



# Birding Adventures

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Hello Birding Friends,

School will soon be over and I am anxious to get working on the website and plan to write up the trip reports and post pictures of some fantastic Birding Adventures of this year. Stay tuned for the new "draft" schedule so you can begin to making plans for next years Birding Adventures.

Wow!! the Birding Year is at it's end and it has been a whirlwind of amazing birds and great adventures. A BIG THANK YOU for those who joined me on a trip or for a class. My goal is to HELP YOU learn and see the birds. And from the feedback I get, I guess I do a pretty good job. For those who went the great memories will linger, but for those who couldn't join us, here are some of the highlights:

1. BIRDING YEAR (8/09-5/10) TOTAL-250 species in Florida to date, including 29 species of shorebirds and 23 species of warblers. All Owls possible in south Florida and some extremely rare birds for the first time on a Birding Adventure trip including Harlequin Duck, Masked Duck, La Sagra's Flycatcher, Brown-crested Flycatcher, Black-throated Gray Warbler and Cape Sable Seaside Sparrow.

2. TRINIDAD'S TROPICAL WONDER-146 species, 3/28-4/2/10

The tropical species came fast and furious including 8 species of hummingbirds, all 3 Trogons, Channel-billed Toucan, Blue-crowned Motmot, Rufous-tailed Jacamar and the very rare Pinnated Bittern. Birding at it's best with Rum Punch in hand or a proper English Tea to view 60 species from the breeze swept veranda including Ornate-Hawk Eagle, Bearded Bellbird, Crested Oropendula, Green and Purple Honeycreeper. A trip highlight was a boatside view of a spectacular spectacle of Scarlet Ibis flying into a mangrove roost for the night. The frantic antics of a lek of 15 White-bearded Manakins clicking their wings and jumping to display to an unassuming female were a wonder to see. We were all thrilled when a Blue-headed Parrot attacked a big yellow snake high in the tree canopy. A steep hike down into a dark, cool cave to see the home of one of the most strangest birds on earth, the Oilbird gave us the feeling we were truly exploring the tropics.

3. CENTRAL FLORIDA GETAWAY-128 species-2/13-15/10

It started out with a rare Black-throated Gray Warbler at Green Cay and only got better. At Sebastian Inlet an extremely rare Harlequin Duck was fishing along the rocks, along with amazing views of Northern Gannets and Reddish Egret. Along Biolab Road in MINWR a Bobcat greeted us as the pink, peach sky at sunset held Roseate Spoonbills. A Clapper Rail put on quite a show calling and swimming on the wildlife drive along with numerous ducks and shorebirds. Ask and you shall receive at the Three Lakes Wildlife Management

Area: seven Red-cockaded Woodpeckers flew from tree to tree, along Brown-headed Nuthatches and Bachman Sparrow. The long awaited Whooping Cranes were seen on a far off field. along with Snail Kite, Crested Caracara, Black-crowned Night Heron and Limpkin in Lake Jesup.

#### 4. FT. DESOTO GETAWAY-101 species-4/24 & 4/25

Not our best year in that the weather wouldn't cooperate and was beautiful. Along Snake Road Crested Caracara made an appearance and Eastern Meadowlark sang. The buzz at Ft. De Soto was a Brown-crested Flycatcher and we got him and had good looks at a Great-crested FC to nail our identification. Lots of shorebirds but the Long-billed Curlew eluded us again. But we had great looks and Sandwich and Common Tern which is not common. A highlight was very close looks at still fuzzy young Great-horned Owl, who had crowded out the parents from his growing size. At the Celery Fields a life bird for most was a Swamp Sparrow and all saw its rufous wings.

#### 5. EVERGLADES BIRDING FESTIVAL-172 species 1/13-18/09

Participants came from 15 states and 5 Florida counties and lots of great birds and birding fun was had by all. Some of the highlights included amazing views of a Great Horned Owl, 5 Snails Kites flying over STA 5, and shorebirds galore expertly taught by the incredible Kevin Karlson at Crandon Beach. At Everglades National Park 10 Short-tailed Hawks were seen at one time along with 14 other raptors more than Cape May, Kevin exclaimed. Next year will be even better with a new venue, pelagic trip and many new field and class workshops. See website for details.

Well, you can see it was an amazing winter and spring and I am busy planning for next year. I am interested in doing a trip from September 9-12 to either the DRY TORTUGAS & FLORIDA KEYS or possibly the BAHAMAS. Let me know which you are interested in the most. Trips being planned for the next birding year include: Central Florida in November, Florida panhandle for President's weekend, Texas in March (and possibly the Sandhill Crane migration on the Platte River as a pre-trip), Tropical Birding in Costa Rica in July, Eastern Shore in October. Plus some regular trips to Duda Farms, Everglades National Park and STA 5. Don't forget about the Bonnet House classes too and I may do a few workshops at Sawgrass Nature Center, Secret Woods and with Audubon of the Everglades. Wow!! Sounds like fun.

Have a great summer. The Pascatores are off to the Canyonlands-Grand, Bryce, Zion, Capital Reef, Moab, Lake Powell, and much more for 19 days. I'll let you know if I get to see the Condor.

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