TAS NATIVE PLANT SALE

Sat.-Sun., Feb 18 & 19, 2006
Native Plant Sale at the Doc Thomas House

Did your garden lose trees and bushes in last summer's Hurricanes? Now you can restore your landscaping in a way that also supports South Florida's urban wildlife.

Go Native! Kick-start conservation at home by purchasing some native plants at the next Tropical Audubon Society Native Plant Sale. Plants available for sale are perfect for creating bird, butterfly and wildlife habitat and also help to conserve water. Experts will be on hand for advice. All proceeds support TAS. The gate opens both days at 9 am. Saturday we close at 5 pm, Sunday at 3 pm.

The South Miami-Dade Watershed Study and Plan

By Cynthia Guerra

For several years, the Tropical Audubon Society has been dutifully serving on the South Miami-Dade Watershed Plan Advisory Committee. The Committee is charged with providing stakeholder input into the Watershed Study and Plan, an ambitious effort to create a blueprint for the future of south Miami-Dade County (which includes almost all of the county south of SW 8th Street). In light of the current campaign by developers to expand the Urban Development Boundary, the completion of the Watershed Plan is taking on new urgency and significance.

The Watershed Study originated from the need to protect Biscayne Bay, Biscayne National Park and Miami-Dade County from current water quality and quantity problems caused by past practices, and potential water impacts posed by future development. It is meant to be a comprehensive study that analyzes and projects surface and groundwater uses and corresponding land uses, including water uses for sustaining and restoring the environment, sustaining economically viable agriculture, providing flood protection, and supplying and protecting drinking water and other water. The final plan is required to meet the following objectives:

- Identify and protect lands, including their uses and functions, that are essential for preserving the environ-

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In Memoriam

Virginia Edens 1943 – 2005
Submitted by Ute Vladimir

We remember Virginia: intense, informed, full of energy, enthusiasm, and strongly held convictions, tempered with Southern graciousness, a big smile and respect for all living creatures. For a few short years, 1987 - 1993, Virginia was a vital and strong presence on our Board of Directors and the South Florida environmental community. She organized the very successful 1991 Wetlands Conference at FIU. Her great loves were the outdoors: the base-line bird surveys of the Deering Estate were the result of her weekly observations. We miss her.

Taylor R. Alexander 1915 – 2005
Submitted by Tom Lodge

Taylor R. Alexander, a noted plant ecologist and early explorer in Everglades science, died November 30, 2005. Born in Hope, Arkansas on May 27, 1915, he received several noteworthy degrees including his Ph.D. in plant physiol-

(Continued on page 6)
Several local birding hotspots were severely impacted by Hurricane Wilma’s late-October passage through South Florida. Hardest hit was Flamingo in Everglades National Park, where storm surge covered the area in a thick layer of Florida Bay marl. Though cleanup continues, that part of the Park remains off-limits to the public. Arrangements were made to allow entry for the annual Coot Bay and Long Pine Key Christmas Bird Counts. Other areas closed by the storm, such as the Deering Estate and Wakodahatchee Wetlands, reopened in a matter of days or weeks. The closures, power outages, gas shortages and curfews wreaked havoc on the TAS events calendar, forcing the cancellation of a number of field trips.

Inland seabird reports are not uncommon during severe storms. A Pomarine Jaeger was seen in West Kendall during Wilma’s passage. Good numbers of southbound migrants were reported in the days after the storm, especially in the Keys. The day after the hurricane, an Ash-throated Flycatcher was found in Tavernier and a Zone-tailed Hawk (!) was spotted during a Marathon hawk watch. A week later, two Nashville Warblers were reported from the parking lot of a pizza parlor in Key Largo. A Hooded Warbler, along with several other migrants, made themselves at home around a dumpster at Kendall Indian Hammocks Park. A Black-headed Gull was discovered at Cutler Wetland in the days before the storm, along with a Franklin’s Gull. Double-digit numbers of Franklin’s Gulls appeared at the wetlands in the weeks following Wilma. Also seen there was a small flock of American Avocets.

Though Lucky Hammock (just outside Everglades National Park) was not spared the wrath of Wilma, the area continued to attract good birds. A number of sparrows were reported in November from that location, including Vesper, Grasshopper, Clay-colored, Swamp, Lincoln’s and White-crowned. Also seen there during the month were Bell’s Vireo, Least Flycatcher, Yellow-breasted Chat and Blue Grosbeak. Later in the month, Lesser Nighthawks, recorded there in large numbers last winter, were once again being seen over the area at dusk. Common Nighthawks were seen and heard over a Homestead shopping plaza in early December. If verified, this will be the first winter record for Common Nighthawk in Florida. Western Kingbirds and Scissor-tailed Flycatchers were reported from their usual winter location, near CR 9336 in Homestead.

Common Loon and Horned Grebe were reported off the coast at a number of locations during the season. Southbound flocks of Northern Gannets were a common sight offshore. A White-winged Scoter was seen in mid-November near Black Point. Two Surf Scoters were photographed during an early-December fishing trip off of Key Biscayne. Several puddle ducks were recorded from Dump Marsh near Black Point, including Gadwall, American Wigeon, Northern Pintail and Northern Shoveler. A duck seen at Cutler Wetlands and believed by its discoverers to be a Cinnamon Teal, was the subject of considerable debate. Farther afield, Eurasian Wigeon were being seen again this winter at Eagle Lakes Park in Naples.

Other Collier County reports from the period include Cassin’s Kingbird and Vermilion Flycatcher, both from CR 858 in the extreme eastern end of the county. Blue-winged and Nashville Warblers were found in early December at Topeekeegee Yugnee Park in southern Broward County. On that same day, the Carolina Chickadee first reported at Greyond’s Park in mid-September was re-found there. Smooth-billed Anis, now difficult to find anywhere in south Florida, were seen in early November near I-95 in Miami Shores. Sadly, the resident anis at the park near Ft Lauderdale Airport may have disappeared.

Hopefully, the Flamingo area will re-open in early 2006 and the TAS events calendar, which includes several winter ENP trips, will return to normal. Please join us on these and other trips planned for upcoming months. Look for trip reports, plus results from the Christmas Bird Counts, in the next bulletin. For immediate information, check the TAS Bird Board at www.tropicalaudubon.org

Tropical Audubon Society's Birdathon Report

Tropical Audubon Society’s Birdathon is coming in April. Bird for up to 24 consecutive hours anytime during April 15 through the 30th. Collect pledges per bird seen or for the whole day. Win prizes! Stay tuned for more information about our exciting Birdathon…fun teams, good prizes, all day birding and all for a good cause!

Tropical Audubon Society (TAS) is a group of dedicated citizens who care about the quality of South Florida’s environment. Established in 1947, we are a chapter of National Audubon Society and Florida Audubon Society. Our headquarters, the Doc Thomas House, is a Dade County Historic site on three sub-tropical acres of native habitat in South Miami.

Tropical Audubon Society’s purposes are:

1) Conservation: to work for the protection and restoration of the natural world and to promote wise stewardship of natural resources, especially native plants and animals and their habitats.

2) Education: to promote, among members and the public of all ages, an understanding and appreciation of nature, the environment, and ecological relationships.

3) Enjoyment: as a society of members with compatible interests, to enjoy together the study and protection of nature. We believe in the wisdom of nature’s design. We seek to foster and promote ecological concern/deemnism in our community.

Editor: Jen Lindsley
Trek, Top Publishing: Steven Mumford

Tropical Audubon Bulletin, the official newsletter of the Tropical Audubon Society, is published bimonthly by the Tropical Audubon Society, a non-profit, 501(c) (3) tax-exempt organization. Throughout this newsletter, “TAS” refers to the Tropical Audubon Society, while “DTH” refers to the Doc Thomas House, the site of our office located at 8530 Sw 172nd Drive, Miami, Florida 33157. The phone number is (305) 667-7337. Membership rate, $20 per year. Please make your check payable to Tropical Audubon Society, and mail to our office (address above). Articles, news of events, original drawings, and letters to the Editor are welcomed, and should be submitted to the TAS office 4 weeks prior to each by-monthly publication. It should be unaltered if your copy was submitted via the internet. See the About TAS section of our website for more information.

Visit Tropical Audubon on the internet at: tropicalaudubon.org
The following generous individuals and organizations have contributed to TAS since the last Bulletin. As always, we greatly appreciate your support!

**Roseatte Spoonbill** ($1000 to $4999)
- Karsten & Carol Rist

**Great White Heron** ($500 to $999)
- Richard & Joyce Newman
- Jay Seber

**Purple Gallinule** ($250 to $499)
- Lisa Blackwelder
- Phil & Fran Guerra

**Painted Bunting** ($100 to $249)
- Anonymous
- John Atkinson
- Donna Bahr-Landsea
- John & Ellen Barrett
- Edward J Briois
- Toby & Mel Davidow
- George D. Gann
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- Mary Munroe Seabrook
- Susan Staiger
- Jeannie & George Van Wyck
- Ferdinand Phillips
- David Anderson
- Melanie Merriman
- Gary Hunt

**White-Crowned Pigeon** ($59 to $99)
- Anonymous
- Raul Jidy
- Martha Andren
- John & Laura Camp
- Susan Cunins
- Adam Lawrence
- Roxanne Featherly
- Lora Fleming
- Elizabeth Golden
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By now, you should have received a Year-End Annual Fund Appeal letter from us. As you can see from our donors list, many of you have responded generously and for that we are extremely grateful. Tropical Audubon may be a small, non-profit organization, but we accomplish so much more than our little budget would suggest possible. We rely on our Board of Directors, and you – our members – to support the work we do.

Our annual operating budget is less than $90,000 per year. If all our members sent in $40, we could easily meet that goal. In 2006, we face some additional expenses as we seek to restore the historic Doc Thomas House and Botanical Garden, which suffered damage from Hurricanes Katrina and Wilma.

Please take this opportunity to send your tax deductible contribution to TAS at 5530 Sunset Drive, Miami, FL, 33143. Every dollar you send to us stays with TAS to support our important conservation work in Miami-Dade County. As always, we appreciate your generosity!
The 2000-mile Great Florida Birding Trail is nearing completion with the opening of the South Florida loop in 2006. The Trail is a conservation tool fueled by the rapidly expanding sport of birdwatching. More than 445 premier birdwatching sites throughout Florida were chosen based on their quality of experience and resilience, and compiled into trail guides representing four geographic regions. East Florida debuted in 2000, followed by West Florida, and the Panhandle; the South and final section will be unveiled on January 14, 2006, at a dedication celebration at Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary in Naples.

South Florida guarantees remarkable birding experiences, with specialty species like snail kites, mangrove cuckoos and smooth-billed anis. Its coastlines act as migration superhighways for shorebirds, songbirds and birds of prey. Caribbean birds like thick-billed vireos and Bahama mockingbirds stray to our mainland. And of course, the expansive Everglades shelter an abundance of birds, most notably Florida’s signature herons and egrets.

The completion of this final section is a conservation coup, harnessing the might of Florida tourism to benefit our delicate wildlands. Come learn more about this important program, its offerings and successes, and get a taste-whetting glimpse of what the South Florida Birding Trail has in store for your next trip! For more information, please visit www.floridabirdingtrail.com.

FLORIDA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY
ANNOUNCEMENTS

†The Dade Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society meets on January 24 at 7:30 p.m. at Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden (social time 7:15). Dan Castillo and Ricardo Zambrano from the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission will discuss feral cat colonies in public lands.

†On February 28, Dr. Len Scinto of the SE Environmental Research Center at FIU will discuss the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan. The meetings are free and open to the public.

†Don’t miss NATIVE PLANT DAY on March 4 at the Deerfield Estate at Cutler! Call 305-255-6404 for more information or visit http://dade.fnpschapters.org.

TAS General Meeting Schedule

General Meetings are held the 2nd Wed. of every month. Members and non-members alike are welcome to join us at the Doc Thomas House (5530 Sunset Dr., Miami) for our monthly meetings. The doors open at 7:30pm and the presentations begin at 8pm. Below is the schedule for November - December. If you would like to suggest an idea for a future presentation, please call 305-667-7337.

Nancy Moreland, teacher at MAST Academy and amateur nature photographer, will present slides of birds and wildlife from her trip to Antarctica.

Wed., Feb. 8 — Dr. Peter Merritt: “Birds of the Bahamas”
Dr. Peter G. Merritt will show video and discuss the ecology and distribution of birds that he recently videotaped in the islands of the Bahamas, including Abaco, Andros, Eleuthera, Grand Bahama, Great Inagua, and San Salvador. The presentation will feature many Bahamian specialties, and include rare video footage of the endangered Kirtland’s Warbler in its winter habitat on Eleuthera, the rare Brown-headed Nuthatch on Grand Bahama Island, and seabird colonies off the coast of San Salvador.

South Florida Birding Trail Opening Soon!

Mark Kiser, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

Want to learn about native plants, help Tropical Audubon maintain our native landscape at the Doc Thomas House and get your hands dirty? We need you! Show up anytime between 8:30-noon and you will find a host of hard workers. This is a great opportunity for students to earn community service hours.

Workdays will be held January 14 and February 11.

FLORIDA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY

TAS is looking for a bilingual volunteer program manager for its Fishing Line Recycling Program. You must have a car, as this position requires visits county marinas and other facilities to check on our recycling bin stations. If you are interested, please e-mail Cynthia at director@tropicalaudubon.org or call 305-667-7337.

TAS FUN DAYS

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It's that time of year again - the dry season! That means we all should do what we can to conserve water. Miami-Dade Water and Sewer can help, with a free water conservation kit available to residents of the county. Remember, if you are saving water, you are saving money and the environment.

The free water conservation kit includes the following:
- Water Flow Restrictor - helps you save water in the shower
- Incredible Bowl Saver - helps you save water by ensuring your toilet tanks are filled to the correct level
- Faucet Aerator - helps you save as much as 5.5 gallons per minute at the faucet
- Leak Detector Tablets - helps save water by finding leaks in your toilet

The South Miami-Dade Watershed Study and Plan

TAS members joined members of the Dade Chapter of the Native Plant Society, the Miami Blue Chapter of the North American Butterfly Association and TREEmendous at A.D. Barnes Park to celebrate nature, the organizations, and the Holidays. A splendid time was had by all!

Conserve Water
Save Money and the Environment!

You can get your free water conservation kit - and a whole bunch of water conservation information - by calling the WASD Waterline at 305-448-SAVE or visit our website at www.miamidade.gov click on "Find a department," then click on "Water and Sewer."

Update on the Urban Development Boundary

Despite a mayoral veto urging the County Commission to preserve the Urban Development Boundary in its current form and alignment, the County Commission voted to transmit the applications to move the UDB to the state's Department of Community Affairs for further review. This review process will continue through the end of February.

The applications will come back to the Planning Advisory Board in March 2006 and the County Commission in April 2006. These two public hearings will decide the ultimate fate of the UDB. TAS urges you to stay involved. Keep contacting your County Commissioner and remind them to Hold the Line! We had tremendous public involvement at the meetings in November, it is critical that the public stay engaged. Check our website for more information – www.tropicalaudubon.org

The South Miami-Dade Watershed Study and Plan

(Continued from page 1)

mental, economic, and community values of Biscayne National Park;
- Identify and establish mechanisms for protecting constitutional private property rights of landowners;
- Support a viable, balanced economy including agriculture, recreation, tourism, and urban development in the Plan area; and
- Assure compatible land uses and zoning decisions in the Study Area consistent with long term objectives for a sustainable South Miami-Dade.

At the December 22, 2005 meeting the Committee was asked to discuss strategies for formulation of the preferred scenario. The preferred scenario will define where future development should and should not occur in south Dade. Because of the diversity of the Committee, it is not hard to imagine that the development of the preferred scenario may be a contentious process. TAS will continue to advocate for the National Park, Biscayne Bay and ecosystem conservation. It is critical that members of the public interested in seeing the environmental benefits promised by the Plan be engaged in the process. Information on future meeting dates can be obtained from Bob Daniels with the South Florida Regional Planning Council at 800-985-4416, or you can call TAS at 305-667-7337 for more information.
In Memoriam

(Continued from page 1)

ogy and ecology from the University of Chicago (1941). Dr. Alexander taught at the University of Miami and, after his retirement, worked with the consulting company, Tropical Bioindustries. Among many accomplishments, Dr. Alexander served on Governor Kirk's Committee on Natural Resources and as an advisor for Florida's Endangered Land Purchasing Program. In 2002 he received Florida Native Plant Society's Mentor Award. He published two books, Botany and Ecology, and many periodical publications and research reports. His final publication was an introduction, entitled "Recollections," in the second edition of The Everglades Handbook: Understanding the Ecosystem by Thomas E. Lodge. He is survived by his two daughters, Barbara Eve Close and Birdie A. Bernetin, and three grandchildren, Robert Taylor Bernetin, and Charles and Kathryn Close.

Selected Field Trips Now Accessible to Spanish Speakers

Spanish-Language Birding Guide Now Available

Renowned birder Kenn Kaufman has produced a Spanish translation of his field guide to North American birds: Guia de Campo Kaufman: A Las Aves Norteamericanas, just out this year. Selected TAS field trips from the regular list will now offer at least one Spanish-speaking leader equipped with this book to welcome new enthusiasts. Invite your Spanish-speaking friends and neighbors! Kaufman has made this book available at a discount to Audubon chapter leaders, and TAS will be offering it for sale at cost ($10). Look for it at the selected field trips, the plant sales, and the monthly programs.

Excursiones de Campo Para Personas de Habla Hispana

Kaufman, pajarero de fama internacional, ha traducido al español su Guia de Campo Kaufman: A Las AvesNorteamericanas. TAS ha seleccionado ciertas excursiones (de su lista anual) donde participa un líder de habla hispana quien tenga este libro para poder asistir a los nuevos entusiastas. Invite a sus amigos y vecinos de habla hispana. Kaufman le ha proporcionado copias de su libro a Audubon, y TAS lo ofrecera a la venta al costo ($10). Lo encontrara en excursiones selectas, las ventas de plantas y las charlas mensuales.

Tropical Audubon Society

530 Sunset Drive
Miami, Florida 33143

SAS Calendar

CALENDAR OF WALKS, WORKDAYS, FESTIVALS, SALES, CLASSES - EVERYTHING YOU EVER WANTED TO DO WITH TROPICAL AUDUBON SOCIETY

The specifics for Tropical's ongoing activities are indicated below. In some cases, the trip leader has included his email address and phone number for direct contact. Otherwise, please call TAS at 305-667-PEEP (7337) or email tas-info@tropicalaudubon.org, or see our web page http://tropicalaudubon.org for more information.

Sat., Jan. 7 — South Dade Birding
Raul Urgelles will lead this all day carpool trip, which may include stops at Lucky Hammock, My Krome Park, and Dump Marsh. Meet at 7:00am in the parking lot of the Burger King on US1 in Florida City (just after the end of the turnpike). Bring lunch.

Sat., Jan. 21 — Wakodahatchee / Loxahatchee NWR Birding
John Boyd will lead this carpool trip. Meet at 6:30am at the east gate (SW 55th Ave.) of the Doc Thomas property (5530 Sunset Drive, Miami) or at 7:45am at Wakodahatchee Wetlands (13026 Jog Road, Delray Beach.) Bring lunch. There is an entrance fee.

Sat., Jan. 28 — Everglades National Park Birding
This is an all day carpool trip with Ellen and Todd Snow. Meet in the parking lot of the Coe Visitor Center at Everglades National Park at 7:30am. There is an entrance fee to the park. Bring lunch.

Sat., Feb. 4 — North Broward Birding
NEW! John Hutchison will lead this carpool trip to birding locations in northern Broward County. Meet at 8:00am at Fern Forest Nature Center, 201 Lyons Road South, Coconut Creek (just south of Atlantic Boulevard and west of Florida's Turnpike.) Bring lunch.

Sat., Feb. 11 — Everglades National Park Beginning Bird Walk
Jeff Weber will lead this trip. Meet in the parking lot of the Coe Visitor Center at Everglades National Park at 7:30am. There is an entrance fee to the park. Bring lunch.

Sun., Feb. 12 — Fakahatchee Strand State Reserve Nature Walk
Meet at the Preserve HQ. Wear sturdy shoes and long pants. Be prepared to wade. Bring water, a hat, bug spray, and snacks. A walking stick can be helpful. A change of clothes and shoes at the end is suggested. Rating: moderate to difficult, trail can be wet and muddy. Space is limited to 20. Reservations required by January 29, call early. Leader: Rick Cohen. Call 305-667-7337 or e-mail Rick at rickc@tropicalaudubon.org for more information. Fee: $13.00 members, $15.00 non-members.

Sat., Feb. 18 — Lake Wales Ridge Birding
Led by Ellen and Todd Snow, this is an all-day carpool trip to Archbold Biological Station and Highland Hammock State Park. Meet at 6:00am at the Tri-Rail station at Griffin Road off I-95. Call 954-926-0265 for more information.

Sat., Feb. 25 — Marco Island Birding
Brian Rapoza will lead this all day carpool trip, which will include stops at Big Cypress Bend boardwalk, Eagle Lake Park, and Tigertail Beach. Meet at 6:30am at the east gate (SW 55th Ave.) of the Doc Thomas property (5530 Sunset Drive, South Miami). Bring lunch. Shared gasoline costs, plus $4.00 per vehicle at Tigertail Beach. Bring lunch and wading footwear.

Tropical Audubon Society

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