

Photo by June Smith



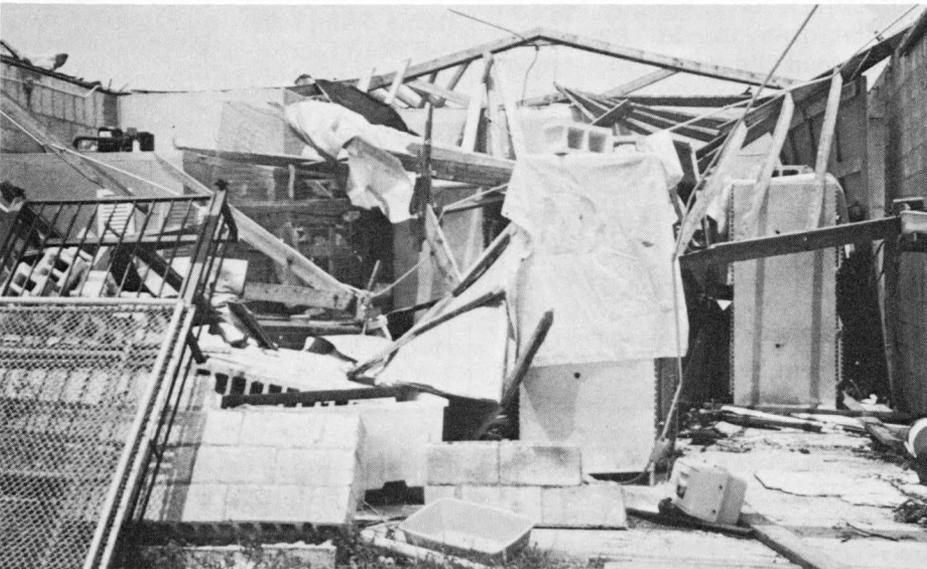
This photo shows the neat, tidy rows of breeding cages set up under big shade trees at Luv Them Birds, Inc., Goulds, Florida in early August of this year.

Photo by Morgan Knox



This photo shows the same general area of Luv Them Birds after Andrew went through. All shade is gone and much of the aviary sections are destroyed.

Photo by Morgan Knox



Hurricane Disaster

Editor's Note: The AFA has received a huge amount of correspondence, photos and articles regarding Hurricane Andrew's massive devastation and the ensuing emergency relief and rebuilding. Not all can be published. The following articles and photos are representative. Additional follow-ups will appear in the next issue of *Watchbird*.

When Help is Needed, AFA is There!

Hurricane Andrew caused major devastation to south Florida. In addition to damage to many businesses and individuals, the Miami Metrozoo was all but destroyed and Parrot Jungle hit hard. Although major relief efforts are flooding into the area, very little aid is being directed towards the avian community. In addition to loss of their homes and personal property, many bird owners suffered the total destruction of their outdoor aviaries and, in many instances, the housing for their pet birds. Because of this, many birds are being confined to small crates, shipping boxes, carriers, etc. There are shortages of feed, uncontaminated water, and other necessary supplies. The need is also great for new cages and shelters since most of the shade trees were destroyed.

AFA First Vice President Chuck Saffell was instrumental in immediately responding to the emergency. He set up the distribution of supplies including gloves, splints, bandages and bird seed. He is also working to aid bird people in

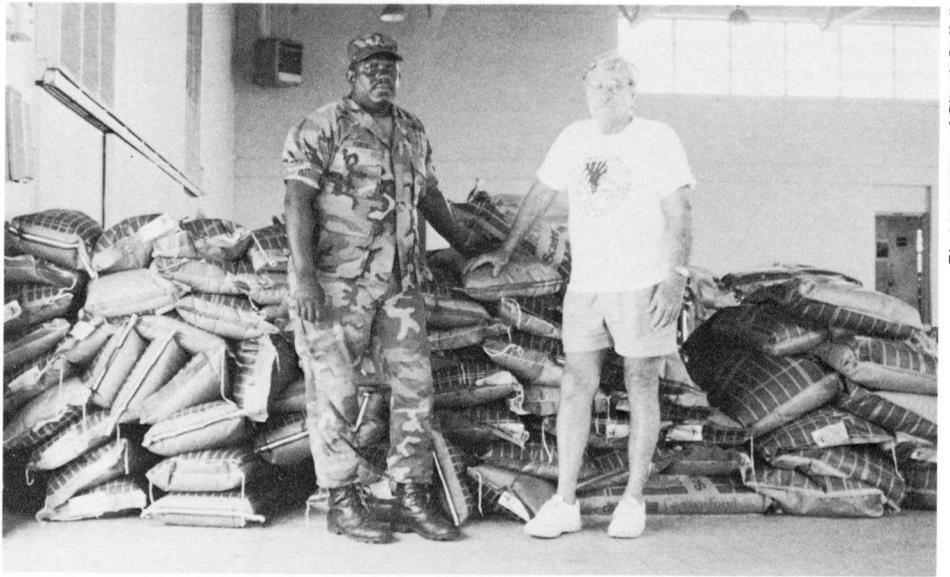
At Luv Them Birds, a concrete block building was totaled out. Some birds were housed in here during the storm. Miraculously, they survived, but it took some doing to remove debris to get to them.

Louisiana affected by Hurricane Andrew. Other AFA members who have been active in assisting bird breeders and owners who are in need of help include **Bob Smith**, AFA Education & Media Services Chairman; **Starr Kirchhoff**, AFA Mid-Eastern Regional Vice President and **John Goss**. **Morgan Knox**, AFA Southeast Regional Vice President and **Diana Skalsky (McNabb)**, AFA Nominations and Elections Co-Chair have been active and are coordinating teams to do physical repairs in devastated areas.

AFA will publish a list of major supply donations in an upcoming *Watchbird*. To help deal with the scope of this disaster, AFA spearheaded the coalition of two affiliated AFA clubs; Gold Coast All Bird Club, Inc. and the Parrot Society of South Florida, along with the South Florida Budgerigar Society, Avian Cage Bird Club, and the Tropical Cockatiel and Lovebird Society to form the **South Florida Avian Relief (SOFAR)**. This organization and AFA will continue to work together to provide aid and support to those in need. SOFAR has secured a warehouse just 20 minutes from the hardest hit areas. Volunteers are donating time and physical effort distributing much needed supplies. For details on SOFAR, call AFA member and Gold Coast All Bird Club, Inc. President Vivain Swain at (407) 790-4154.

The success of the project requires the joint effort of all bird lovers including individuals, clubs and avian supporters. AFA has established a **Disaster Relief Fund**. Donations are desperately needed. Money contributed will be used to offset the cost of supplying help to those in need. Any excess funds will be maintained for help with future disasters. Both monetary contributions and supplies are needed now to help the birds in Florida and Louisiana. Items needed include: bird seed/pellets, peanuts, handfeeding formula, cage wire, wire cutters, water, wood shavings, J-clips, crimpers, veterinarian supplies, nets, nest boxes, and canned food. When help is needed, AFA is dedicated to assisting the avicultural community.

Don't delay! Your support is needed right away!



The Florida National Guard Armory, Palmetto, serves as the west coast main supplies depot for AFA avian aid pouring into the southern end of the state. Chuck Saffell (right) and U.S. Army personnel stand with recent donation. Chuck has been one of the vanguards and chief coordinators of the Andrew Disaster Relief movement.

Photo courtesy of Chuck Saffell



Brandon Avian Society members prove they can move mountains. Dollie wheels and frame groan . . . and backs strain to off-load 7,000 lbs. of donated seed to storage. It will soon be on-loaded again to another truck making the run into the disaster area.

Photo by Chuck Saffell

SUPPLY DONATIONS

For information and scheduling shipments call:
 Chuck Saffell (813) 722-0997
 AFA First Vice President
 Palmetto, FL
 OR
 Robert Benaim or "Bear" (305) 885-2527
 Parrot Society of South Florida
 at the Dade, Florida warehouse

MONETARY DONATIONS

Make checks payable to:
 AFA Disaster Relief
 Mail to:
 AFA, P.O. Box 56218,
 Phoenix, AZ 85079-6218

All monetary donations will receive a tax deduction receipt, thank you letter and be listed in the AFA *Watchbird*.



Photo courtesy of Chuck Saffell

Chuck made arrangements with another compassionate businessman in Palmetto (Woody's Tomato Packing Corp.) who loaned AFA the use of a forklift and additional warehouse space. Here a big donation from Topper Bird Ranch gets proper handling.



Photo by Chuck Saffell

Members of the Brandon Avian Society take a break after they off-loaded 7,000 lbs. of bird seed for safe storage and re-distribution at the National Guard Armory, Palmetto.



Photo by Chuck Saffell

Hurricane Andrew

*by Morgan Knox and Dwight Greenberg
as told to Diana Skalsky (McNabb)
Narcoossee, Florida*

You all must be aware by now that south Florida was devastated, almost demolished, by Hurricane Andrew. It went through Monday, August 31st. By late Tuesday, telephone calls to my home were non-stop and my line remained busy for 18 hours daily for five days. Wednesday I spent almost the entire day setting up a communication and information network. Communication was spotty to virtually non-existent in the disaster area as most phone lines were down and power was out. Information coming out was hand carried by people coming out, with us receiving it third and fourth hand. Our major concern was what was true and false, exaggeration versus reality.

In this story we would like to use victims' names. We also wish we could get information on all your bird friends in south Florida. We saw very few people on this first day trip to Miami. We also do not want to contribute to the rumors and exaggerated stories that are already running rampant. In the future, we will provide you with additional *confirmed* information on individual people. Remember, by the time you receive this *Watchbird*, hopefully you will have communicated with your birdie buddies.

One of my first contacts into the area was with Sally Zonner at Avian Specialties, an AFA commercial member. She had already initiated a relief effort on her own to help aviculturists. I spent hours talking with her, figuring out what was needed. The American Red Cross and other groups were putting their relief requests over local TV and, of course, none of these included bird seed or supplies. Sally donated feed and other supplies, acted as a drop off point for distribution and helped both us as well as victims in the area. Thank you to a very special lady!

I called Dwight Greenberg of Cocoa and asked if he would be willing to go down with me to help with relief efforts. We knew that a lot of work would need to be done, a lot of clearing and other things like that. Information coming out of the area was spotty and nothing could be con-

This is all that's left of private aviculturist Karin Zwerette's backyard aviaries. Can you imagine the cost and energy just to clean it up? One of her doves sits on a high branch, waiting for food and order to be restored.

firmed. Dwight and I decided to go into the disaster area to assess what could best be done to help. We contacted Sally Zonner and she was able to arrange passes for us to get into the area. I was also in contact with Chuck Saffell who is spearheading AFA's donation drive; and two bird clubs in the Miami area. I made arrangements for club officers to meet us at Avian Specialties on Friday morning. Not only did I want to meet them to get reports of damage that any of their members might have sustained, but we also needed tour guides into the area. Many of the places I had been before but I had been warned that all local landmarks and street signs were non-existent. Also, roads might have been blocked; U-turns were a frequent occurrence on this trip.

Further calls into the area turned up an immediate need for veterinary supplies to assist the avian vets who were working in the area. Local vets; Dr. Andrix of St. Cloud Animal Hospital, Dr. Robert Hess of Winter Park Veterinary Clinic, Dr. Gefferey Slade of Sebastian Animal Hospital and Dr. Mahler at Pershing Oaks Animal Hospital were contacted for donations. They immediately threw together relief packages. Further supplies were picked up at local pet shops; we did have a small supply of seed, bottled water and numerous other emergency first aid and disaster relief supplies. (Three-fourths of the back of our truck was full of donated vet supplies.)

I left St. Cloud at 4:00 a.m. and drove to Cocoa to pick up Dwight. Being a bit cynical about mankind lately, on the way down we were both surprised to see relief caravans from the Carolinas, Tennessee, Alabama and Georgia. Seeing everyone from all over pitching in to get these people help was extremely heartening. The toll system was suspended in south Florida as well as the weigh scales so that relief vehicles could get in as quickly as possible.

Our first stop going into Miami was with Sally Zonner at Avian Specialties and we picked up our relief credentials and passes from her (Thanks again!). We also dropped off the vet supplies and reloaded more supplies to be carried into disaster areas. We met with Gold Coast All Bird Club; Vivian Swain, Gloria Balaban and Joan Kohl. We also met with Art Yerian, general manager and curator of Flamingo Gardens (an animal park administered by the city of Davie). Later, we were to meet Neva Wheeler, v.p. of the Parrot Society of south Florida. We continued our tour into the disaster area.

Our first stop was a dog kennel in Davie, where 62 birds had been dropped off immediately before "Andrew" hit.



Photo by Louise Auger

Chuck Saffell's van was "maxed out" with a load of Zu-Preen monkey chow. The vehicles (van and rented truck) were driven by Louise and Chuck from AFA's main warehouse in Palmetto, FL (west coast) to the Dade County area which is in need of just about everything.

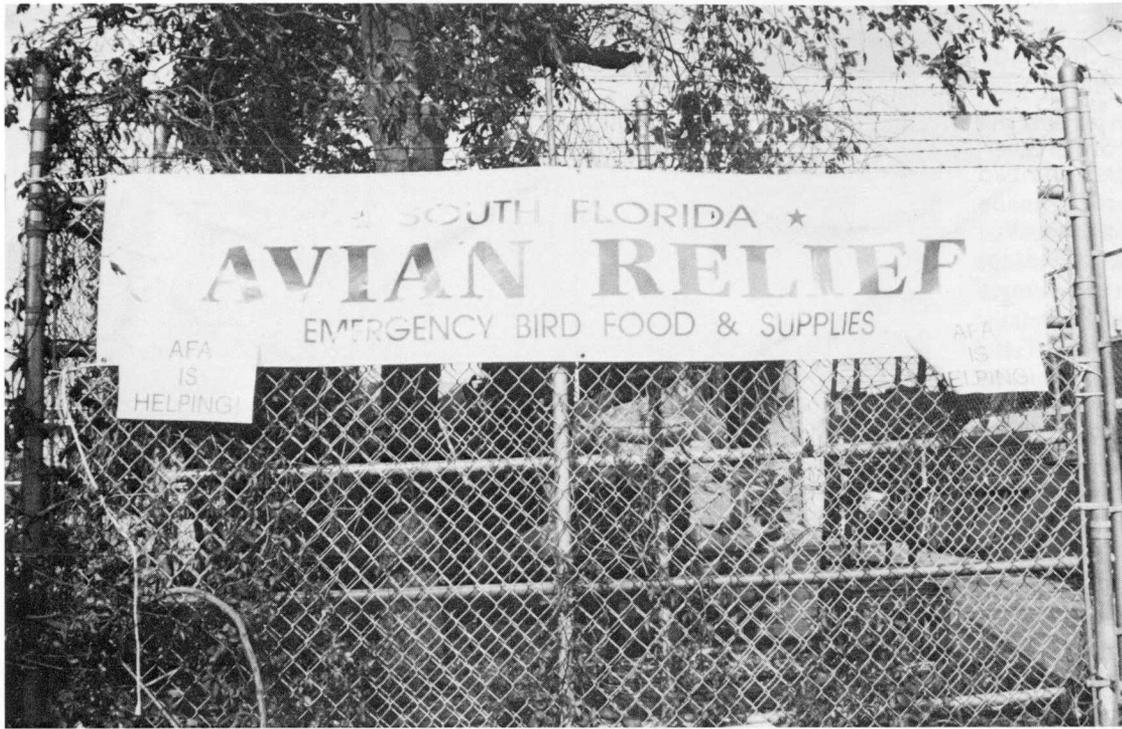


Photo by Chuck Saffell

A fully loaded, rented truck makes a delivery to the AFA SOFAR distribution center in Dade County. Local bird club volunteer starts attaching the AFA/SOFAR banner to the fence.

We had heard numerous conflicting reports about these birds, and felt that first hand observation was the only way to evaluate the situation. The birds were found to be in pretty good shape. A local veterinarian had already stopped by and removed the injured and sick birds. A second vet had come in a day later and

removed two additional birds which were stressed out. The remaining birds were being cared for by a member of the Gold Coast All Bird Club. When we got there, they were in excellent condition considering what they had just been through and they had adequate supplies of food and water. The preceding two days we had



AFA/SOFAR announces its presence at a Dade County warehouse.

been looking for the owner, but could not contact her. We requested that the kennel owner keep these birds until the owner showed up and only release birds for vet care. She expressed concern over taking care of the birds because she had lost some staff as they no longer had homes and had left the area. The kennels' interior was in good condition; however, the exterior had severe wind damage, and many trees were blown over. As in all places in the area, existing resources are being taxed to the maximum — this is

another reason why we called Gold Coast Bird Club to come in and help out.

Dwight and I have both been in third world countries (military duty) and we thought we were prepared for the devastation wreaked by Andrew, but as we came into the area and started seeing power lines down and other damage, we knew that we were not prepared, as neither of us had experienced anything like this. Literally, thousands of buildings were damaged, many totally destroyed. Acres and acres of avocado and citrus groves were

totally destroyed, every leaf gone, most branches sheared with fruit lying on the ground. Pine trees broke like toothpicks. If you didn't run over 250-plus power lines in a mile, that street had already been cleaned up. Pieces of tin roof everywhere, plywood pieces everywhere. Roof tops picked clean, some with the plywood still on. Concrete telephone poles, which were supposedly hurricane proof, were down. Rebar was bent and twisted. Telephone poles snapped in two. Windows broken, walls and roofs flattened, trees on

At a local drop-off point in the heavily damaged area, people come, ask for, and get . . . free parakeet, lovebird, macaw, finch and chicken feed and seed mixes.



homes and cars, the list was endless. The area affected seemed endless as we drove further on.

We drove down into the Goulds area and could not recognize anything. We, as well as our tour guides, spent a lot of time getting lost and backtracking. There were no reference points to help us get where we were going, even people who lived in the area had told me they could not find their own homes because of all the destruction and damage. You cannot imagine the problems you would have getting around in an area without street signs, landmarks, convenience stores or fast food restaurants! Initially, we tried to get into Monkey Jungle. Art Yerian is a primate specialist and we had heard that Monkey Jungle was in terrible need of assistance and food. Due to blocked roads, we were not able to get to Monkey Jungle and instead found Kathleen Harring, Luv Them Birds.

Luv Them Birds was completely devastated, the facilities (except the house) were all blown to the ground. All of the birds had been caught before the storm and brought into the house. They lost only one pair that had been overlooked. Kathleen already had work crews there trying to put her farm back together. She is not in need of assistance, just loving thoughts. Using Kathleen's place as a reference point, we were able to locate other avicultural collections in the area.

The next collection we checked had been able to bring in their birds before the hurricane and sustained only one casualty. Unfortunately, it was a half of a breeding pair of Golden Coures.

The next collection seemed to have very good control over what was going on. They actually refused supplies and referred us on to other people who probably needed the supplies more.

Unfortunately, the next collection did sustain damage. The 4' x 4' x 8' elevated breeding flights for macaws were spread on the ground over about an acre of open pasture. The cages still had the birds in them. They appeared to be in good shape, however, they were sitting out in the sun and it was getting hot in the middle of the afternoon. We were able to find plywood easily and provide shade for these birds. We also made sure they were checked on later to insure they were being fed and watered properly. Worse yet, this man's smaller bird collection had been kept in a single bird house. The roof had collapsed in on top of the birds. It appeared that there were approximately a dozen mortality cases in this group. Many birds were trapped in their cages and the gentleman there was having a difficult time getting food and water to them. The owner had left the area to get building supplies, additional food, and friends to help him take his bird house apart, piece by piece, catching birds as they got to them.

We stopped at Robbie's Feed and Seed in Goulds. I talked to the owner, who was more than happy to help with our relief efforts. He is willing to take supplies and distribute them to people in need of them. He actually had his own water source so the 24 gallons of water we brought were not needed here.

Our experience in the Goulds area was that if somebody did not need help, they

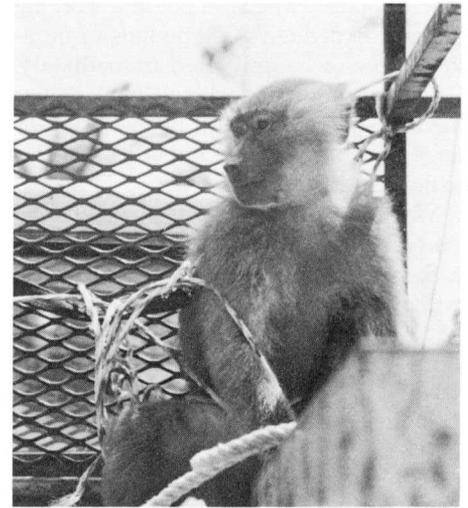


Photo by Chuck Saffell

This forlorn tame and handsome baboon was found wet, scared and hungry. Here he's tethered to the back end of a truck bed until proper facilities can be found.

did not accept offers of help. We gave water to people who needed it, we gave bird food to people who needed it. I do not understand how a person who's roof has blown off and is barely being able to make it would refuse assistance and tell us to go find somebody else who needed it more!

Late afternoon we tried to get to Monkey Jungle again. This time we were successful. Between late morning and that afternoon the road had been cleared and vehicles were able to get through. It, as well as this entire area, will never be the same. Art Yerian (the primate specialist), Dwight and I were able to meet with the owner. They were very short on food and a quick call to Renn Danzer at Sunshine

Photo by Chuck Saffell



Monkey Jungle was totaled out. Badly needed feed and water arrives by handcart. The sign posted by entrance expresses frustration and urgency, "We need workers, help us!"

Bird Supplies (when we got to a working phone!) expedited 1000 pounds of monkey chow to be delivered immediately. Renn Danzer and Sunshine Bird Supplies have also donated and delivered very large quantities of seed and other supplies to the disaster area. Thanks!

We were under the gun, timewise — curfew was at 7:00 p.m. in the disaster area and we did not want to get stuck without our own supplies. If we were not out by curfew, we couldn't leave until the next morning — relief personnel or whomever.

We left Monkey Jungle and proceeded to Miami Metrozoo. On our way, we did see a lot of devastation. Those of you who are familiar with the area can probably remember the mobile home park that used to be located next to the zoo. We passed by this mobile home park. My estimate is that there were originally 500 homes in the park. On this trip, it looked like a pile of rubble that covered acres of land. Nothing stood over four feet tall with the exception of an occasional refrigerator or dining hutch.

As we approached the zoo, the public was not allowed entrance past Coral Reef Drive. There were both private guards as well as military guards. We were admitted and escorted into the main warehouse and the hospital facility to meet with Ron Johnson, bird curator. Again, the devastation was evident everywhere. (Please see the photos of what remains of "Wings Of Asia.") The old railroad cars by the

museum were stacked on top of each other, pushed over — totally destroyed. We met with Ron and he informed us that the zoo, though not under control at that time, needed no assistance from the private sector. AAZPA and Busch Gardens (Tampa) are mounting a major relief effort for them. Many of the animals had already been removed. All of the birds that were not in Wings Of Asia have already been relocated to Busch Gardens. Busch Gardens is running a daily refrigerated supply truck so neither keepers nor animals are in any serious problem right now. I will note that Ron was very happy to have a cold soda pop, and those of you who know Ron realize that this is completely out of character. Everyone appreciated anything that was iced down. Ice is a non-existent commodity in this area (remember — very little running water and no electricity). A common complaint was that people were getting sunburned as the tree canopies have all been destroyed. In Miami Metrozoo, we saw one truck parked upside down on top of another truck. By now, our time was running short and Ron had to usher us out of the zoo so we would not be caught by the curfew.

In the short time we were at the zoo, someone showed up with a small conure they had found. We immediately took the conure, fed and watered it with supplies we had and have since made arrangements for it to be placed in a holding facility. A short time later, a woman came in from Homestead who had 17 birds and

a small collection of cats and dogs. She was not willing to leave the area without knowing her animals were being taken care of. This lady told me, "A week ago I was comfortable, had a roof over my head and my loving pets." At this point she started crying, turned around pointing to her car and said, "That's all I have anymore." And the car wasn't much to look at — it looked as though a couple of power poles had fallen on it during the storm.

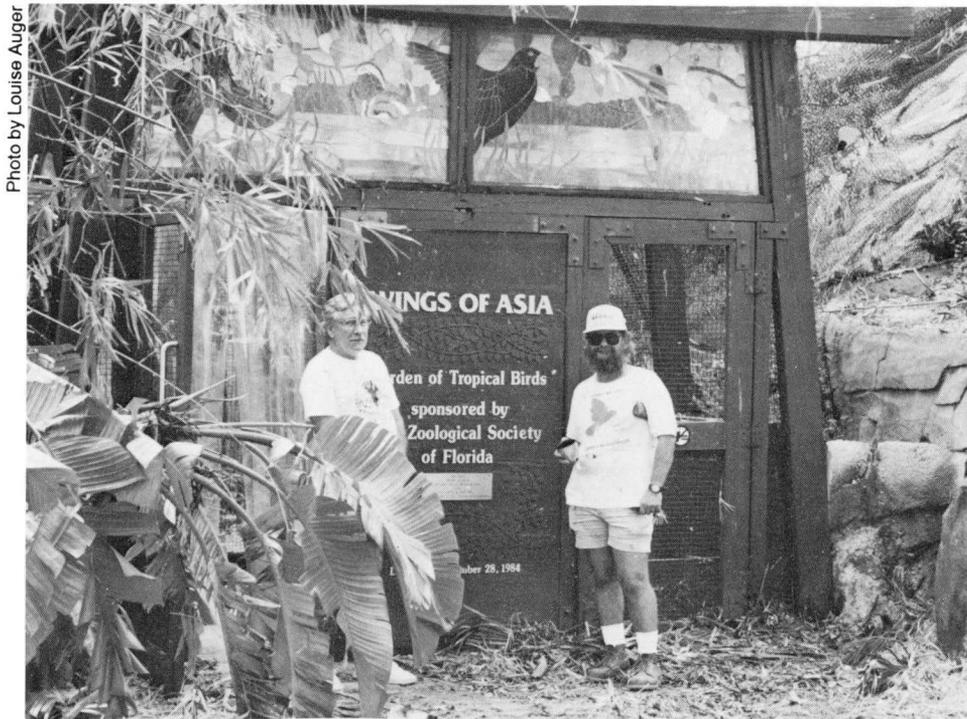
To experience Miami during rush hour traffic with traffic lights working is nightmare enough, but imagine, if you will, no power, no traffic lights, no one directing traffic. What used to be a 15 minute trip now takes two and a half to three hours. It's a commuter's nightmare. We were among those fortunate enough to have a vehicle and gas. Many people lost their vehicles and others have already run out of gas or don't have enough gas to find more.

As soon as we were out of the area, we unloaded all our tour guides and proceeded to the comforts of home. Filled with information we had gathered, we spent the trip home trying to work out immediate relief plans.

Many bird clubs and individuals are calling us and volunteering to help from all over the country — speaking for ourselves as well as those in south Florida, thank you! Please keep the donations coming. Items still needed: baby food, produce, cage building and disassembling tools, heavy equipment (bulldozers, tractors, etc.), sterno, talcum powder, mosquito repellent and, of course, money! It will take several months for these people to rebuild their homes, aviaries and lives. Many people don't have jobs as the buildings where they worked are either without power or were destroyed. Rivers of tears have been shed, both by the victims as well as ourselves. The stress of it all is now beginning to show on people and their birds.

What is AFA doing? Plenty! Chuck Saffell has obtained a warehouse and is soliciting donations from manufacturers (truck loads of seed, bedding material, tools, wire, crimps, baby food, etc.) as well as sending down loads to distribution points. The seven clubs in the area have banded together and are distributing delivered materials to whomever needs them. Morgan and Dwight are coordinating work crews to go into the area and begin cleanup of aviaries where needed.

There are already a tremendous number of individuals and clubs who have donated time, products and money. If we have your names, we will thank all of you formally in an upcoming issue of *Watch-bird*. ●



As is the nature of disasters . . . 99-1/2% is gone. The 1/2% left intact is a main entrance to Wings Of Asia still complete with its decorative stained glass panels. Chuck Saffell (left) and Ron Johnson, curator of birds at the Miami Metrozoo, are about to enter and survey the sorry remains.