

# TREASURE COAST BIRDING GUIDE

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THE OFFICIAL GUIDE TO THE TREASURE COAST SINCE 1995



Florida's Treasure Coast is home to a multitude of bird species, and part of the Great Florida Birding and Wildlife Trail. Birding is fun! Print this handy checklist to learn about and keep track of birds that you are certain to see while exploring the area.

I SAW IT!



### Black Skimmer

They look similar to a tern but don't be fooled. With striking black and white plumage and a bright orange bill, the Black Skimmer has a unique ability to forage in flight. It skims close to the water's surface and locates its prey by touch, not sight, with its lower mandible. The world's three species of skimmers are the only birds on earth that feed in this manner.



### Snail Kite

This medium-sized bird of prey feeds almost exclusively on apple snails and, in the U.S., is found only in Florida. The species is locally endangered due to prolonged drought, which affects its primary food source. The best place to see them is around Lake Okeechobee.



### American White Pelican

These migratory, all white pelicans, are twice the size of their brown cousins and breathtaking to behold. They are often referred to as the "original snowbirds" for their snow-white color and seasonal arrivals and departures. See them in large groups along the lagoon waterfront in Sebastian during the winter months.



### Great Blue Heron

The largest of the North American herons. At an average of four-feet tall with a wingspan of around six feet, they are magnificent to see in flight. Named for their blue-gray plumage, they have yellow bills and black head feathers. They adapt to both salt and freshwater environments, and are abundant along the Indian River Lagoon.



### Sandhill Crane

Florida is home to two species of these enormous cranes, which stand around four-feet tall. The Greater visits from the north in the winter and the Lesser is a year-round resident. Almost always seen in pairs, they are gray in color with dark-red crowns. Residents stick mostly around freshwater ponds and lakes.



### Osprey

These large raptors can look like juvenile bald eagles with their white bellies and variegated brown underwings. They're actually a hawk found around salt water, and feed primarily on fish that can commonly be seen clutched in their talons. Their nests are big stick structures often built on poles, channel markers, and dead trees over open water.



### Florida Scrub-Jay

Endangered, it's the only species of bird endemic to the state of Florida. There are only about 4,000 individuals left due to habitat loss. Scrub-jays exist in unique patches of Florida scrub that have been destroyed by development. Scrub-jays are cooperative breeders, meaning offspring receive care from their parents and other group members.



### Snowy Egret

Adult Snowy Egrets are all white with a black bill, black legs, and yellow feet. They have a patch of yellow skin at the base of the bill. They wade in shallow water to spear fish and other small aquatic animals, but sometimes they will run back and forth, chasing their prey, which is entertaining to watch!



### Roseate Spoonbill

Sometimes mistaken for a flamingo, this gregarious wading bird is easily recognized for its bright pink plumage and big spoon-shaped bill. There is a growing population of these beauties on the Treasure Coast due to rising water levels in the Everglades. Best seen around inland freshwater wetlands.