in our area at this time of year — specifically, the Wilson’s Plover, Least Tern and Black Skimmer. Helping these beach denizens safely hatch and raise their chicks is deeply meaningful, and a captivating teaching opportunity for kids.

**Tips to help Shorebirds Survive & Thrive!**

- Give nesting birds plenty of space. Signs or volunteers usually alert us to nesting areas.
- Where pets are allowed on beaches, keep them leashed, away from birds and off dunes.
- Remove trash and food scraps, which attract foraging animals and potential predators.
- Stay on marked pathways, and do not traverse beach dunes or other nesting areas.

[Click here to view "Three Ways to Share the Shore" short video.](#)
More information from National Audubon Society about how to become a bird-friendly beachgoer.

Regularly scheduled birding field trips will resume in September. Share your bird sightings on our Bird Board and Facebook Bird Board.

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

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Featured Events
Advocate for the Birds!
APPLY now for “Bending the Curve”
— the FREE High School Edition
of our Award-winning Ambassador Program
June 14 Registration Deadline!

South Florida High School students who love the natural world can now foster “conservation through community” and earn service hours via the new summer edition of our award-winning Tropical Audubon Ambassador Program. The inaugural high school version of the environmental series was launched to help empower a new generation of young leaders to become more engaged, educated and effective environmental advocates.

Scheduled for July 1-20, 2024 and themed “Bending the Curve,” the curriculum is designed to inspire students to activate their “Tropical Audubon Ambassador” education to help halt and reverse biodiversity loss across South Florida.

Learning will be structured with a virtual Zoom component for remote flexibility and the ease of engaging online, and with in-person events to enhance networking and provide hands-on experiences.

In addition to earning up to 25 service hours, aspiring High School Ambassadors will receive comprehensive advocacy training from environmental experts, will gain a deeper
understanding of our region’s indigenous wildlife and our cornerstone ecosystems — The Everglades, Biscayne Bay, Pine Rocklands, and Tropical Hardwood Hammocks — learn new skills and network. A field trip to Everglades National Park will bring their studies to life.

**Tropical Audubon Society’s High School Ambassador Program is FREE thanks to our Conservation Sponsor Everglades National Park and to the financial support of The Miami Foundation, Everglades Foundation, Audubon in Action Grant, and the Ocean Reef Conservation Association.**

**Apply Today**

**Dine-in or Take-out @Whisk Gourmet**
Tuesday, June 11, 5-9pm

*El Paraiso — Whisk’s new signature June tequila cocktail*

Make a “Second Tuesday” of June, July or August dinner date at [Whisk Gourmet](#)
and *Whisk* will feather the proverbial Tropical Audubon Society (TAS) nest with 10 percent of its dinner revenues. The beloved bastion of Southern-accented American Comfort Food offers a refreshing summer menu, Indoor Dining or Outdoor Covered Seating options, and Take-out or Curbside-pick-up. (Deliveries are not eligible for this promotion.)

However you opt to dine, Executive Chef Michelle Minotti infuses her captivating signature cuisine with Cajun and Caribbean accents. Check out the daily fresh fish special, experience the melt-off-the-bone BBQ glazed pork loin ribs or Faroe Islands bourbon-glazed salmon, savor the *Whisk* tacos, local mango salad and fried conch appetizers, and don't dare miss the iconic fried green tomatoes.

*Whisk* has been a generous TAS community partner every summer since 2011, despite hurricanes and a change of ownership, so kindly let your server know how much you appreciate them. Their annual “Dine Out” series helps TAS protect the places South Floridians cherish — Biscayne Bay, Florida Bay and The Everglades.

**RESERVATIONS ARE RECOMMENDED** for all on-site dining. Call 786.268.8350

**Save July 9 and August 13 for two more opportunities to Dine Out for the Birds!**

This event takes place at [Whisk Gourmet 7382 SW 56 Avenue Miami FL 33143](https://www.whiskgourmetmiami.com)

Limited onsite free parking available.

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**Conservation News**

Chirp! Program debuts in April — designed to nurture a love for the Environment in youth from underserved communities
April 13 marked the launch of our new **Chirp!** program, an immersive, educational initiative designed to spark a lifelong love for the environment in youth from underserved and marginalized South Florida communities. Nurturing curious young minds with the wonders of birds and nature helps develop a meaningful connection to our region’s native flora and fauna, empowering future stewards of our natural world.

The free **Chirp!** Program cultivates environmental literacy by engaging youth ages 5 to 12 in hands-on educational activities. Topics include: Introduction to Birding, Native Plants and their Pollinators, Bird Adaptations, Bird Migration, Environmental Stewardship, and Climate Change.
Coordinated by TAS Education & Advocacy Director Dr. Stephanie Clements (*pictured above*) **Chirp!** is offered during the school year on the second Saturday of September through May (except February and December). Contact Stephanie at education@tropicalaudubon.org to schedule your group’s visit.

**Chirp! is supported in part by our founding funder, the Lynn and Louis Wolfson II Family Foundation and the Jacarlene Foundation.**

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**TAS presents data supporting Mangrove Island Rookery protections at Biscayne Bay Marine Health Summit**

TAS staff and board members have been surveying one of the last known active nesting rookeries in north Biscayne Bay since February, reporting the data gathered at Mangrove Island to relevant government agencies, including City of Miami, the island’s owner. Our Senior Conservation Director Lauren Jonaitis had the opportunity to present the results of her team’s monthly visits at the well-attended [Biscayne Bay Marine Health Summit](#) held May 20 at Jungle Island on Watson Island.
In the most recent April survey, she reported that 15 bird species were documented, with a total of 263 individuals spotted. Although the latter number represents a decrease from the 477 individuals counted in the March survey, it’s notable that Brown Pelicans and Double-crested Cormorants are still actively nesting on Mangrove Island, which serves as a lifeline and literal oasis for birds and other wildlife. Lauren summed up by underscoring TAS’s commitment to continue lobbying for better protections of this extant rookery and more active enforcement of the "Slow Speed Manatee Zone" that surrounds the rookery.

To prevent nest abandonment caused by human disturbance, we encourage you to also advocate for more aggressive and meaningful action to protect the island’s avian residents and migratory visitors. Please take action here!

*Photo: Surveying Mangrove Island by Stephanie Clements*

Pine Rocklands Tour shines spotlight on rare habitat & the urgent need to protect remnant patches of the imperiled forest
On the heels of legal and political victories that spared precious Pine Rocklands habitat from a proposed theme park development, a May 28 tour of three remnants of the once-mighty forest was staged to better educate federal and local officials involved in the decision-making that can facilitate preserving any remaining unprotected parcels.

Why preservation matters: Pine Rocklands are biodiverse and globally critically imperiled forests found only in South Florida and the Bahamas. Locally, the forest once encompassed nearly 200,000 acres, running the length of Miami-Dade County on a SW/NE axis. Today, less than a few thousand acres exist outside of Everglades National Park.

The immersive “field trip” commenced at Zoo Miami’s Pine Rockland preserve and was co-hosted by TAS, Center for Biological Diversity and Bat Conservation International. The tour progressed to Florida City Pineland (which showcased the importance of small patches of forest to the overall recovery of the ecosystem) and Everglades National Park. Along the way, participants were tutored by experts on the rarity, uniqueness and exceptional biodiversity of Pine Rocklands, on the threats to the ecosystem, how to protect it and the endangered South Florida species that rely on it to survive, and on the urgent need for future protections.

Losing our Pine Rocklands would mean losing a globally unique habitat and an ecosystem that embodies our region’s natural heritage.

Bird Key $31.5M Listing mobilizes Environmentalists — TAS presses to conserve the crucial Biscayne Bay sanctuary
The recent listing of Bird Key in north Biscayne Bay with a price tag of $31.5M has garnered global and local attention, and has alarmed the conservation community because the precious sliver of mangrove forest is zoned for residential development. As "South Florida's Voice of Conservation," TAS is proactively endeavoring to work with the seller, partner non-profits and key government agencies to avoid development that would impact wildlife, and instead achieve a viable conservation solution agreeable to all parties. Because of the private island's ideal location and critical habitats that also include the seagrass acreage that surrounds it, the unspoiled site serves as a marine sanctuary. Indeed, it’s the only natural island north of Rickenbacker Causeway that also lies within the Biscayne Bay Aquatic Preserve.

Marine and wading birds use Bird Key as a refuge and safe harbor. And because it’s surrounded by water, the birds who inhabit the island or stop over to rest and refuel here are protected from predatory mammals such as raccoons, rats and feral cats.


Plants for Birds
Bird-Friendly Gardening Day @TAS!
Dig in Saturday, June 15, 9am-Noon

Help steward our Bird-Friendly Demonstration Garden and 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).

*Photo: Native Coontie is the host plant for the Atala Butterfly. By Colin Knight*

RSVP for Bird-friendly Gardening Day

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**Chirping About**
Book Awards bestowed on TAS Board Member Kirsten Hines

We’re proud to share that our TAS board member and resident beekeeper Kirsten Hines has recently received two prestigious awards for her latest book, *Wild Florida: An Animal Odyssey*. The prolific author and wildlife photographer is also an Audubon Florida board member and a passionate conservationist. She has spent several years hiking and camping deep into Florida’s wild places, and more recently distilled those experiences into an award-winning photographic and narrative journey in *Wild Florida*. On April 25, her beautifully written and illustrated effort received the Gold Medal in Visual Arts for the Florida Book Awards held in Tallahassee (pictured above); on the weekend of April 26-27, *Wild Florida* scored First Place in the Nonfiction Book category at the National League of American Pen Women Biennial held in Columbus, Ohio.

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**Green Things to Do**
Leica Lounge “Little Landscapes” with Leslie Sternlieb
@Leica Store Miami
Friday, June 7, 7pm

Perch at Leica Store Miami for a Leica Lounge with Leslie Sternlieb, whose beguiling “Little Landscapes” feature macro interpretations of local botanicals. The Coral Gables native is June’s featured Customer Gallery Artist, and an avid photographer, journalist and “Exquisite Eons” founder. “Beauty can be mined from nearly everything” is her mantra, as reflected in her current works, which capture "all life stages of plants and flowers—from vibrant blooms to elegant decay." She’ll discuss equipment, technique (the magic that happens when shooting fairly wide open) and where she finds her daily inspiration.

Light refreshments will be served. This event is free and open to the public.

Leica Store Miami, 372 Miracle Mile, Coral Gables, 33134

RSVP
The Birds thank some very special folks ...

When the handle of our 1948 MJ-7 Frigidaire was torqued by a visitor unfamiliar with the unique mechanism, there was only one guy on the East Coast who could put the old girl right — John Jowers of Antique Appliances, the craftsman who so beautifully restored her in 2018. But John hangs his shingle in Clayton, Georgia, and the birds had no budget for shipping. What to do? First, lighten the load. Enter Scott Postupak of Round Tuit Carpentry, who volunteered to carefully remove the door from its vintage hinges for us.

Purchased by TAS benefactor Arden Hayes “Doc” Thomas, the mid-century fridge was among the home’s functioning appliances when TAS received his 2.2-acre estate post his December 31, 1975 death. Indeed, it hummed along into the early 2010s(!), so it was imperative to put its original door into good hands. Recruiting a reliable driver to ferry the precious cargo to and from Georgia was as easy as asking perennial volunteer
extraordinaire Mark Monroe, who mans the Bird Bar during concert season and helps stage the annual June Go-Native Plant Sale, among other duties. “I was happy to do it, I folded it into my trip to Springfield, Ohio, for the solar eclipse. John was good enough to fast-track the repair so I could pick it up on my way home,” Mark said. “He didn’t even give us a bill!”

The fix was so well executed that the fridge door now opens and closes more effortlessly than before, but it took a team of generous souls to make it happen. Folks such as John, Mark and Scott are the wind beneath our organization’s wings. We depend upon volunteers, members, community partners and big-hearted patrons to facilitate our conservation mission. To volunteer in any capacity — from gardening to leading tours, answering phones, stamping envelopes, writing letters or staging plant sales and hosting dinner parties — write to volunteer@tropicalaudubon.org ... the Birds will thank you!

Photo, top left: Repairing the refrigerator handle required shipment of the entire door back to Antique Appliances in Clayton, Georgia.

Photo, top right: Mark Monroe volunteered to drive the precious cargo north and south. He’s pictured here after his return to Miami with the refrigerator door back in place.

Photo inset: John Jowers fast-tracked the repair and gifted his time to the Birds.

Support Birds

Become a Member

www.tropicalaudubon.org

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