



Tropical Audubon Bulletin

Newsletter of the Tropical Audubon Society



5530 Sunset Drive; Miami, Florida 33143

(305) 666-5111

November/December 2002

It costs money to do good !

by Karsten Rist, TAS Treasurer

When it comes to environmental issues in Dade County, Tropical Audubon is where it ought to be - right in the middle of the action. Thanks to our executive director, Cynthia Guerra, we have a voice when it comes to new development proposals or to one of the many projects of the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP). We are doing all of this work on a shoestring budget. Here is what our 2002 income and expenditures look like:

INCOME

Director's Contributions	\$17,000	21%
Major Donors	\$17,000	21%
Appeal Letters	\$12,000	15%
Endowment Income	\$10,800	13%
Membership	\$8,000	10%
Plant Sales	\$6,900	9%
Dry Tortugas	\$6,140	8%
Birdathon	\$3,230	4%
TOTAL INCOME	\$81,070	100%

Notice that the "Endowment Income", the legacy left to us by past members of the society, is an important part of our budget and helps us to maintain our current operations. Your annual membership dollars support mainly the subscription to Audubon Magazine and the important programs of the National Audubon Society. The share of the membership dues returned from NAS to Tropical pays most of the cost of publishing the Tropical Audubon Bulletin. We depend on your membership to make our advocacy efforts stronger and on your generous contributions to support our continuing operations. Tropical

EXPENSES

Payroll / Taxes	\$43,060	53%
Insurance, Audit, Office	\$14,580	18%
Doc Thomas House	\$10,400	13%
Bulletin	\$9,200	11%
Program Expenses	\$3,700	5%
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$80,940	100%

thanks you and asks you to please remember the importance of every small and large donation when the next appeal letter arrives in your mailbox.

Why Become a Member of Tropical Audubon?

In this issue, we have focused on the work being done by Tropical Audubon and the importance of membership. The mailing list includes not only current members, but many expired ones who we hope to welcome back into our folds. We also suggest that you consider giving Audubon memberships as holiday gifts. Here's a quick list of the reasons why every membership in Audubon counts:

- Elected officials listen to membership organizations because they represent groups of voters. Your name on our rosters makes our voice stronger.
- Membership dues help maintain our important operations.
- Our mailings will keep you in the loop and you can become more active as desired.
- Membership provides you with the opportunity to support a cause which promotes the conservation ideals in which you believe.

Become a member of Tropical Audubon today!

Brian Rapoza's Birding Roundup

It's hot, it's sticky, it's rainy and it's buggy. Yes, it's south Florida in the summertime. A perfect excuse to head to our beautiful beaches. Home of sun, sand, surf and . . . shorebirds!

Most of south Florida's beaches attract at least a few shorebirds, gulls and terns year round. Beaches with mudflats, such as Crandon Beach on Key Biscayne offer more variety, as well as the chance for something unusual. Reported there over the course of the summer were a possible Ruff, plus Dunlin, Lesser Black-backed Gull (with up to 11 seen in June) and Common and Gull-billed Tern. An even better selection of shorebirds can be found at beaches on Florida's west coast, such as Ft. Myers Beach or Tigertail Beach on Marco Island. A mid-August visit to Tigertail produced nineteen species of shorebirds, including Whimbrel and American Avocet.

Not all shorebirds are found at the beach, though. Flooded fields in the agricultural areas of south Florida are also magnets for migrating shorebirds. The farmlands around the Homestead racetrack once again proved productive. Northbound White-rumped and Buff-breasted Sandpipers visited in early June, while southbound shorebirds seen in the area in August included Stilt, Pectoral, and Solitary Sandpipers. August visits to the agricultural areas south of Lake Okeechobee in Palm Beach County also produced sightings of a variety of southbound shorebirds, including sod-loving Upland Sandpipers. Other birds seen in the area were Barn Owl, Smooth-billed Ani, King Rail, and, most unexpectedly, a Tyrannid flycatcher assumed to be a Tropical Kingbird.

More Upland Sandpipers, as well as other species of shorebirds were seen later in the month in the plowed fields near Lucky Hammock, in Frog Pond Wildlife Management Area outside Everglades National Park. This area also attracted several

southbound passerines during the month, including a well-photographed Black-billed Cuckoo. Two days later, a pair of juvenile Mississippi Kites were seen soaring over the hammock. Also seen there late in the month were calling Alder Flycatchers, Orchard Oriole, Lark Sparrow, Blue Grosbeak, and several warbler species, among them a Prothonotary. Another Prothonotary warbler was spotted at Enchanted Forest in north Dade during the month. August also produced a variety of early fall migrants at A. D. Barnes Park, including Louisiana Waterthrush, Kentucky, Hooded and Blackburnian Warbler, Painted Bunting and Chuck-wills Widow.

A pair of late August trips on the *Gulf Lady* out of Islamorada provided birders with a long overdue south Florida pelagic experience. While seabirds were not abundant, participants were treated to outstanding views of several species, including Greater, Cory's and Audubon's Shearwaters. Other species sighted were Wilson's and Band-rumped Storm Petrel, Arctic, Roseate, Bridled, Sooty, and Black Terns, Brown Noddies and Brown Boobies.

Early September produced sightings of Wilson's Phalaropes at several locations, including Flamingo and the now off-limits East Everglades water retention areas on SW 232 street in south Dade.

Passerine sightings in September included Alder, Acadian, and Least Flycatchers (plus several individual of this difficult group left unidentified to species), Veery, Gray-cheeked and Swainson's Thrushes, plus a wide variety of warblers, including Canada (several), Cerulean, Swain-

son's, Kentucky, Prothonotary, Chestnut-sided, and Yellow-breasted Chat. Key West was once again a hotspot for southbound migrants, including a rarely seen in Florida Yellow-green Vireo. The bird was seen only once, and could not be relocated.

A little over a week later, Key West produced the season's most incredible sighting, Florida's first record of Slaty-backed Gull. Normally found in northern Japan and the Kamchatka Peninsula, and occasionally seen in Alaska, the gull was first spotted on Higgs Beach by birders participating in the annual North American Fall Migration Count. Though somewhat ragged in appearance when found, it seems quite content in its balmy new home, allowing close-up views and posing for photographs taken by a steady stream of visitors. Let's hope its in no particular hurry to return home.

How long will we have to wait for the next once-in-a-lifetime bird to appear in south Florida? As we head into fall, anything can happen, and usually does. Remember, the surest way to keep up with the latest sightings is to keep your binoculars focused on the Miami Bird Board, found on the TAS website at

<http://www.tropicalaudubon.org>.

HOUSE FOR SALE

Tropical Audubon Bulletin reader Ruth Wendenburg and her husband, a structural engineer by profession, are selling the house which they have been building since 1994. It is their retirement dream home, a labor of love, which is secluded and remote, on 5 acres of land 4 miles from the Bay at 14993 SW 364 St. The house runs on windmill and solar power and, since they began construction after Andrew, is built to withstand a hurricane. There are 2 bedrooms and 2 baths in 1600 square feet. Outside is a 700 sq.ft partially covered patio with a tile and wood deck. The house is 10 ft. above ground to prevent flooding. Due to poor health, the Wendenbergs must move back to civilization. They dearly hope to find some enterprising nature lovers to buy their home.

Please contact Mrs. Wendenburg at 786 210 5954.

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 subtropical acres of native habitat in South Miami.

Tropical Audubon's purposes are:

- 1) Conservation: to work toward protection of the natural world and to promote wise stewardship of natural resources, especially native plants and animals and their habitat.
- 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 conscientiousness in our community.

Editor: Cathy Coates
Layout: 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 5530 Sunset

Drive; Miami, Florida 33143. The phone number is (305) 666-5111. Membership rate, \$20 per year. Please make your checks 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 would be preferable if your copy were submitted via the internet. See the "About TAS" section of our website for more information.

Visit Tropical Audubon on the internet at:
<http://tropicalaudubon.org>

TAS Executive Director's Report

By Cynthia Guerra

When the Tropical Audubon Board of Directors made the decision to fill the position of Executive Director, they reaffirmed their commitment to the mission and goals of TAS. Volunteers like the Board Members make a critical contribution to TAS, but a full-time staff member puts a face on the organization and ensures that TAS is active on a daily basis.

One of the first things I did when coming to work at Tropical Audubon was to re-read the mission statement. I had read it before, and you may have as well. It is always published in the Bulletin. Our priorities are outlined: Conservation, Education and Enjoyment. With this directive so clearly stated, I had no problem getting to work.

Below is a summary of my activities since coming on board. While reading, please remember that this work is directed by the mission statement and the desires of the Board of Directors, but supported through memberships and donations. Our efforts to protect the environment in Miami-Dade County would not be able to continue without memberships and gifts. And our voice would not be so powerful without a long and strong list of those supporters. You count!

EVERGLADES PROTECTION:

* I attend public meetings, and review planning and project documents pertaining to the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CEPR). CERP is the nation's largest environmental restoration project and the success of CERP will be dependent upon the active participation of groups like TAS. It is important that TAS apply pressure on State and Federal agencies, reminding them to keep CERP on-track for Everglades restoration, rather than turning it into a flood control and water supply project for urban and agricultural areas.

* I monitor permitting and regulatory decisions that can have an impact on CERP, like the recent authorization of Lennar's Lakes by the Bay, a large residential development in an area that is needed for a critical CERP project that will benefit Biscayne Bay. You can check out our website for more info on this permitting decision and how you can help.

* I represent TAS in the Everglades Coalition (EvCo). EvCo is a large group of environmental conservation organizations which are active in the CERP process. The benefit of working with and through the Coalition is that we collectively represent hundreds of thousands of people and we advocate for the protection and restoration of the Everglades on their behalf. Because we represent so many people that care about the Everglades, public officials involved with CERP pay attention to EvCo. For example, the Coalition was recently invited to testify before the Committee on Environment and Public Works of the United States Senate. CERP is a tremendously large and complicated plan, and by working together, we ensure that all aspects of the plan are being monitored.

BISCAYNE BAY:

* I represent TAS on the Biscayne Bay Regional Restoration Coordination Team (BBRRCT). BBRRCT is charged with preserving, protecting, and enhancing Biscayne Bay and its connected waters so that the ecological and aesthetic values of Biscayne Bay may endure for the enjoyment of future generations. The team works to integrate and coordinate restoration, enhancement and preservation projects, so that the Bay and its watershed are able to maintain a functioning and healthy ecosystem. For the past two years, BBRRCT has laid the groundwork for important activities to take place for the benefit of Biscayne Bay, such as water quality monitoring and

(Continued on page 4)

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Director's Report

(Continued from page 3)

analysis, habitat restoration, education, and outreach.

* I am actively involved in monitoring City of Miami plans for the development of portions of Virginia Key, as well as the proposed Miami River Dredging, Biscayne National Park's General Management Plan and the Fisheries Management Plan. I am also working with Florida Sea Grant to bring a monofilament recycling program to Miami-Dade County. So far, we have distributed about 30 free collection containers to boat/bait retail outlets for disposal of used fishing line. This material is sent to a manufacturer which processes the used line to create nylon pellets for use in other products. This is a self-sustaining program. The manufacturer sends the retail outlet a new container every time they receive a full one (at no cost to the outlet). Soon, we hope to get outdoor collection bins mounted at fishing piers, boat ramps and marinas. The reduction of this material in the environment will mean fewer manatee, turtle and bird entanglements as well as less general degradation to coastal ecosystems.

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES PROTECTION:

* I represent TAS in the Manatee Awareness Group (MAG), a multi-agency/organization task force dedicated to manatee protection. Currently, the MAG is working on public service announcements, education and outreach projects, and enforcement of manatee speed zones, like the upcoming Operation Sea Cow event in Miami-Dade County. Op Sea Cow is a multi-agency effort in which US Coast Guard, local municipal marine patrol units, US Fish & Wildlife, and Florida law enforcement agencies emphasize speed zone compliance at the beginning of manatee season.

* I monitor and respond to activities that may impact birds and animals like the recent Bad Boys 2 film shoot in Biscayne Bay and at the Oleta River State Recreational Area. Through my involvement, the producers were required to implement extensive watch plans to ensure that no harm would come to any animals as the result of the filming.

* I initiated an electronic campaign to other environmental organizations and activists targeting the Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation (FWC) Commissioners, advocating for a staff proposal to re-evaluate the State's species listing process and criteria (endangered, threatened, species of special concern). The FWC is now engaged in that critical process. The standing criteria are so unrealistic that it appears likely that the Florida manatee will be down-listed from endangered to threatened even though state scientists predict that the population will decrease by 50% over the next 45 years. I am fighting for the continued protection of the manatee and all of the state's listed species.

COORDINATION WITH AND ADVANCEMENT OF

OUR AUDUBON PARTNERS (NATIONAL AUDUBON AND AUDUBON OF FLORIDA) AND TAS:

* I represent TAS on the Audubon of Florida Southeast Regional Conservation Committee (RCC). The Audubon chapters in the state of Florida work on regional issues collectively. Our region is currently engaged in protection of Lake Okeechobee, Protected Species, Everglades and the Florida Keys, as well as focusing on the importance of Fire Management for south Florida's pinelands. Many of my individual activities on behalf of TAS complement those of the RCC. For instance, I am fighting to protect a portion of pineland from development in South Miami-Dade near Metro Zoo. No portion of the pineland should be developed because the ecological community is dependent on periodic fires. The pinelands can't be burned if there is any development on the site.

* I have coordinated and held membership drives signing up almost 50 members since April.

* I participate in National Audubon training activities, like a lobby training event that was held in Washington DC. The purpose of the event was to teach us how to communicate more effectively with our elected officials. After two days of intensive training, we were on Capitol Hill putting our new skills to work.

(Continued on page 6)

BIRDING PARADISE

The Lodge at Pico Bonito

Our species list is over 275 species on site. Dr. Robert Ridgley (author of "A Guide to the Birds of Panama, with Costa Rica, Nicaragua, and Honduras") says, "The Lodge is probably the best place in the world to see the Lovely Cotinga".

Don't miss the experience of a visit to the Lodge at Pico Bonito, the recently opened nature lodge on the Caribbean coast of Central America. This resort is set on 200 acres of rain forest at the base of the Nombre de Dios mountain range, a national park two and one-half hours flying time from Miami in the beautiful, undiscovered country of Honduras. Two small rushing rivers on either side, with waterfalls and natural swimming pools, cascade down from the uninhabited mountain range above. Numerous activities are conveniently available both on the property and nearby.

For more details see our web site, www.picobonito.com. For reservations call toll free 1-888-428-0221, or direct to the Lodge, 011-504 440-0389/8

Special group rates are available.

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CSI Tropical Audubon?

By Amy Kimball

Long before the popular forensic crime television show debuted its Miami-based spin-off, restoration ecologist George Gann was piecing together evidence of a slightly different nature: what did Florida's native plant communities look like and where did they occur? And how can we recreate these globally imperiled habitats today?

Unlike the TV scientists, this investigative team doesn't have a dead body to comb for evidence. Gann and a cadre of other experts are analyzing a corpse of another sort: using old photographs, historic records, and extensive knowledge of native communities in South Florida, they are recreating habitats that have no living or dead example.

And, unlike most crime scene investigations, this one will have a living result: restoration areas that are thriving examples of Pine Rockland and Tropical Hardwood Hammock habitats and homes for rare plants and animals, including butterflies and migratory birds.

Restoration of historic pineland and hammock remnants at the DTH was initiated ten years ago. Those partial plantings have become the backbone of the new restoration effort. On September 14, 2002, over twenty volunteers from TAS and Treemendous planted another 99 na-

tive trees and shrubs on the west side of the DTH property. Grants from Miami-Dade County DERM and Treemendous paid for the plant materials and tree holes.

Why do habitat-appropriate plantings matter? TAS has advocated native planting for years. Now, we will have these important examples to share with the public at our plant sales and educational gatherings. And importantly, our newest restoration areas will link into the reknown Florida Keys Botanical Garden created by TAS member David Lysinger at the rear of the DTH (see our website for tour dates of David's outstanding garden).

Native plant restoration areas at the DTH will demonstrate how to use native plants to create integrated habitats. A natural habitat, especially when joined with other natural areas, provides a richer and more diverse place for plants and animals. The end result is a more meaningful and valuable use of native plants in our environment.

Want to become involved? Join George Gann, and volunteers David and Paula Swetland, Gary Hunt, Joe Barros, Joe Grimes, Tiffany Gann, Bob Kelly and many others during our workdays at the DTH. You can also call our Executive Director Cynthia Guerra for more information about how you can help contribute time and other resources to our habitat restoration efforts, plant sales and environmental education work!

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Check this web site also for information on Capt Ed's 168 page "Top Gun" Memoirs of the journey from the flak-filled skies over Vietnam to the coral reefs of the Florida Keys.

3 efficiency apts @ \$89.50/night for 1-2 people, \$10.00/ additional person per night. Units include kitchens, washer/dryers, cable TV, and depending on which unit, can sleep 3-8 people, 14-16 people max. There is also a gas BBQ grill and flowered butterfly courtyard on premises.

Capt. Ed Davidson, Chairman Emeritus of Florida Audubon, long time Board member of Tropical Audubon, and former eco-tour concessionaire for Biscayne National Park, lives on site and is available for tours, discussions, and environmental field trips for student and adult groups.

Located in the heart of the Keys at Mile Marker 52 in Marathon - 2 hrs from Coral Gables, 1 hr north of Key West. Call Capt. Ed at 305-743-6054 -- 24 hrs, 7 days for info, or email:

CaptEcoEd@aol.com

TAS NOTES

The Education Committee Needs You! The following volunteer opportunities are available:

- 1.) Members are needed to assist with the refreshments at the monthly programs.
- 2.) TAS plans to work closely with Audubon of Florida in planning activities for students and teachers, including visits to the Doc Thomas House and Botanical Garden. We are especially interested in bringing boy or girl scout groups onto the TAS property for educational programs.

If you can help out in either of these areas, please contact Bob Kelley at 305-666-9246 or by E-mail at RKelley@math.miami.edu

Please note that the Conservation Committee will NOT meeting during the months of November and December, but will resume its regular schedule in January on the 4th Wednesday of the month, 7:30pm at the Doc Thomas House.

A TREEmendous Effort!

Tropical Audubon thanks TREEmendous! On September 14, a group of enthusiastic, hard-working TREEmendous volunteers pitched in with the folk from Tropical to plant 99 trees at the Doc Thomas House.

TREEmendous Miami, Inc. was formed in 1998 as a volunteer organization whose mission is to make Miami-Dade County more environmentally healthy and beautiful by promoting increased tree canopy. TREEmendous was formed through the merger of two successful entities-- the City of Miami Committee on Beautification and Environment whose work continues to be seen by thousands daily, particularly in the many beautiful, flowering trees that now thrive along the sides of I-95 in Miami. The other group was Trees for Dade, whose fo-

cus was on educating. TREEmendous consolidated the work of these two entities into a new organization which has so far planted nearly 3,000 trees throughout the county.

The mission statement of TREEmendous Miami is "volunteers united to build community pride by planting, protecting and preserving trees in Miami-Dade County". Already in 2002, TREEmendous Miami has sponsored the planting of 272 trees in public areas along our highways, the Vizcaya Metrorail Station, the Little Gables neighborhood, the Goldcoast Railroad Museum, MetroZoo, and most recently, the Doc Thomas House. TREEmendous volunteers have also weeded, fertilized, pruned and spread additional mulch around more than 550 trees planted in prior years to insure their ongoing health and longev-

ity. Believing that proper stewardship of our environment must start at the individual level, TREEmendous has produced and distributed literature about the environmental benefits of trees, including the proper selection and placement to help conserve energy and reduce electric bills, and the proper techniques for planting, maintaining and pruning trees in our semi-tropical climate. Its literature is distributed through the media and to residents at various fairs and festivals as well as at meetings where TREEmendous members present talks on trees.

For more information on TREEmendous, contact Amy Creekmur, program coordinator (305) 378-1863 or visit the website at

www.treemendousmiami.org

Director's Report

(Continued from page 4)

* I assist the Board Members with the maintenance of the Doc Thomas House and Grounds, including our new Pineland and Tropical Hardwood Hammock restoration project (see the associated article in this edition of the Bulletin).

WATER RESOURCES PROTECTION:

* I work to reduce the potential negative impacts development in Miami-Dade County can have on our wellfields. Wellfields are those areas of the aquifer from which we get our drinking water. I have recently opposed plans by the Codina Group to construct an industrial park. I made an appeal to the Board of County Commissioners asking that they deny the request by Codina on the grounds that the developer could not adequately protect the Northwest Wellfield and because the development may contaminate an important source of drinking water for many of the residents of the County. It is over the protection of our wellfields that I also have recently opposed a portion of the proposed incorporation of Doral.

OUTREACH / EDUCATION:

* I represent TAS in the Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce, Chamber South, and the Environmental Education Providers Group. Through these organizations, I work to educate residents, businesses and visitors on the steps we all can take to be good stewards of the environment.
* I give presentations on TAS activities and the environment to a variety of community and student groups.

It is my hope to expand the breadth and width of our activities here at TAS. The development of specific educational programs and school materials is of particular interest to me and the organization, as is our outreach to less advantaged members of the community. We accomplish a tremendous amount but there remains so much to be done!!!

Tropical Audubon and I again thank our members, contributors and supporters who make this important work possible.

I hope everyone has a peaceful and joyous holiday season. Remember, if you have any questions, you can send me an e-mail at director@tropicalaudubon.org or call me at 305-666-5111.

TAS NOTES

Advertise in the Bulletin! We have great rates, a great audience, and a darned good cause. Contact Cathy at tas002@tropicalaudubon.org for more info.

Our Mailing List: Want to receive the plant sale fliers? Have we misspelled your name? Is your mail sent to the right address and wrong name? Do you receive two of everything? Have we left you off the list? We want to make it right! Contact tas002@tropicalaudubon.org.

Recycling and YOU

In the last issue of the Tropical Audubon Bulletin we presented an overview of local recycling resources for commonly recycled products- cardboard, phone books, household batteries, etc. Due to the great response we are including this special section below as a resource for harder to recycle goods. Cut out this article and put it on your refrigerator! Close the loop! Recycle everything you can and purchase products made from recycled materials.

Computers and Home Electronics —

To donate or recycle PCs: The Electronics Industries Alliance Consumer Education Initiative's Web site has a searchable database of electronics recycling locations and donation sites (703) 907-7500, www.eiae.org Or check out Electronics Recycling.org ----- <http://www.electronicrecycling.org>

Compact Discs, tapes and Other Media —

To recycle: GreenDisk (800) 305-DISK, www.greendisk.com
Appliances —

To donate: Contact Goodwill to find drop-off locations near you (800)664-6577 or www.goodwill.org. To recycle: Contact the Steel Recycling Institute to find local drop off locations (800) YES-1-CAN, www.recycle-steel.org.

Eyeglasses —

To donate: Contact your local Lions Club or For Eyes, Lens Crafters, or Pearle Vision eye care chain. The glasses are repaired and refinished to match the prescriptions of people who can't afford to buy them.

Foam Packing Peanuts and Blocks —

To reuse packaging peanuts: Plastic Loose Fill Producers Council, (800) 828-2214. To reuse foam blocks: The Alliance of Foam Packaging Recyclers (410) 451-8340, www.epspackaging.org

Paint cans, unused household or commercial paint -
Log on to www.miami-dade.co.fl.us/dswm

South Florida Nature for the Love of It

by Leah La Plante

"I do not want to investigate nature as though I were solving a problem in mathematics...I have a sense of reverence and devotion...elation, just as though the birds or the trees had told me their secrets and had understood their language--and nature herself had made me a confidant."

- Charles Torrey Simpson, *In Lower Florida Wilds* 1920

"I loved Florida on sight," says Simpson in his book *Florida Wild Life*, published in 1932. He came to the state in 1905 at the age of 53 to "retire," as he later said in his usual light-hearted way. He was a world-class conchologist, finishing up his years at the Smithsonian. Retirement consisted of four books about

South Florida nature, and a great many articles in magazines and newspapers, as well as endless wilderness treks, and talks at local nature and garden clubs. "Go quietly and alone early in the morning into your garden, then you will learn something of what Dr. Simpson knew and experienced," said David Fairchild.

In 1923, the 77-year-old Simpson was the recipient of a high honor in the botanical world, the Meyer Medal, presented by his friend Fairchild. Four years later, Simpson received the first honorary doctorate in science given by the University of Miami. In April of 1931, there was the dedication of the Simpson Park meeting house, with 200 people present.

Through the years, a great many shells and plants were named for Simpson, such as the fan palm *simpsonia microcarpa*, and the tropical tree snail *Liguus fasciatus Simpsonii*.

Simpson died in December 1932, while at work at his desk at the Sentinels, the home he built in Lemon City, an early northern suburb of Miami. A tree, one of the stoppers discovered by Simpson, was planted next to his grave, on a plot deeded to the Garden Clubs of Miami by the Woodlawn Park Cemetery Association.

Most of all in Simpson's work there speaks a brilliant scientist who was at the same time humble, warm and friendly, spontaneous, good-humored, expressing an almost childlike enthusiasm about his green kingdom. He reminds one of John Muir, John Burroughs, and other writers of wild life and the natural character of place.

South Florida National Parks Trust

By Karyn Ferro

Biscayne, Everglades, and Dry Tortugas National Parks are pleased to announce the creation of the South Florida National Parks Trust, a new non-profit philanthropic organization dedicated to supporting the South Florida National Parks. The Trust was created to raise friends and funds to help these National Parks conserve unique ecosystems and cultural resources; provide visitors the opportunity to experience these ecosystems; advocate responsible stewardship and community sustainability; and educate future generations of community leaders

about the value of these treasures.

The Trust will be raising money to support programs and projects at the parks in the areas of volunteerism, visitor services and programs, education, outreach, and research. The Trust is a committee of the National Park Foundation, the congressionally chartered nonprofit partner of America's National Parks. For more information on the Trust please contact Karyn Ferro at Everglades National Park (305-242-7702) or Michelle Oehmichen at Biscayne National Park (305-230-1144 x3037).

A final note for Audubon: Aside from the plant world, Simpson reported that "The entire Everglades teemed with glorious animal life...but it was the birds that gave color and glory to the whole. I cannot describe them. They covered the glades by the millions, roseate spoonbills, the saintly herons and egrets, that dream of color the flamingo, a host of ducks and pelicans and gulls."

TAS Schedule of Events

Sat., Nov. 9 - **Everglades National Park Birding** Paul Bithorn and Juan Villamil will lead this all day carpool trip. Meet at 6:30am at the east gate (SW 55th Ave.) of the Doc Thomas property (5530 Sunset Drive, South Miami) OR in the parking lot of the Coe Visitor Center at Everglades National park at 7:30am. Bring lunch.

Sun., Nov. 10, - **Charles Deering Estate Nature Walk** Reservations required! Rick Cohen will emphasize the botanical and geological features found in the 420 acre park. The park entrance is located just east of Old Cutler Rd. on SW 168th Street. Wear sturdy shoes. Bring water, hat, and bug spray. Admission fee to park required. Rating: easy to moderate. Contact rickc@tropicalaudubon.org and include your phone number or call 305 666 5111. This is a popular outing and space is limited so call early!

Wed., Nov. 13 – **Membership Meeting: Everglades Wildflowers with Roger Hammer** Roger Hammer, Famous Local Nature Man, will present a slide program on his new book on the wildflowers of our area which is due to be published on November 1. Copies of the book will be on sale. Roger is always irreverently entertaining. The program will be fun. Membership meetings are open to the public and held at the Doc Thomas House, 5530 Sunset Dr., near Red Rd.. The doors open at 7:30pm and the show beginning at 8pm.

Sat., Nov. 16 - **Marco Island /Briggs Nature Center Birding** Brian Rapoza will lead this all day carpool trip. Meet at 6:30am at the east gate (SW 55th Ave.) of the Doc Thomas property (5530 Sunset Drive, South Miami). Bring lunch and wading footwear.

Sun., Nov. 17 - **Tour the Botanical Garden at the Tropical Audubon Society** David Lysinger, native plant expert and Botanical Garden architect, will lead a tour from 9:00 am to 12:00 pm. Learn about our botanical heritage and visit the garden at the historic Doc Thomas House. 5530 Sunset near the intersection of Rd. Rd.

Sat., Nov 23 – **South Florida Exotics Trip – NEW!** Paul Bithorn will lead birders in search of parrots, bulbuls, mynas, and other introduced species in this carpool trip. Meet at 7:30am at the east gate (SW 55th Ave.) of the Doc Thomas property (5530 Sunset Drive, South Miami).

Sat., Dec. 7 - **Everglades National Park Beginning Birding Class** Jeff Weber, Kevin Sarsfield and Paul Bithorn will lead this trip. Contact Bob Kelley at horn-edowl@earthlink.net, or by calling 305 666 5111 to register and to obtain information on the meeting location and time.

Sun., Dec. 8 - **Upper Keys Birding, Botany and Geology** Led by David Wright, Mary Ellen Ahearn and Joe Barros, this is an all day carpool trip to Windley Key Geological Site. 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, water and insect repellent. There is a fee for entering Windley Key Geological Site.

Join the Bird Counts!

Every year since 1900 teams of interested birders have joined together across the country to count the number of individual birds within each species occurring on the same date in the same place. This huge task is coordinated by the National Audubon Society. The consistency of the count creates a viable set of statistics that can be compared and used to measure the effects that changes in the environment have had on the bird population. These measurements act as important warnings of environmental deterioration that should be heeded. In addition to the serious consequences of the bird counts, they are a fun way to spend a day with fellow birding enthusiasts. This is an all day event. Volunteers are needed for all areas. Call 305 666 5111 for more information and team assignments.

- Sat., Dec. 14 - Miami-Dade County Christmas Bird Count – Coordinated by Brian Rapoza
- Wed., Dec 18 – Long Pine Key Christmas Bird Count – Coordinated by Dick Cunningham
- Sat., Dec. 21 - South Dade County Christmas Bird Count – Coordinated by Dick Cunningham
- Sat., Dec. 28 - Coot Bay / Everglades National Park Christmas Bird Count – Coordinated by Dick Cunningham

Sun., Dec. 29 - **Tour the Botanical Garden at the Tropical Audubon Society** David Lysinger, native plant expert and Botanical Garden architect, will lead a tour from 9:00 am to 12:00 pm. Learn about our botanical heritage and visit the garden at the historic Doc Thomas House. 5530 Sunset near the intersection of Rd. Rd.

Sat., Jan. 4 - **Everglades National Park Birding** Paul Bithorn, David Wright and Mary Ellen Ahearn will lead an all day carpool trip. Meet at 6:30am at the east gate (SW 55th Ave.) of the Doc Thomas property (5530 Sunset, Miami) OR in the parking lot of the Coe Visitor Center at ENP at 7:30am. Shared gasoline and entrance fee costs are required. Bring lunch.

Wed., Jan. 8 – **Membership Meeting: The Fakahatchee Strand- Fla's Botanical Paradise** Mike Owen, biologist at the Fakahatchee Strand Preserve State Park, will present an introduction to the botany of this orchid paradise. Rick Cohen will again lead a TAS Fieldtrip there in February. This is an excellent opportunity to learn about the area before hitting the trail. Membership meetings are open to the public and held at the Doc Thomas House, 5530 Sunset Dr., near Red Rd.. The doors open at 7:30pm and the show beginning at 8pm.

Sat.-Sun., Jan. 11-12 - **Merritt Island Overnight Bird Trip** Reservations required! Ellen and Todd Snow will lead this overnight carpool trip to Brevard County. Shared gasoline and hotel costs are required. Call 305 666 5111 for more information.

Sun., Jan 12 - **South Dade Birding** John Boyd will lead this all day carpool trip, which may include stops at Lucky Hammock, Mary 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). This is an all day trip. Bring lunch.

Fri.-Mon., Jan. 17-20 - **North Florida Birding – NEW!** Reservations required! Brian Rapoza will lead this four-day, three-night carpool trip to North Florida. Stops will include Paynes Prairie, Tall Timbers Research Station, Black Swamp, Florida Caverns State Park, Alligator Point, and St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge. Shared gasoline and hotel costs are required. Call 305 666 5111 for more information.

Tropical Audubon Society
5530 Sunset Drive
Miami, FL 33143

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