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NUMBER OF THE WEEK

836

Traveling to the mainland for the Thanksgiving holiday, maybe even Miami International? Travelers need to know that the Dolphin Expressway has a new right-lane exit fly-over ramp to MIA/northbound NW 42nd Avenue (LeJeune Road). Motorists now traveling east on the SR836 to catch a flight at MIA can stay safely in the far-right hand travel lane to access the new right lane exit ramp, which has been configured to begin more than a half-mile sooner than the old left-lane exit.

ON THE COVER

Little is know about the great hammerhead shark. A concert on Dec. 1 hopes to raise funds to change that. See story, Page 20. CONTRIBUTED

THEY'RE HEADED RIGHT FOR US!

Report banded pelicans to help science

KARUNA EBERL
www.keysweekly.com

Brown pelican squadrons are soaring into town this month, as they flee the cold for their wintering grounds in the Keys, Cuba and Central America. This year some of them are sporting stylish blue and green leg bands, which researchers are hoping humans will notice and report.

Scientists have banded about 750 birds under Project Pelican, which aims to illuminate brown pelican migration habits. Since the Keys are a vital migration corridor, researchers are hoping residents here will step up to the challenge of reporting sightings.

"These sightings are very important to learn more about the whereabouts of these majestic birds," says Project Pelican researcher Yvan Satgé, who works with the multi-agency program at Clemson University. "Brown pelicans are very common in the South, but we still lack the most basic information about their ecology."



■ Grab your binoculars and look for pelicans with bands on their legs. Reporting the findings help researchers understand more about migration patterns of young birds. KARUNA EBERL/Contributed

Project Pelican sightings have helped researchers understand how juvenile pelicans (with brown heads, which turn yellow-white as they mature) survive their first winter, as well as track the distances they travel in those early years. While some simply head from Alabama to Tampa, a handful of others head from Texas all the way to the Pacific coast of Mexico.

Brown pelicans can live upwards of 20 years in the wild, dive headfirst into the water from 60 feet in the air, and scoop up 2.6 gallons in one gulp. They were nearly driven to extinction by plume hunting in the late 1800s, then again in the 1960s and '70s by the pesticide DDT, which caused their eggs to become thin and collapse under their weight. Today their recovery is a rare and grand success story, as they approach their 10-year anniversary of being removed from the Endangered Species List.

If you see one with a blue, green, or any other color of band, note the color and the three-digit code. Report it to projectpelican.weebly.com, along with the date and location. Satgé and his colleagues just might be able to let you know some fun details about the birds' travels. Photographers are also encouraged to join in at <https://www.flickr.com/groups/bandedpelicans/>.

CORRECTION

While Barnacle Barney's tiki bar in Marathon does serve mixed drinks, they are concocted with wine-based ingredients that taste like vodka, tequila, rum, etc. Barnacle Barney's does, however, host a fish fry every Friday from 5 to 9 p.m. It is located at 1688 Overseas Highway, behind the Hammocks resort.

Marathon Cinema
NOW SHOWING
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MON-FRI 7 PM
SAT-SUN 2 & 7 PM
3D SHOWING:
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