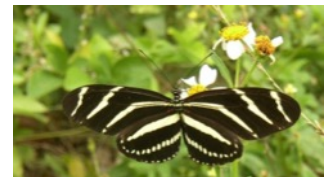
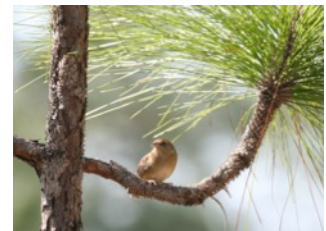


South Florida Birding & Nature

With Naturalist Journeys & Caligo Ventures



April 10 – 15, 2016
866.900.1146
800.426.7781
520.558.1146
naturalistjourneys@gmail.com
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Naturalist Journeys, LLC



Find yourself faraway from Florida's bustling, tourist-packed theme parks on a [Naturalist Journeys](#) adventure that takes you deep into Florida's wild side.

Just barely above the Caribbean tropics, Florida's climate and geography isolate it from the rest of the country. Because of its geographically unique position, Florida is a crossroads between the temperate north and the sultry Caribbean south. Indeed, about a dozen bird species of West Indian origin reach the northern limits of their range here. Many of these West Indian species live nowhere else in the United States.

We time our tour in mid-April when spring migration is well underway, potentially augmenting our trip list with a wide variety of northbound, colorful warblers and charismatic waders.

On this tour, we cover the southern third of the state in search of the many specialty birds on offer. We begin by experiencing the justifiably famous and unique Everglades, otherwise known as the River of Grass, in search of a broad suite of specialties that include the critically endangered "Cape Sable" Seaside Sparrow and the majestic Swallow-tailed Kite. In the Upper Florida Keys, we seek out Caribbean

Naturalist Journeys, LLC / Caligo Ventures PO Box 16545 Portal, AZ 85632 PH: 520.558.1146 / 800.426.7781
Fax 650.471.7667 www.naturalistjourneys.com / www.caligo.com info@caligo.com /
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specialties such as White-crowned Pigeon, Black-whiskered Vireo, and Mangrove Cuckoo. We also spend time birding in Miami, a city with a decidedly Caribbean flair, in search of several ABA-countable exotics such as Spot-breasted Oriole, White-winged Parakeet, and Red-whiskered Bulbul. On the last leg of our journey, we visit a series of well-planned wetlands in Palm Beach where nearly all the Florida wetland specialties occur: Wood Stork, Purple Gallinule, Limpkin, and more. We also visit oak-scrub for Florida's only endemic bird, the Florida Scrub-Jay.

With some luck, many of the sites we visit on this tour are alive with migrant songbirds, and there is always a chance for a Caribbean vagrant like a La Sagra's Flycatcher or Western Spindalis.



Tour Highlights

- Bird the Miami-Ft. Lauderdale metro area for exotic bird species from around the world, including Spot-breasted Oriole and Red-whiskered Bulbul
- Immerse yourself in subtropical sawgrass prairies cypress dome, tropical hardwood hammock, pineland, and mangrove swamp across South Florida
- Find wonder and a great mix of species in Everglades National Park
- Tour one of the largest tracts of tropical hardwood hammock in Florida at Key Largo State Botanical Site in search of Mangrove Cuckoo and Black-whiskered Vireo
- Visit the unique Florida pineland ecosystem to see the endangered Red-cockaded Woodpecker
- Explore Green Cay and Wakodahatchee Wetlands in search of Florida specialties
- Discover Jonathan Dickinson State Park, searching for Swallow-tailed Kite, Bald Eagle, Sandhill Crane, and Florida Scrub-Jay

Tour Summary

6-Day / 5-Night South Florida Birding Tour with Carlos Sanchez

\$1895 from Miami

Airport is Miami International (MIA)

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Itinerary

Mon., Apr. 10 Arrivals

Welcome to Florida! April is a fantastic time to visit. Migrants pour through to augment resident bird numbers, while breeding bird specialties have arrived from their winter homes in the Caribbean and beyond.

You arrive today at Miami International Airport. We enjoy a welcome dinner with an orientation before we depart on our birding adventure tomorrow morning.

Accommodations south of Miami at Kendall (D)



Tues., Apr. 11 Everglades National Park

Published in 1947, Marjory Stoneman Douglas' *The Everglades: River of Grass* highlighted the uniqueness of the Everglades. Lying at the southern tip of the state, the Everglades is a vast subtropical sawgrass prairie broken only by cypress domes, tropical hardwood hammocks, pinelands, and mangrove swamps. There is nowhere else in the United States with such a decidedly tropical suite of habitats.

We work along the length of the main park road that terminates in Flamingo, exploring and learning about these various habitats and searching for several birds difficult or impossible to see anywhere else in the country like "Cape Sable" Seaside Sparrow and Shiny Cowbird. American Crocodile is possible at the marina in Flamingo.

There is also be an optional night birding session to look for Eastern Screech-Owl, Barred Owl, and Chuck-will's-widow.



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Accommodations south of Miami at Kendall (B,L,D)

Wed., Apr. 12 Upper Florida Keys

After an early breakfast, we drive along Card Sound Road to Key Largo State Botanical Site, making a brief stop at a patch of mangroves along the way to see the Florida race of Prairie Warbler and the Cuban race of Yellow Warbler. Once slated to become a housing development, Key Largo State Botanical Site protects one of the largest tracts of tropical hardwood hammock in Florida. It is also an important breeding ground for several key species on our tour, particularly the elusive Mangrove Cuckoo and vociferous Black-whiskered Vireo. After a delicious lunch, we keep our schedule open to accommodate for the presence (or absence) of migrant songbirds, shorebirds, or even chasing a Caribbean vagrant.



After a delicious lunch in Key Largo, we head back to the mainland in order to search for Snail Kite along Tamiami Trail.

Accommodations south of Miami at Kendall (B,L,D)

Thurs., Apr. 13 Miami Metro Area / Green Cay / Wakodahatchee Wetlands

The nearly tropical climate and exotic vegetation of the Miami-Ft. Lauderdale metropolitan area offers a unique landscape of opportunity for myriad introduced bird species from all over the world. We spend the morning exploring this urban landscape in search of ABA-countable exotics such as Gray-headed Swamphen, Spot-breasted Oriole, White-winged Parakeet, Red-whiskered Bulbul, and Common Myna. However, introduced species are only a small fraction of the avifauna of Miami, a county which claims one of the longest bird lists east of the Mississippi River.



Parks, preserves, and even parking lots provide opportunities to see native species like Gray Kingbird, White-crowned Pigeon, and more, along with a supporting cast of migrant songbirds.

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After a delicious lunch in Miami, we head north to Green Cay and Wakodahatchee Wetlands, two artificially created wetlands that host nearly all of Florida's wetland specialties: Black-bellied Whistling-Duck, Least Bittern, Limpkin, Sora, Purple Gallinule, and more. The rookeries at Wakodahatchee Wetlands should be very active at this time of year, providing excellent photographic opportunities of nesting herons, egrets, ibis, and storks.

Accommodations at the Hampton Inn, Juno Beach (B,L,D)

Fri., Apr. 14 Jonathan Dickinson State Park / Palm Beach

After an early breakfast, we make a short drive over to Jonathan Dickinson State Park. The pine flatwood and oak-scrub communities in this lovely park are more typical of Central Florida. As a result, several species reach the southern limit of their distribution here, including Bachman's Sparrow and the endemic Florida Scrub-Jay. Other species we should encounter as we explore this part of Florida include Swallow-tailed Kite, Bald Eagle, and Sandhill Crane. Just to the south in neighboring Palm Beach County, a tract of pineland habitat hosts a colony of the endangered Red-cockaded Woodpecker.

Over the course of the day, we explore several other sites in Palm Beach at a leisurely pace; Snook Islands Natural Area for gulls, terns, and American Oystercatcher; Peaceful Waters Sanctuary for migratory shorebirds; and Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge for Smooth-billed Ani (if they persist).

Accommodations at the Hampton Inn, Juno Beach (B,L,D)

Sat., Apr. 15 Departures

After some optional early morning birding in search of any species that we may have missed, the tour ends at Miami International Airport. (B)

Cost of the Journey

Plan Ahead!

Protect yourself with Allianz Travel Insurance. Offset your Carbon Footprint. Show us the receipt and we'll take 50% - up to \$50.00 - of your carbon offset fee off your final payment.

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Cost of the Journey

Cost of the journey is \$1895 double occupancy (DBL) / \$2390 single occupancy (SGL), per person, from Miami, FL (MIA). This cost includes: accommodations for 5 nights, most meals as specified in the itinerary (B=breakfast, L=lunch, D=dinner), airport welcome and transfer or hotel shuttle, land transportation during the journey, professional guide services, park and other entrance fees, and miscellaneous program expenses.

Cost does not include: round-trip airfare to and from Miami, items of a personal nature such as laundry, telephone, drinks from the bar, and gratuities for luggage handling or personal services. With fewer than 6 participants, a small-group surcharge (typically \$100 – \$200 per participant) may apply, or we may request that you pick up the cost of a few additional dinners in lieu of this surcharge.

Travel Information

The airport for this tour is Miami International Airport (MIA) in Miami, FL. Please plan to arrive in Miami no later than 3:00 PM on April 10. Please plan on departures after Noon on April 15.

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Photo Credits

Wood Stork, Peg Abbott (PA); Great Egret, PA; Bachman's Sparrow, PA; Zebra Longwing Butterfly, PA; Great Blue Heron on the Beach, PA; Roseate Spoonbill, Betty Andres; Magnificent Frigatebird, PA; Everglades Scenic, PA; Little Blue Heron, Greg Smith (GS); Least Bittern, Tom Dove (TD); Snail Kite, PA; Mangrove Cuckoo, Mahlon Hale; Green Heron, GS; Bald Eagle, Rob Colyer (RC); Purple Gallinule, Tom Dove; Florida Scrub Jay, RC; Great Blue Heron, RC.