



SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

3301 Gun Club Road, West Palm Beach, FL 33406

MEDIA ADVISORY

March 21, 2011

CONTACT:

Rochelle Gilken

South Florida Water Management District

Office: (561) 682-2800 or Cellular: (561) 670-1890

www.sfwmd.gov/news

follow us on **twitter**

Big "O" Birding Extravaganza Allows Visitors to Explore Florida's Natural Beauty

Birders and photographers are invited to register for the four-day event



*More than 300 species of birds can be found around Lake Okeechobee, including
roseate spoonbills.*

(Click on the picture for a larger version.)

WHAT: Join the search for the elusive smooth-billed ani and enjoy the sight of the roseate spoonbill or endangered Everglades snail kite at this year's Big "O" Birding Extravaganza. The annual festival is becoming one of the largest bird-themed events in South Florida as visitors are provided with a fun and educational experience.

The Hendry-Glades Audubon Society, which partners with the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) to offer bird-watching events, will lead tours at the renowned Stormwater Treatment Area 5 (STA-5) during the extravaganza. The festival has a full slate of activities to excite and enlighten attendees, who are helping to support the local economy and show this is a destination for birders.

WHEN: Wednesday, March 23 through Saturday, March 26

STA-5 Bird Tour Highlights

March 23	Sunrise photo shoot 5:30 to 9 a.m. with nature photographer John J. Lopinot
March 24	Birding from 6 to 11:30 a.m.
March 25	2 p.m. presentation by South Florida Water Management District on the past, present and future of STA-5 and Lake Okeechobee

TIME: Hours vary but the program generally begins by sunrise and ends at sunset. For a complete schedule, visit www.bigobirdingfestival.com.

WHERE: Registration is at the Historic Clewiston Inn
108 Royal Palm Ave.
Clewiston, FL 33440

RSVP: Registration forms are available at
www.bigobirdingfestival.com/registration.html.

#

About the South Florida Water Management District

The South Florida Water Management District is a regional, governmental agency that oversees the water resources in the southern half of the state – 16 counties from Orlando to the Keys. It is the oldest and largest of the state's five water management districts. The agency mission is to manage and protect water resources of the region by balancing and improving water quality, flood control, natural systems and water supply. A key initiative is cleanup and restoration of the Everglades.