Feb. 19-23, 2024

South Florida Winter Birding Trip

Cost
$2500 for single room occupancy
$2100 for double room occupancy per person
Cost is for guiding fee, hotels, park/reserve entrance fee, rental car and packed lunches/breakfast.
Dinners will be self-pay.
Minimum number of participants 3, maximum number of participants 6

Event overview
Come join the Toledo Zoo’s Ornithologist in the tropical habitats of Southern Florida. Florida is a great place to shake off the winter blues and experience a richly diverse ecosystem of wetlands filled with truly amazing birds. Roseate Spoonbill, Limpkin and Wood Storks are just the beginning of some of the birds that call South Florida home.

Day 1  Arrive in Fort Myers
Day 2  Ding Darling NWR/Coastal Birding
After a quick breakfast we will set out for our day. This subtropical barrier island on Sanibel Island makes for some fantastic birding and photography – over 200 species of birds have been documented at this location. We will do lunch at Ding Darling and time pending we might hit another location before heading back to the hotel and dinner.

Day 3  Red-cockaded Woodpeckers/Pine Forest birding Babcock-Webb WMA & Florida Scrub-jay
Again, another early morning, this time heading out to the unique pine forest that provides the opportunity to see some unique species of birds – our main target here will be the Red-cockaded Woodpecker named after its red ear tufts that are hardly ever seen. We will also be on the lookout for Bachman’s Sparrow and Brown-headed Nuthatch that can be found in this specialized habitat. After the morning birding we will break for lunch before heading further North to see Florida Scrub-jays at Prairie Creek Reserve. The Scrub-jay is nearly endemic to Florida with only a couple records in South Georgia. From here, we will head back to the hotel before heading out for dinner in the evening.

Day 4  Audubon Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary
This early morning brings us to one of the highlights of this trip- the habitat is what someone would expect from the everglades state – rich swamplands teeming with life. Not only do birds call it home, but also you can expect to see alligators, mammals, and more. We will do our best to spend the majority of the day here but if time allows we will try to hit another nearby location in or around Naples.

Day 5  Morning birding – Depart for airport
We will visit a local park in the morning and try to clean up on any birds that we may have missed during the rest of the tour. The early morning light will also provide great photography opportunities. We will wrap up birding and conclude the trip from there. Please do not book flights earlier than noon on this day.

Day 6  Depart

Please note: This itinerary is tentative and some days may shift around or plans may change due to a rarity being found – South Florida is notorious for producing rare birds that I am sure everyone in the group would love to see if given the chance.

For additional questions, please contact your guide
Jeremy at birding@toledozoo.org or 419-385-5721 ext. 3096