

TROPICAL AUDUBON SOCIETY



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May in the Field

As Spring Migration winds down this month, take advantage of our [MAY](#) birding events before this warm, breezy weather yields to sweltering summer heat!

Join us [May 6](#) for a chance to spot Mangrove Cuckoo, White-crowned Pigeon, Gray

Kingbird and Black-whiskered Vireo when we visit Key Largo Hammocks State Botanical site.

Global Big Day, a.k.a. World Migratory Bird Day, takes place on Saturday, May 13. 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](#).

Participating is easy! Stick close to home, or venture further afield. Songbirds are usually most active in the morning and late afternoon, but waterbirds are often conspicuous at any time of day. Although Spring Migration is now tapering off in South Florida, many species can still be spotted by simply being observant.

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.

To view our entire Spring 2023 trip schedule visit our [website calendar](#). Please note that [REGISTRATION](#) is required for all trips.

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

***Banner Photo:** Mangrove Cuckoo by Arend Trent. Look for one on our Key Largo Field Trip.*

RSVP for a May Field Trip

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

Saturday, May 6, 6:30am-12pm

[Phoebes Birding Bird Walk: Bill Baggs Cape Florida State Park](#)

Sunday, May 7, 8-10am

[Phoebes Birding Bird Walk: Markham Park](#)

Saturday, May 13 8-10am



RSVP for an International Field Trip

[Kenya Birding and Wildlife Tour](#) FULL | May 13 - 28, 2023

[Charm of the Colombian Andes - Birding the Coffee Triangle](#) FULL | July 23 - 31, 2023

[Peru, Spectacles of Nature: Birding Amazonia and the Andes](#) | Sept. 13-23, 2023

Photo: Andean cock-of-the-rock by Ian Segeba

Featured Events

Tour the historic Doc Thomas House

Saturday, May 6, 1 & 3pm



You're invited to tour our historic Doc Thomas House headquarters. The charming 1932 cottage has recently undergone extensive structural restoration and repair. Enjoy a captivating, 1-hour guided tour led by a Tropical Audubon docent. Learn about TAS patron and area pioneer Arden Hayes "Doc" Thomas and Robert Fitch Smith, the architect who designed the charming Florida vernacular cottage, distinguished by its native woods and oolitic limestone features.

Bonus: Explore our Bird-Friendly pollinator gardens and near-native Steinberg Nature Center grounds.

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 here.](#)

Birding 101 Family-friendly Workshop Simpson Park Memorial Garden Center Saturday, May 6, 1:30-3pm



Explore the Basics of Birdwatching with TAS Education & Advocacy Director Stephanie Clements at Simpson Park. Adults and children can learn how to use binoculars, find birds and identify some of South Florida's most common backyard bird species.

A limited number of loaner binoculars will be available, including child-friendly sizes, but if you own a pair, please bring them.

55 Southwest 17th Road, Miami, FL 33129

Registration is required for this FREE event.

[RSVP here](#). Limited to 40 participants.

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 help setting up, unloading plants and watering on June 1, 10am to Noon; arranging plants, placing signage and watering on June 2, 10am to 3pm; and June 3 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.

Chirping About

DAOU Vineyards wows
Walk in the Woods w/Wine & Whisk patrons



Our Spring 2023 New World edition of “Walk in the Woods with Wine & Whisk” wowed 38 patrons with the culinary artistry of *Whisk Gourmet* Executive Chef Michelle Minotti paired with the divine wines of California’s spectacular DAOU Vineyards. (*Cori & Luke Wolfson, pictured lower right, walking through the woods.*)

The enchanting alfresco evening was made possible thanks to the extremely generous support of presenting partners **A Joy Wallace Catering, DAOU Vineyards, Domaine Carneros, Republic National Distributing Company** (Wine Fairy Roxana Garciga, *pictured upper right, pouring*) and **Whisk Gourmet** (Chef Michelle Minotti, *pictured lower left, plating*), and to in-kind contributions from **Keez Beez, Misha's Cupcakes** and **Whole Foods Market Coral Gables**.

The Fall 2023 Old World edition of “Walk in the Woods with Wine & Whisk” is tentatively slated for November 8. To be added to the wait-list email events@tropicalaudubon.org.

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

Marius Robinson Bird Festival celebrates Spring Migration on Key Biscayne





Clockwise from top row, left:

A young birder practices using binoculars.

TAS Board Member Miguel Caridad & Senior Conservation Director Lauren Jonaitis tabling at the Marius Robinson Bird Festival.

CFBS Director Michelle Davis explains bird migration.

TAS President José Francisco Barros (left) with Marjory Stoneman Douglas Nature Center Director Theodora Long, Key Biscayne Community Foundation Director Melissa White, Marius Robinson's life partner Rosa Gardiner and other Marius Robinson family members.

One-hundred-plus peeps turned out to experience the wonders of birds, nature and science at the April 23 Marius Robinson Bird Festival at Bill Baggs Cape Florida State Park. Participants enjoyed expert talks, field sketching, games, prizes, book readings, binocular demonstrations, and learning about the Cape Florida Banding Station (CFBS), a community science project under the TAS wing since 2020.

Dedicated to the late Marius Robinson, a businessman, philanthropist, partner, father, grandfather, and naturalist who truly enjoyed Key Biscayne's natural treasures and avian life, the first-time festival was made possible by a generous donation from the Key Biscayne Life Enhancement Forum and with the help of our partner event organizers: [Biscayne Nature Center](#), [Cape Florida Banding Station](#), Florida State Parks, Friends of Cape Florida, [The Key Biscayne Community Foundation](#),

Led by CFBS Director Michelle Davis along with TAS staff, a score of volunteers also pitched in, among them; Roxanne Featherly; authors Marta Magellan and Debbie

Wanninkhof; Miguel Caridad, Steffanie Munguia, Rachel DiPietro; TAS field guides Eliana Ardila Kramer, José Francisco Barros, Luis Gonzalez, Marc Kramer and Brian Rapoza.

Birdstock ConCon Finale & Members Migration Celebration cap off Earth Month



On the final weekend of Earth Month 400+ TAS members and friends perched with the Birds on our 2.2-acre Steinberg Nature Center grounds.

Three captivating musical acts headlined Birdstock on April 29: *(pictured clockwise from*

top left) Acoustic Anarchy and solo singer-songwriters Guaico and Polina. All of these generous-spirited musicians lent their beautiful musical talents to our conservation cause.

Hospitality sponsor [Republic National Distributing Company](#) stocked our Bird Bar to overflowing on Saturday and Sunday. (*Pictured lower right, volunteer Mark Monroe pours Francois Lurton Sauvignon Blanc for Coral Gables Magazine Associate Publisher Amy Donner.*)



At April 30's annual Members Migration meeting sponsored by **Leica Store Miami**, sensational home-grown country artist Ricky Valido & The Hialeah Hillbillies (*pictured top right*) opened the festivities with a foot-stomping, hour-long concert. Emmy-award-winning WPLG Local 10 News Anchor Louis Aguirre (*pictured lower left*) followed Ricky with the afternoon's Keynote address. The founder of the "Don't Trash Our Treasure"

series gave a stirring, heartfelt speech about why education and messaging are crucial to saving South Florida's precious habitats, and how he was personally inspired to champion our region's natural treasures.

Next, four South Florida conservation heroes were honored in an awards ceremony that recognized them for going the extra mile to protect and preserve area wildlife, critical habitat and/or our region's natural resources. *Pictured lower right, from left: TAS volunteers Javier Prat and Martha Kent each received a Tropical Audubon Society Board Appreciation Award; MDC resident Amanda Prieto received the Polly Redford Citizen Conservation Award; Bill Baggs Cape Florida State Park Biologist Elizabeth Golden received the Daniel Beard Government Conservation Award.*

Between the program, grazing on *Sports Grill* sliders, sipping cups of Doc Tonic Punch and enjoying a Bird Walk, attendees also bid generously at the Silent Auction.

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

Conservation News

Legal Victory for Endangered Miami Tiger Beetle!



Last month the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service agreed to finalize critical habitat for the Endangered Miami tiger beetle by May 8. The April 10 announcement marked a legal victory for the Center for Biological Diversity, Miami Blue Chapter of the North American Butterfly Association and Tropical Audubon Society. Our region’s native beetle faces devastating habitat loss from unfettered development and sea-level rise.

“It has been a long time coming, but we are thrilled that this endemic species is finally receiving the much-needed critical habitat designation it needs to survive and, hopefully, thrive once again,” says TAS Senior Conservation Director Lauren Jonaitis. “This critical habitat designation benefits the Miami tiger beetle by protecting its primary home — the globally imperiled, crucially important Pine Rocklands habitat.” [Read the Media Advisory.](#)

Feather Friendly® window decal "demo" installed on Doc Thomas House front porch



Doc Thomas House's circa 1932 front porch mullion windows are now sporting anti-collision Feather Friendly® decals, serving as a model for raising awareness about preventing deadly bird strikes (most often associated with plain glass windows and doors). The life-saving decals were installed by TAS Board members Eliana Ardila Kramer and Marc Kramer (*pictured*). The "Birding by Bus" cofounders are also Feather Friendly® ambassadors who have mounted a South Florida effort to educate the public about the little-recognized crisis of soaring bird deaths caused by glass windows that are invisible to birds in flight. Raising awareness and compelling action is particularly crucial in Greater Miami, where glass-plated high-rise buildings are common, and are directly in the path of migrating birds traveling along the Atlantic Flyway.

Up to 1 billion birds are killed each year in the United States alone due to window collisions according to this [story](#) published by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology.

Why? Because migrating birds unfamiliar with their surroundings are unable to see exterior window glass in their search for hospitable habitat. Some birds are also attracted to reflective windows, mistaking them as an extension of the sky and/or tree canopy (*as*

illustrated above by the window reflection of the Lignum vitae located in our front yard). This inability to “see” and “recognize” glass often causes a bird to collide with a window at full speed, an impact that is usually fatal. When a bird is knocked out rather than killed, a feral cat will often reach the bird before it revives.

The good news is that there is a feasible, economic solution to this deadly crisis. Feather Friendly® decals are an easy-to-use product suitable for all residential and commercial windows.

The decal examples applied to the Doc Thomas House windows were donated by Feather Friendly® to help spread the message about simple ways of saving birds from senseless and preventable deaths. A limited number of Feather Friendly® decal packets will be made available for purchase at a special price at our June 3 Native Plant Sale.

For tips on how to prevent bird strikes at home or at work visit <https://www.featherfriendly.com>

Follow the Spring Banding Season finale at Cape Florida!



The northward migration of songbirds heading to breeding grounds in the Appalachians, Northeastern United States and Eastern Canada peaks between late April and early May. The Gray Catbirds who spent the winter with us have now mostly departed, but not without first serenading us with their beautiful songs. New faces are in town, however, including several brilliantly hued Indigo Buntings and Magnolia Warblers in their spring finery.

As of May 1, CFBS has now banded (or counted previously banded return visitors from other seasons) 597 birds of 29 species. Gray Catbirds remain the top species encountered, with Prairie Warblers and Ovenbirds close behind. Male Black-throated Blue Warblers and American Redstarts are also starting to move through Key Biscayne in larger numbers. They are a week or two ahead of the females because they are in a hurry to claim the best territories up North.

Perhaps the most unusual bird CFBS has banded thus far this season is a female Hooded Warbler — a species that primarily winters in Central America and crosses the Gulf of Mexico to breed in Southern swamps. Meanwhile, some of the local Northern Cardinals

are already feeding their fledglings in the Hardwood Hammock around the Station.

May promises to keep us busy. We expect a few special species, such as the Connecticut Warbler, to stop over, along with tens of thousands of female birds of various species passing through on their way north to join their mates in their respective breeding territories.

Keep up with what's happening at the Station on the [CFBS Blog](#).

Photo: An Indigo Bunting banded at the Cape Florida Banding Station shortly before being released.

Photo by Miriam Avello

Join “Lights Out Miami” —
Help Birds Survive Spring Migration!
Volunteers Needed!



Spring Migration in our region spans mid-March to mid-May as millions of birds

heading north to their breeding grounds pass through South Florida. Because migrating birds generally rest and forage during the day and travel at night using the stars as navigational aids, brightly lit cities impede their night vision, steer them off course, and can confuse and disorient them, often causing deadly collisions. Sadly, millions of birds are lost to building collisions in the U.S. each year.

To lower the mortality rate, TAS's "Lights Out Miami" initiative urges homeowners and building managers to turn off or block non-essential lights from 11 p.m. to sunrise through May 15 to protect migratory birds traveling through our region.

You can help! [Volunteer to be a bird collision data collector.](#) **Learn simple steps to reduce building collisions and take the [Lights Out Miami Homeowner's Pledge.](#)**

Plants for Birds

Bird-Friendly Gardening Day @TAS!
Dig in Saturday, May 20, 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 3, 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:

- Attend a Rain Barrel/Water Conservation Workshop with IFAS Extension, University of Florida. Registration required to attend the Rain Barrel workshop. Pre-purchase of rain barrels is highly recommended to guarantee June 3 delivery. [Click HERE to RSVP or to purchase a rain barrel, or both.](#)
- Learn about “Lights Out Miami” and how to make your windows bird-safe
- Explore our 2.2-acre Steinberg Nature Center campus
- Tour our historic Doc Thomas House
- Pack breakfast or lunch and perch in our oak-shaded picnic grove

The Birds Thank ...



STORE
MIAMI

The Birds thank [Leica Store Miami](#) for so generously underwriting our Annual “Bird Day” in February and our “Members Migration” meeting in April.

In addition to its financial support, Leica Store Miami graciously hosted a “Binoculars 101” table at our educational, family-oriented “Bird Day” event. Leica team members were also present at “Members Migration,” where they provided loaner binoculars and pointers to attendees of the TAS-led bird walk on our Steinberg Nature Center campus.

Over the years, our highly valued Community Partner's kindnesses have also included organizing and/or sponsoring birding adventures for TAS members, and sponsoring the Miami Christmas Bird Count (CBC) with the loan of binoculars, scopes and cameras, and underwriting the post-count wrap dinner. We remain humbled by Leica Store Miami's abiding generosity.

Located on Miracle Mile, the independently owned shop and gallery specializes in the world's finest photographic and sports optics gear. It hosts local and destination boot camps and workshops, as well as in-store events designed to enhance your Birding experiences.

Visit [Leica Store Miami](#) on-site or on-line soon and "Bird with the Best." Supporting those vendors who support TAS is an easy way to contribute to our Mission. The birds will thank you

Support Birds

Become a Member

www.tropicalaudubon.org



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