



# *Why do Birds Matter?*

Birds are an important part of our environment for various reasons. In The Bahamas, we are lucky to have roughly 300 resident and migratory bird species.

**Birds eat pests.** Birds eat mosquitos, aphids, rats, mice (e.g. owls and red-tailed hawks) and cockroaches.

**Bring bird watchers.** People travel from near and far to experience bird watching in The Bahamas. Bird watching is a \$32 billion industry in the USA, and brings over 27,000 jobs.

**Free waste removal.** Some birds, like turkey vultures clear away carcasses. Turkey vultures can smell a dead animal from 10 miles away!

**Seed dispersers.** Some birds, like pigeons and parrots, are great seed dispersers.

**Pollinators.** Such as hummingbirds and bananaquits.

**Biological Indicators.** Birds are biological indicators of disturbance, pollution (e.g. oil spills), extent plastics in the ocean, and more.

**Birds are uniquely ours.** 26% of birds found in The Bahamas are endemic species, which means they are only found here!

**Gateway to enjoying and studying nature.** All you have to do is go outside and look/listen! Birds help with science and research by helping us understand evolution and other processes. They help us learn about our past, and give us clues to what past ecosystems were like.