

## **Southern Florida Migration Time in the Keys April 24-30, 2023**

### **Itinerary:**

Please plan to arrive in Miami on April 23. Rooms are reserved at the Holiday Inn Express & Suites Miami Airport East. There is no hotel shuttle, but it's only a 5-minute taxi ride from the airport. We will plan on meeting for dinner & a brief orientation at 6 PM. Dinner and the hotel tonight are included in the tour cost.

#### **Day 1 (Monday, April 24) Jonathan Dickinson State Park**

After an early breakfast, we'll be heading to Jonathan Dickinson State Park to find Florida's only endemic bird, the **Florida Scrub-Jay**, as well as Longleaf Pine Savanna specialties such as **Red-cockaded Woodpecker** and **Bachman's Sparrow**. Hopefully successful, we'll turn our attentions to the Everglades headwaters at Loxahatchee NWR where our prime target is the **Snail Kite**, with chances to see **Limpkin**, **Sandhill Crane**, and **White-tailed Kite** as well. We'll then head to the boardwalks of Wakodahatchee Wetland and/or Green Cay Wetland to enjoy a range of wetland birds at close range, allowing opportunities for easy photography. Right after lunch we'll continue our southward journey to Richardson Historic Park to make our first dedicated foray into Florida's exotic parrot territory. Afterwards, we'll head to Homestead where we'll spend the night, with a potential to do some owling at Frog Pond Wildlife Management Area. **Night in Homestead.**

#### **Day 2 (Tuesday, April 25) Everglades National Park**

We'll start the day looking for a Florida endemic subspecies, the **Cape Sable Seaside Sparrow** which is restricted to the Everglades. This is a very difficult species that requires us to get up pre-dawn, and ample patience and persistence. But, given its rarity and restricted range it's well worth a try. Once we have (hopefully) succeeded with the sparrow we'll look for a few migratory warblers before heading to Flamingo in Everglades National Park to look for species such as **Reddish Egret**, and perhaps even a **Gull-billed Tern**, **American Crocodile**, and **West Indian Manatee** if we're lucky. Once we head out of the Everglades National Park, we'll look for **Burrowing Owls** at a few nearby stakeouts before taking our first stab at **Mangrove Cuckoo**. **Night in Key Largo.**

#### **Day 3 (Wednesday, April 26) Dagny Johnson Key Largo Hammock Park, Big Pine Key**

We'll start the day at Dagny Johnson Key Largo Hammock Park to look for **Black-whiskered Vireo** and **Mangrove Cuckoo**, if still needed. Thereafter we'll continue towards Cart Sound Bridge to look for **Golden Warbler** before heading back to Key Largo where we'll be looking primarily for **Nanday Conure** but also some shorebirds that may use Key Largo as a stopover point on their annual migration northward. Then we'll head southwest towards Key West, stopping at Marathon to look for **Roseate Terns** before visiting Big Pine Key to look for migratory warblers as well as **Key Deer**, a diminutive and Federally Endangered subspecies of its more common Whitetail cousin further north. Depending on where we are as nightfall draws closer, we'll look for **Antillean Nighthawks** at several potential sites. **Night in Key West.**

#### **Day 4 (Thursday, April 27) Tortugas National Park**

We'll start the day taking a ferry, the Yankee Freedom III, to spend the day at Dry Tortugas National Park. Once we reach the Tortugas, we'll be met with thousands of **Sooty Terns** and **Brown Noddies** whirling ahead. We'll spend some time enjoying the seabird spectacle before we head for land where we'll be searching for warblers on this migrant trap. We should have a bit of downtime during our time on the Tortugas during which trip participants can visit Fort Jefferson. Those who wish could also take a quick dip into the ocean or rent snorkeling gear for a taste of underwater paradise before we head back to Key West. Our return route is generally very conducive for **Brown Boobies**, while we may even see a **Masked Booby** or two if we're lucky. **Night in Key West.**

**Day 5 (Friday, April 28) Key West**

This day we'll visit several sites in and around Key West in search of migratory species and Caribbean specials we may have missed earlier. If needed, we'll start off looking for **Antillean Nighthawk** before heading to Fort Zachary Taylor State Park to look for migratory warblers and other neotropical species on their way to their northern breeding grounds. After a few hours of birding, our participants might even spend a few hours on the beach, if so desired. Once we're done here, we'll continue our journey towards Miami, stopping en route for any species we may have missed on our southward journey. **Night in Miami.**

**Day 6: (Saturday, April 29) Miami Exotics**

Our last day in the Sunshine State will be spent looking for rare species that are present in the Miami area, as well as the large number of ABA-countable exotic parrots and parakeets that call Miami home. **Night in Miami**

**Day 7 (Sunday, April 30) Flights home**

After breakfast we will head to the airport for our flights home.

***\*Order of days in itinerary may change if logistically necessary***