

News from the Everglades

A Weekly Update from Everglades Imagery

April 24, 2005

The Experience

This week I tried to focus on the Rocky Pinelands ecosystem that is found in the Long Pine Key area. Most of the time I was there I was focusing on the small details of the landscape such as flowers, plants, a few insects, and some birds. This week I have included five images from this ecosystem. My landscape images were taken with my large format camera and have not been developed yet so I can't include those at this time. I also photographed sunrise and moonrise on Saturday and got some great shots. One of them is included here as well as an image of a Yellow-billed Cuckoo that I got while I was waiting for the moon to rise.

This upcoming week is going to be a lot of fun. I am going to be traveling to Dry Tortugas National Park to experience spring migration on this small island. I am hoping to be able to photograph a number of migrant songbirds such as warblers, tanagers, thrushes, vireos, and much more. Many of these beautiful birds are often hard to photograph because they spend much of their time high in tree canopies or in dense underbrush. I am hoping that I will be able to walk away with some good shots as these birds will be tired from the trans-Caribbean flight and the lack of dense vegetation on this small island. There is much more to the Tortugas than migrant song birds, namely a seabird colony and a pre-Civil War era fort. Next week's newsletter will be dedicated to this trip so I won't say much more about it here. Because of the remote location I am not sure if I will be able to update my weblog but I will have access to a satellite phone that has data capabilities so I might be able to. If I am not able to update, expect a complete update on Thursday or Friday when I return.

The Photos



Unidentified Insect on Everglades Squarestem – Long Pine Key, Everglades National Park

After photographing a number of flowers earlier in the morning, I decided to turn to the insects that were becoming active as the temperature was rising. I found this interesting beetle as it was feeding on nectar of an Everglades Squarestem. I still don't have a field guide for insects so I don't know much more about this beetle at this time.



Marsh Pink – Long Pine Key, Everglades National Park

These pink flowers are in bloom right now and the color along the side of the lake in the campground is spectacular. This particular flower was found along the nature trail through the pinelands and surrounding prairies. They are very common but I have noticed the color varies from a bright pink to almost white.



Palmetto – Long Pine Key, Everglades National Park

Palmettos dominate the ground in the Rocky Pinelands. In some places these plants making hiking nearly impossible while in other places they are sparse enough to allow easy passage. I thought this was a strong image and really liked the diagonal lines.



Red-bellied Woodpecker – Long Pine Key, Everglades National Park

After photographing the flora of the pinelands in the morning, the wind began to pick up so I headed into the campground to see if I could find any birdlife. Red-bellied Woodpeckers were everywhere and were oblivious to my presence. This male was feeding on berries and insects on a nearby tree but perched on this pine for a few minutes before returning to feed. This bird is common throughout the park but is especially common in the pinelands.



Singing Male Northern Cardinal – Long Pine Key, Everglades National Park

Like the above woodpecker, the Northern Cardinal is found throughout the park, but is particularly common in the pinelands ecosystem. This male was up singing for quite a while before I was able to capture this image. I love the green of the tree he is perched in and it brings context to the image that a simple portrait could not.



Red-shouldered Hawk in Cypress at Sunrise – Everglades National Park

While headed to a specific place I wanted to shoot shortly after sunrise I passed this hawk and simply could not pass up the opportunity. The fog, color, and cypress just bring it all together.



Yellow-billed Cuckoo with Lubber Grasshopper – Mahogany Hammock, Everglades National Park

While I was waiting for the full moon to rise last night I stopped by Mahogany Hammock to see if anything was happening. As I pulled into the parking lot this cuckoo flew from the ground up into a dense tree. I had to shoot a portrait because this was all of the birds I could see. I have only seen these birds three or four times in my life and never dreamed I would be able to photograph one this semester.

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