



SPRING 2014

Society Pages

News from Friends of the J.N. "Ding" Darling National Wildlife Refuge

ABOUT THE SOCIETY

"Ding" Darling Wildlife Society, a nonprofit Friends of the Refuge organization, supports environmental education and services at J.N. "Ding" Darling National Wildlife Refuge. It depends on membership support and private contributions and is grateful to those who help fund projects such as the Education Center, internships, interpretive signage, research, student education, and informational literature.



An osprey "sculpture" in progress: Upcycle artist Andrew Corke is donating the festival's signature silent auction piece.

UPCYCLE! ART FEST

Get ready for Sanibel Island's first fine arts and crafts event to require the use of repurposed and re-envisioned materials on Wednesday, April 16, 2014, at the Refuge. Twenty-five artists working in all media from around the U.S. will participate in the Upcycle! Art Fest.

"We are planning an educational and entertaining event that will directly benefit wildlife and its habitat
continued on page 7

Tarpon Tournney Heats Up

A 100 percent purse and Randy Wayne White's participation promise to make the third annual "Ding" Darling & Doc Ford's Tarpon Tournament on May 3, 2014, the hottest competition on the water.

It is the only local tarpon tournament that awards 100 percent of the entry fee (\$500 per boat of up to four). Even with the big payout, the tournament raised \$40,000 last year for the Refuge.



A few spots remain for the 50-limit, catch-release-and-care tournament. The Captain's Dinner will take place the previous evening, May 2, at Doc Ford's Rum Bar & Grille on Fort Myers Beach.

Doc Ford's — with locations on Sanibel Island, Captiva Island, and Fort Myers Beach — has again
continued on page 7



Fishermen set out at first light.



Team Teaser netted the big check for first place.



Marty Harry, co-owner of title sponsor Doc Ford's Rum Bar & Grille, watches as boats turn out at dawn to get out there and get fishing.



Guests and volunteers had fun in the In the Pink Photo Booth

Thanks to our Trailgate Sponsors and Donors

Please thank and support our generous Trailgate Party sponsors: **Spoonbill Level:** Mark and Gretchen Banks, The Wilbur Smith Law Firm; **Bear Level:** Bailey's General Store, Cip's Place, Darlene and Bob Duvin, George & Wendy's Seafood Grille, Jacaranda Seafood House, Queenie's Real Homemade Ice Cream, Traders Café & Store; **Gator Level:** Billy's Rentals, Caloosa Tent & Rental, Chris Coile, Dan Hahn Custom Builders, The Eco Plumbers, Gulf Coast Palm & Tree, Heidrick Insurance, Island Events, John Grey Painting, Law Office of Janet M. Strickland, PA., Mabry Brothers Electric, Propane People, Ryan Schuetz, Suncatchers' Dream, Suncoast Portable Sanitation, Don & Ann-Marie Wildman

And our auction donors, who made the fundraiser a success: 50% off Framing, Ace Hardware,

Adventures in Paradise, Terry Baldwin, Mark & Gretchen Banks, Big Red Q, Billy's Bikes & Rentals, Jaye Boswell, Broadway Palm, Captiva Kayak, Cason Photography Studio, Luc Century, Clyde Butcher Gallery, Disney, Doc Ford's Rum Bar & Grille, Jerry Edelman, The Dunes Golf, Finnimore's Cycle Shop, Dick Fortune & Sara Lopez, Gramma Dots, Leah Godley, The Green Flash, Green House Coffee, The Grog Shop, Judy Hicks, Island Inn, Island Paws, Island Therapy Center, Jerry's Market, Kathee Jones, Mary Klaus, Lighthouse Cafe, Macintosh Books and Paper, Birgie Miller, Lyn Morningstar, The Mucky Duck, Offshore Sailing School, Over Easy Cafe, Johnna Patterson and Al Romanoski, Myra Roberts, Carol Rothman, The Sandbar, Kandi Sanger, Sangria Grill, Sanibel Bookshop, Sanibel Deli, Sanibel Island Golf Club, Sanibel Seashell Industries, Sanybel's



Our best-dressed-in-pink couple, Laurie and Bill Harkey from Carlisle, Pennsylvania

Finest, Schnapper's Hots, SeaWorld Orlando/Aquatica, Shell Point Retirement Community, Charlie Sobczak, Jim Sprinkle, Patty Sprinkle, Suncatcher's Dream, Sweet Melissa's Cafe, Tarpon Bay Explorers, Tommy Dixon Collections, Tween Waters Inn, Vortex Binoculars, Dorothy Wallace, Chelle Koster Walton, Ann-Marie Wildman, Curt Will, Jean and Ralph Woodring

Welcome to our New Board Members

The "Ding" Darling Wildlife Society Board of Directors recently welcomed four new members: Sarah Ashton, Mike Baldwin, Vasanta Senerat, and Richard Yanke.

Sarah, a broker associate for Royal Shell Real Estate, moved to Sanibel in 2001 and has been biking Wildlife Drive ever since. A former board member and chair of the Sanibel and Captiva Chamber of Commerce, she will serve on the Advocacy Committee for DDWS.

Mike has lived on Sanibel for 14 years after retir-



Sarah Ashton



Mike Baldwin



Vasanta Senerat



Richard Yanke

ing as vice president of technology at Millennium Petrochemical. Until last year he continued to consult on health, safety, and environmental issues in the oil, chemical, and energy industries. He has already taken an active role in the DDWS Advocacy Committee.

Certified Public Accountant Vasanta has been operating her accounting practice in Fort Myers since 1994 and Sanibel since 2004. She has served on the boards for the Bailey-Matthews Shell Museum, Fort Myers

Women's Network, Southwest Florida Addiction Services, and others. She has accepted the position of board treasurer for DDWS.

Richard's vast professional background includes chief information officer and information technology director in the banking industry as well as health care, public accounting, education, and business impact analyses. He will head the newly formed DDWS IT Committee.

Sea Monsters Exhibit

Venom, ultra vision, jaws, bioluminescence: These are some of the fascinating “monster” characteristics of certain sea creatures.

The Sea Monsters traveling exhibit — on loan from Mote Marine Laboratory, 1600 Ken Thompson Parkway, Sarasota, FL 34236 — arrives at the Refuge this summer to engage visitors in these mysterious and intriguing attributes.

Opening June 1, 2014, the free exhibit explains how the unusual animal characteristics are adaptations to extreme underwater environments. Visitors can interact with the exhibit through August 18, 2014, during regular hours in the free Visitor & Education Center — 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. daily.

Some features of the 12-foot exhibit include a Monster Makeover panel where visitors can see themselves with different monster attributes, Fold-down Sea Puzzle, mako shark jaws and tooth-diet matching activity, touchable shark skin, inflated giant squid, and other interactive elements.

The Refuge will also schedule special interactive programs where participants can learn about marine animals through a live videoconference with Mote’s science educators, who will speak to guests through a TV screen in the exhibit.

Tarpon Bay Explorers, the Refuge’s recreation concessionaire, will be offering discounts on their boat and touch tank excursions during the duration of the exhibit. Refuge staff is planning additional free summer programs that will tie in with this exhibit, including crafts and storytelling. For more information on the Refuge’s schedule of free summer programs, visit www.dingdarlingsociety.org/summer-programs.

The Sea Monsters exhibit’s visit to “Ding” Darling was made possible by DDWS and grants from the Southwest Florida Community Foundation and a private family foundation. Part of the grants funds will provide transportation to bring disadvantaged children to the Refuge who wouldn’t otherwise be able to come on their own and experience the exhibit.



Sea Monsters invade the Refuge this summer. Photo courtesy of Mote Marine Laboratory



Bagzilla wears a year’s worth of an average person’s disposable bag consumption.

Earth Day at the Refuge 2014

Trash-talking, plarn (yarn made from plastic bags), and Bagzilla: These are just a few highlights of the adult and kid activities that will be available at the Refuge’s free Earth Day celebration on Saturday, April 19, 2014.

Free activities will include giveaways to the first 200 arrivals, earth crafts in the Education Center Classroom, a guided hike along Indigo Trail and the new Wildlife Education Boardwalk, a “trashy” contest for kids, family story-times, free admission to Wildlife Drive for hikers and bikers, free bike rentals, plein-air artists, and upcycle trash activities.

“We are gearing our activities for all ages,” said Ranger Becky Wolff, refuge education specialist. “We’ll bring back our disposable bag-costumed Bagzilla character and teach people how to turn trash into jewelry and other masterpieces.”

J. N. “Ding” Darling National Wildlife Refuge, the “Ding” Darling Wildlife Society-Friends of the Refuge (DDWS), and Tarpon Bay Explorers co-host Earth Day at the Refuge. Watch local papers for more details, visit www.dingdarlingsociety.org, or call 239-472-1100 ext. 236.

‘Dingers’ Meet Secretary Jewel

Secretary of Interior Sally Jewel recently visited Florida and met up with Refuge and Society staff. Here President John McCabe meets with Secretary of Interior Sally Jewel at Duando Ranch, part of the Everglades Headwaters NWR acquisition in central Florida. Below, DDWS staff pose with the secretary at an Everglades Coalition function.



FOLLOW AND LIKE US

DDWS is currently active on three social media platforms. Please “LIKE” us on **Facebook** by searching “Ding” Darling Wildlife Society. (You can also “LIKE” the Refuge by searching for its “Official” page.)

Instagram users can find us at @dingdarlingwildlifesociety. To follow us on **Pinterest**, search for Ding Darling and then click “Pinner” at the top left.



Volunteer Awards

The Refuge and Wildlife Society celebrated our annual Volunteer Awards Luncheon on February 28, 2014, at Sanibel Community House.

"The Refuge would not be able to operate as it does without the valuable support of our volunteer corps," says Ranger Jeff Combs, who oversees the Refuge's public services. At the luncheon, volunteers honored

Jeff with an award to thank him for his service and loyalty to the volunteers.

He reports that in 2013, 270 volunteers worked more than 33,873 hours at the Refuge, representing a labor savings of 16 staff members and \$846,762.

Staff and volunteers were honored by the attendance of regional and national wildlife system representatives.

The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Southeast Region's Visitor Services Chief Garry Tucker came from Atlanta for the occasion, and David Houghton, President of the National Wildlife Refuge Association, flew in from Washington, D.C., to address and applaud the volunteers.

The packed house gave a standing ovation to Mary Lou Schadt, the first Refuge volunteer ever to bring home an award for 30 years of volunteerism. Jeanne Rankin also took top honors with a 9,500-hour award.

Below is a list of volunteers who won awards for reaching hour and year achievement levels.

MEMORIAL AND HONOR GIFTS

December 7, 2013 – March 7, 2014

Memorial gifts and gifts made in honor of special occasions are a wonderful way to pay tribute to family and friends who have been important to us. Throughout the year, the "Ding" Darling Wildlife Society has received gifts in memory and in honor of loved ones. Thank you to everyone who supported the Refuge in this thoughtful and meaningful way.

We recently received gifts in MEMORY of the following:

David B. Butts	Edward Leighton
Jeff Case	Gordon Martin
Jeanne P. Clear	Burton James McGlynn
Mary Rose Doke	Joyce Mutz
John Fisher	Marion Oleson
Wilfred Gardner	Gerald Paulsen
Hank Hill	Joseph H. Petersen
Joseph Hoffman	Herbert Pincus
Pete Ingham	Joan Pope
Dale Jensen	Dorothy Darling Powel
Joan Kelly	Donald Roessler
Joane Reade Kelly	Florence Savage
Steve Kelsch	Dr. R. Denison Stewart
Mark Kirk	Jacquelyn Tetherston
Kip Koss	Nora W. Wells
Molly Krival	Jane and Clem Werner

We received gifts in HONOR of:

Julie Armantrout	Kevan and Lynn Rehm
Terry Baldwin	Paula Reiss
Marvin A. Black	Wendy Rex
Jeff Combs	Tina Ross
Tony and Isabella Corsaro	Jim and Anne Scott
H. Frank Hicks	Gregg and Lisa Skinner
Marilyn Kloosterman	Bill and Shirley Soltow
Chip Lesch	Jim Sprinkle
Karen Lewis	Patty Sprinkle
Wanda Daugherty and	Birgie Vertesch
Lou Klein	Frances & Charles Webb
Robert Meeker	John and Martha Wolf
Brian and Dolores Mishell	Patsy Zapf
The Peabody Ducks	John D. Zimmerman
Carol and Bill Redeker	

30-year award

Mary Lou Schadt

20-year award

Bob Ingraham
June Ingraham

10-year award

James Griffith
Polly Huntington
Miriam Hursey
Allen Marcus
Brian Mishell
Dolores Mishell
Irene Rabor



Regional administrator Garry Tucker congratulates Mary Lou Schadt for 30 years of volunteer service.

9,500 hours

Jeanne Rankin

5,500 hours

Jack Rushworth

5,000 hours

Judy Davis

4,000 hours

Is Cloak
Ed Combs
John Masuka

3,500 hours

Doris Hardy

3,000 hours

Latham Morris
Mary Lou Schadt

2,500 hours

Anne Bresslau
Betsy Doonan
Miriam Hursey
Carolyn Johns

2,000 hours

Bart Cuderman
Malcolm Harpham
John Wettstein
Patty Wettstein

1,500 hours

Tom Edgar
John McCabe
Tom Mustachio
Shirley Schiffman
John Wettstein

Patty Wettstein

1,000 hours

Lea Brown
Patsy Dicken
Bob Dicken
Charles Dunham
Lynda Dunham
Alan Gast
Harold Johnstone
John McCabe
Alan Parker
Linda Parker
Edith Rood
Maureen Schiller

500 hours

Robert Blacklow
Gary Dutton
Carol Herr
John Herr
Polly Huntington
Jim Newes
France Paulsen
Marian Pool
Wendy Schnapp
Helen Taylor

250 hours

Pat Appino
Joyce Barney

Claudia Burns
Karitha Charoensri
Maryann Czarnecki
Thomas Hoopes
William Lupfer
Pat Lussier
Phillip Nye
France Paulsen
Joanne Reece
Greg Scherer
Ruth Schudel
Cindy Seaman
David Sharpe
Steven Speirs
Sally Stranahan
Roger Tosch
John Waszmer

150 hours

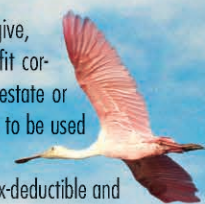
Lyndon Borrer
Barb Guidotti
James Jackson
Kevin Kloesz
Tom Mehalic
France Paulsen
Robert Roth
Nancy Sebree
Jane Sharpe
Sally Stranahan
John Waszmer

Leave a Legacy and Support 'Ding' Darling in Your Estate Plans

"Ding" Darling Wildlife Society (DDWS) is proud to be mentioned in many of our departed benefactors' Last Wills and Testaments and as beneficiaries of retirement and other estate plans. It's quite simple to do.

You may name DDWS in your will as follows: "I, [name], of [city, state, ZIP] give, devise, and bequeath to the "Ding" Darling Wildlife Society, Inc., a Florida non-profit corporation located on Sanibel Island, Florida" [written amount or percentage of the estate or description of property] for [designate the purpose, if desired, or leave blank for gifts to be used to address the greatest need]."

The IRS has granted DDWS tax-exempt status and any gift to our organization is tax-deductible and will help offset inheritance taxes your family or friends might otherwise be obligated to pay. For more information, visit our Web site at www.dingdarlingsociety.org/bequest.



TBE Tops \$50,000 in Contributions

As part of the Guest Contribution Partners (GCP) program, Tarpon Bay Explorers (TBE) recently exceeded \$50,000 in charitable funds contributed to DDWS.

"We have really enjoyed this fundraising," said Wendy Schnapp, TBE co-owner. "We ask for one dollar on every transaction and get lots of fun responses such as: 'How can you say no to a dollar?' or 'Why don't you make it \$10. We love this place!'"

TBE, the Refuge's official recreation concession, joined the GCP program in March 2009. The five-year-old program partners with local businesses that raise money to support the Refuge by giving guests and customers the option of donating \$1 per night or transaction.

"Tarpon Bay provides amazing support for the Refuge in this and so many other countless ways," said Birgie Miller, DDWS executive director. "We are so grateful to all of our most valued GCP partners."



The Refuge's Blue Goose mascot poses with staff at Tarpon Bay Explorers.

"It's been such a pleasure to thank our customers and to let them know how much we've raised a dollar at a time as we approached this monumental 50,000 mark," said Wendy.

For information on participating in GCP, please contact Birgie Miller at 239-292-0566 or director@dingdarlingsociety.org.

South Seas Joins GCP

South Seas Island Resort recently joined "Ding" Darling's Guest Contribution Partners (GCP) program as the eighth island business to combine forces in support of the Refuge, one of the islands' main economic drivers.

"By partnering with the 'Ding' Darling Wildlife Refuge, we are able to support an integral resource to Sanibel and Captiva, while simultaneously informing our guests of the amazing experience awaiting at the Refuge," said Daniel Smock, who handles marketing and communications for South Seas.

GCP partners agree to give their guests and customers the option to donate \$1 to the Refuge per night or transaction. Thus far, the program has contributed more than \$100,000 total, 100 percent of which goes directly to benefit conservation and education programs at the Refuge.

"We are so grateful to our accommodation and business partners for being a part of this program, which

gives their guests and customers an opportunity to show appreciation for their experiences at the Refuge," said Birgie Miller, executive director of the "Ding" Darling Wildlife Society, which manages the program. "These gifts will strengthen the Refuge even further in the areas of conservation, research and education."

"We welcome South Seas with open arms," Birgie added. "With 330 acres and more than 100 thousand guests each year, the partnership is certain to pay off for the wildlife."

"Birgie and [DDWS] president John McCabe made the process incredibly easy," said Daniel. "They provided educational materials to promote the Refuge and explain how the donations will be used to continue to offer memorable experiences to its visitors. All we had to do is add a posting code in our property management system to route the donations, and we'll be able to

Rare Bird Alert

A White-Crowned Pigeon, the national bird of the Bahamas, has been making rare Refuge appearances this winter. More common to the Bahamas and Caribbean, it was first spotted by birding authors/photographers Lillian and Don Stokes on one of their trips along Wild-life Drive.



The Stokes were also fortunate to spot a Mangrove Cuckoo during their charity tours of the Refuge in February. The two lead separate identification and photographer tours each year to benefit DDWS. Tarpon Bay Explorers donates the use of two trams for the annual fundraiser.

To inquire about the 2015 Stokes Tours, email director@dingdarlingsociety.org.

White-Crowned Pigeon captured by Pat Lussier



Daniel Smock with Birgie Miller and Jess Shelton.

periodically write a check for the donations collected."

Guests are eager to donate, Daniel added. "It's only \$1 per night, and it goes toward a great cause. It only takes one trip to the J.N. 'Ding' Darling Refuge to understand how special a place it is."

To thank our GCP partners, the Society recently took out ads in the *Islander* and *Island Sun*. They include Jensen's on the Gulf and Marina & Cottages, Kona Kai Motel & Cottages, Mitchell's Sand Castles and Forty/Fifteen Resort, Parrot Nest, Sanibel Moorings, South Seas Island Resort, Tarpon Tale Inn, and Tarpon Bay Explorers.

Welcome New Interns

The Refuge has welcomed three new interns to the team recently — biology interns Hanna Joergens and Libby Errickson and education intern Megan Gallagher. DDWS provides financial support for the Refuge internship program.

Libby lived from York, Pennsylvania, but most recently lived in Washington State, where she worked as a raptor counter for Hawkwatch International. Previous to that she worked on an urban bird breeding ecology study at Ohio State University and as a naturalist at New Jersey Audubon's Hawkwatch platform in Cape May, New Jersey. She holds a bachelor's degree in wildlife conservation and management from Delaware Valley College in Doylestown, Pennsylvania.

Hanna graduated from Indiana University in Bloomington with a degree in outdoor recreation and



Libby Errickson and Hanna Joergens

resource management. She has gained field experience since then in positions at Big Cypress National Preserve in Florida, Bon Secour National Wildlife Refuge in Alabama, and most recently the southern fisheries research division of the Indiana Department of Natural Resources.

Her work has focused on species from catfish to sea turtles.

Megan graduated in 2013 from the University of Massachusetts Amherst with a degree in animal science and

minor in natural resources conservation. She comes to the Refuge from Hawk Mountain Sanctuary in Pennsylvania, where she was a conservation science trainee.

"The intern program not only fulfills the Wildlife Society's mission to educate a new generation of wildlife stewards, but fills a government budget void by providing valuable manpower to assist the Refuge's overworked staff," said DDWS Executive Director Birgie Miller.



Megan Gallagher with Ranger Becky Wolff, refuge education specialist

Refuge Loses Longtime Friend

Last month, staunch Refuge supporter, Molly Krival, passed away at age 88, and will be missed mightily by staff, volunteers, and wildlife. Molly served refuge friends groups not only locally but also at the national level. She and her husband, Art, who passed away in 2010, worked many years as Refuge volunteers and DDWS board directors. Molly served as Board President for three terms.

Born in New York City, Molly developed a lifelong interest in art, opera, and world culture. In her teens she moved to Florida and later enrolled at the University of Missouri-Columbia where she met and married fellow student Art. She earned a master's degree in speech correction and began her career in speech therapy.

Art's opportunity with a U.S. Aid for International Development project took the couple to Nairobi, Kenya, in 1967. There, Molly volunteered at a speech therapy clinic. She also discovered a passion for wildlife and the natural world. Molly and Art took the family camping in the East African bush as often as possible. She became a remarkable outdoorswoman.

When the family returned from Kenya in 1970, Molly accepted a faculty position in communication disorders at the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater.

After she retired as a full professor emeritus in 1988,

Molly moved with Art to Sanibel, and they began volunteering at the Refuge. She also served two terms as chairman of the City of Sanibel Wildlife Committee, and volunteered as a trail guide for the Sanibel-Captiva Conservation Foundation. Later, she chaired the Citizens Advisory Committee for the Charlotte Harbor National Estuary Program, and she served for some years on the Board of the National Wildlife Refuge Association.

Notably, Molly developed a mentorship program to help communities form refuge friends groups and for many years traveled the U.S. and its territories in this effort. Among other awards, she received the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service's Special Commendation for Valuable Service in 1996 and was named its national Volunteer of the Year in 1998.

In 2004, Molly served as the Director of the Friends of Midway Atoll, joining a group of environmentalists from around the nation in serving the refuge there. Deeply committed to the welfare of wildlife, Molly continued to mentor her successors even after she and Art left Sanibel for Shell Point in 2005.

"I worked closely with Molly for a long time," said Emeritus Board Member Marilyn Kloosterman. "She was the driving force in getting the Board to start a



Molly Krival

campaign to build the Education Center. Molly was also on the committee to design the exhibits. She and Art were long-time rovers on the Drive."

The family has designated "Ding" Darling Wildlife Society and Harry Chapin Food Bank as beneficiaries of memorial donations. To make a memorial donation to DDWS please visit http://www.dingdarlingsociety.org/donate_cust.php.

'Ding' gets on the map — the Google map, that is

Thanks to a donation from The Will Gardner Family, visitors trying to find the entrance to the Refuge on Google won't end up at the far end of Wildlife Drive instead.

The Refuge's official address — 1 Wildlife Drive — didn't register correctly on Google Maps, so the Gardner donation went toward hiring Google photographers to come to the Refuge to take pictures and film from street side, through the Refuge, and even inside the "Ding" Darling Visitor & Education Center.

So now when prospective visitors enter "ding darling" on the Google Maps page, they can click on interactive 360-degree films that show the Refuge's en-

trance and take a virtual walk-through tour of the free Visitor & Education Center's exhibits.

More than 50 still photos give Google Maps visitors a taste of what's inside and outside at the Refuge's main campus.

"This is huge!" said Toni Westland, supervisory refuge ranger. "It will cut down on complaints about driving past the Refuge trying to find it. So frustrating for everyone!"

"As far as we know, we are the first of the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service's more than 550 refuges to offer this extensive new online conduit to the Refuge and its free Visitor & Education Center."

"The Gardner family has always been forward-

thinking in their donations," said Birgie Miller, DDWS executive director. "In the past, they have funded our web site's live video feed. They were really excited about helping us take this step toward enhancing nature with technology and education. We believe it will draw more people into the free Visitor & Education Center to learn more about the Refuge."

Of the 700,000 people who visit the Refuge annually, only about 250,000 visit the Education Center, Birgie added. "The new, colorful archway that we added last year — thanks to the AWC Foundation — has improved those numbers," she said. "But this will actually introduce people to the Center when planning their trip to Sanibel."

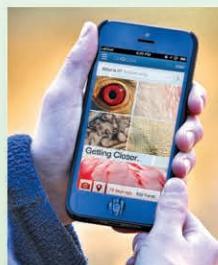
Discover 'Ding' App

A new smartphone app under development for the Refuge promises to raise the interpretive bar on national wildlife refuges by delivering the first-ever GPS and game-based learning experience to visitors. The Discover "Ding" App combines game play, GPS, and social media to create a fun experience that encourages users to observe and analyze what they see and better understand the Refuge's wildlife conservation mission.

"The Discover 'Ding' App will offer the public a fun new way to experience the Refuge, further enhancing

our effort to integrate new technology and social media into our interpretive programming," said Paul Tritaik, Refuge manager.

A collaboration among the Refuge, DDWS, and app developer Discover Nature Apps (DNA), the Discover "Ding" App is designed to adapt to the public's expanding reliance on smart devices by creating a positive interactive experience that



encourages smartphone users to immerse themselves into their natural surroundings.

"We're excited to be on the leading edge of what we believe will become a vital tool with which to engage Refuge visitors," said John McCabe, president of DDWS. The Society has been instrumental over the years in helping to underwrite innovative visitor outreach strategies and has played a leading role in promoting development of the Discover "Ding" App.

The Discover "Ding" App will be launched in the late spring of 2014, and will be the first of such for many to follow for national wildlife refuges and national parks throughout the country.

REFUGE NATURE STORE

Successful Lecture Series

The 2014 Lecture Series is drawing capacity crowds throughout its 12-week run this winter. Most lecturers presented two lectures each Friday, some even three to accommodate crowds that queued up hours before the lecture to get a seat.

The series ends spectacularly on April 11 with a presentation by noted wildlife photographer Clyde Butcher.

Many thanks to lecture series sponsor The Sanibel Captiva Trust Company. For more information, visit www.dingdarlingsociety.org/lectures.



Clyde Butcher's Cayo Costa portrait

Look What's New!

There's always something new on the Nature Store shelves! Come see for yourself.

It's never too early to think about Christmas. Shop early for this year's Luc Century etched glass ornament. This year's piece features shells and a sea star — perfect for your favorite sheller.

If you've been waiting for this year's photo contest



winners notecard pack, you're in luck. They've arrived in sets of 16. Each card showcases one of the winning Refuge

photographs from our 2013 "Ding" Darling Days Amateur Nature Photography Contest. Please call 239-472-1100 ext. 241 to mail-order from the Nature Store. Remember, all proceeds from purchases in the Refuge Nature Store benefit education, research, and ultimately wildlife at the Refuge.



Bob H. Lee, author of Backcountry Lawman; True Stories from a Florida Game Warden, kicked off the 2014 series on January 17.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Mark your calendars and join us! Visit www.dingdarlingsociety.org for details.

Winter Refuge Programs - Through April 20, 2014

Bi-Weekly Wednesday Film Series - Through April 16, 2014

Weekly Friday Lecture Series - Through April 11, 2014
(sponsored by Sanibel Captiva Trust Company)

Upcycle Art Fest - April 16, 2014

Earth Day at the Refuge & Plein Air Painting - April 19, 2014

Third Annual "Ding" Darling & Doc Ford's Tarpon Tournament - May 2 & 3, 2014

25th Annual "Ding" Darling Days - October 19-25, 2014

Tarpon Tourney

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Beach — has again committed to being the title sponsor for the 2014 tournament, along with the Wildlife Society. Proceeds will benefit wildlife and conservation education at the Refuge.

"There's not another tarpon tournament like it in the area," said Marty Harriy, Doc Ford's co-owner. "In past years we've had fishermen from all over the country."

"Doc Ford's has been a faithful supporter of our efforts at 'Ding' Darling, helping greatly to bolster Refuge programs and research to balance federal budget shortfalls," said Birgie Miller, DDWS executive director. "Last year we raised \$40,000 for the Refuge as a result

of sponsorships, donations, and auction proceeds. We're so grateful to them for this huge effort in our behalf."

For more information on the tournament, please visit www.dingdarlingtarpontourney.com. Anyone interested in becoming a tournament sponsor should contact Birgie at 239-292-0566 or director@dingdarlingsociety.org.

A whopper thanks to our tournament sponsors:

Title Sponsor: Doc Ford's Rum Bar & Grille; **Presentation Sponsors:** Diversified Yacht Services of Fort Myers Beach, Sanibel Bean; **Platinum Sponsors:** Florida Weekly, Lamar Advertising, Suncoast Beverage; Gold Sponsors: Anisa Jewelry; Bella Signs & Designs, Sanibel Captiva Community Bank; **Silver Sponsors:** Myers, Brettholtz & Company, PA; Sanibel Island Fishing Club; Semmer Electric



Friday's Captain's Dinner brings teams and friends to mingle, bid on silent auction items, and get their final instructions for the morning.

Upcycle Art Fest

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at 'Ding' Darling," said Barb Lund, Upcycle! Art Fest committee chair.

"Besides demonstrating the importance of recycling and conservation, it will offer visitors opportunities to purchase one-of-a-kind pieces and even try their hand at it."

The festival will take place at the free "Ding" Darling Visitor & Education Center from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., featuring works for display, judging, and sales. Activities will include artist exhibits, an art sale, a silent auction for an exclusive piece fashioned by Andrew Corke specially for the event, make-and-take crafts for kids and adults, and environmental slide presentations.

Any businesses or individuals interested in sponsoring or participating in Upcycle! Art Fest should contact Birgie Miller, DDWS executive director, at 239-292-0566 or director@dingdarlingsociety.org.

For more information on Upcycle! please visit www.UpcycleArtFest.org.



Upcycled art by Jean Standish.



One Wildlife Drive
P.O. Box 565
Sanibel, FL 33957

Forwarding Service Requested

Phone: (239) 472-1100, ext. 233

Fax: (239) 472-7803

WEBSITE

www.dingdarlingsociety.org

E-MAIL

dingdarlingoffice@yahoo.com

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IN THE PINK



Everyone got into the spirit of pink and supporting the Refuge at the 2014 Trailgating Party: In the Pink on February 21 at the Refuge. The fundraiser brought in approximately \$110,000 to support Refuge educational and research projects. See page 2 for more pretty-in-pink pictures from Trailgate.

