



WINTER 2019

Society Pages

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

ABOUT THE SOCIETY

"Ding" Darling Wildlife Society, the non-profit Friends of the Refuge organization, supports the J. N. "Ding" Darling National Wildlife Refuge Complex through the generation of independent funds to undertake student education, internships, research projects, informational literature, advocacy, land acquisition and facility enhancements. Efforts may extend beyond the Complex's borders and involve partnerships with like-minded conservation organizations.

'Ding' Days Excitement October 12-14, 2018



This year's "Ding" Darling Days celebrated 30 years of bringing together the community and visitors for opportunities to enjoy the Refuge and learn more about conservation, wildlife, and habitat. It began as a one-day Family Fun
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We Won!

Our Restrooms Best in U.S.



Cintas' Sean Mulcahey, Refuge Manager Paul Tritaik, Supervisory Refuge Ranger Toni Westland, and DDWS Executive Director Birgie Miller pose with the award and the restroom project's signature manatees sculptures, made from recycled bike tires.

It's official! Our Learning Lavatories (#LearningLav) won as #1 in America's 2018 Best Restroom® Contest. At a special press conference at the Refuge on October 22, Cintas Corporation announced the long-anticipated victory.

"['Ding' Darling has] taken the restrooms to the next level," Cintas Corporation Marketing Manager Sean Mulcahey told those gathered for the announcement. "They really raised the bar for our future finalists. They really have something to compete against here."

"We're thrilled that the public is as wild about our restrooms as we are," said Supervisory Refuge Ranger Toni Westland. "As one of 566 national wildlife refuges around the country, we saw the restrooms as a major missed opportunity

for educating visitors, which is why our new Learning Lavatories encourage visitors to become entirely immersed in Refuge habitat and wildlife. We are the first in the entire National

Refuge System to have a restroom like this, and winning this award is a real honor."

Newspapers, web publications, and TV stations from local to nationwide picked up the good news. Funded by a \$125,000 grant from the West Coast Inland Navigation District (WCIND) and contributions from private donors AWC Family Foundation, the Middendorf

Family, Laurie and Bill Harkey, and Chuck and Irene Raber, Project #LearningLav debuted in October 2017.

To read more about #LearningLav and view more images and video, visit www.bestrestrooms2018.com.



DDWS Welcomes New Members

At its Annual Meeting on December 5, the membership of the “Ding” Darling Wildlife Society elected David Jeffrey and Dick Levinson to the Board of Directors.

Once the vice president of Morgan Guaranty Trust Company of New York, David later served as chairman of David Jeffrey Associates, which provided training programs for international financial institutions; and director of the investment firm, The Jeffrey Company.

Now retired, David is emeritus trustee and former Chair of the Board of Trustees of the non-profit educational organization, New Jersey SEEDS. He has been on the boards of trustees of various nonprofit organizations, including Americans for Campaign Reform, Dwight-Englewood School, Bede School, Englewood Community Foundation, Issue One,



David Jeffrey

and Design Art Technology Massachusetts.

David and his wife Hope spend summers in South Dartmouth, Massachusetts, and winters on Captiva. An avid bird photographer, he has been visiting “Ding” Darling for many years and recently mounted a photography exhibit there. He was instrumental in the restoration of the Refuge’s Buck Key paddling trail after Hurricane Charley.

Dick and his wife Pat have been coming to the islands for more than 30 years and now divide their time between North Salem, New York, and Captiva.

Dick is a former trustee of the North Salem Open Land Foundation and led several campaigns to acquire ownership or conservation easements on several tracts. He is now working with Past President John McCabe on acquisitions fundraising.

For the past few years, Dick has been the volunteer steward of the Buck Key path, having led the push for the 2004 restoration. He has had a 40-year career in finance and is currently the senior partner in a New York investment management firm.



Jim Sprankle accepts a Founder Award from “Ding” Darling Wildlife Society President Mike Baldwin

Society Founder Awards

DDWS presented a Founder Award, in its second year of existence, to Jim Sprankle at 2018’s annual meeting on December 5. The award goes to individuals who have made a vital contribution to the success of the Society. Past recipients include Millie Ford, Marilyn Kloosterman, Bill Rankin, and Jeanne Rankin. Those selected as a Society Founder are recognized with their name on a wall plaque specifically designed for this purpose and displayed in the Society’s offices.

Farewell to a Friend

Emeritus Board Member since 2010, Joseph E. Kelley passed away peacefully on October 28, 2018. Joseph served on the DDWS Board of Directors from 1988 to 1998, three of those years as Board President. Joe and his wife Peggy spent most of their married life in Mount Kisco, New York. They moved to Sanibel in 1987, where Joe, in semiretirement, was a real estate agent and was active in the local Catholic Church. They moved to Palm Harbor, Florida, in 2000. Gifts may be made in Joe’s name to Suncoast Hospice House at suncoast-hospice.org/online-donations.

‘DING’ DAYS

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Day event, grew to a weeklong string of activities, and this year hit middle ground with one fun weekend that ran from Friday, October 12 through Sunday, October 14.

The 30th annual “Ding” Darling Days celebrated the birthday of the refuge’s namesake, father of the Federal Duck Stamp program and Pulitzer Prize-winning cartoonist, Jay N. “Ding” Darling.

The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, “Ding” Darling Wildlife Society, and Tarpon Bay Explorers, the Refuge’s recreation concession, cosponsor “Ding” Darling Days with generous support from the local community and businesses.

Mark your calendar for next year’s “Ding” Darling Days: October 19-20, 2019.

Deep gratitude goes to our 2018 sponsors, who made it possible to offer this educational event free to the public. Please show your support of the businesses that support us.



Our Blue Goose mascot made cameo appearances.

ROSEATE SPOONBILL SPONSORS

Doc’s Ford Sanibel Rum Bar & Grille

GREAT EGRET SPONSORS

Wayne & Linda Boyd, Jim & Patty Sprankle

GREAT BLUE HERON SPONSORS

Bailey’s General Store, Mike & Terry Baldwin, Bank of the Islands, Island Sun, Sanibel Captiva Beach Resorts, Sanibel Captiva Rotary Club, Sanibel Moorings, Sunny Day Guide

REDDISH EGRET SPONSORS

Sarah Ashton, RE/MAX of the Islands, Casa Ybel Resort, Chicago Midwest Claims, Inc., Jerry Edelman & Maryanne Daly, The Gresham Family, Jensen’s on the Gulf and Marina & Cottages, Tiffani Kaliko and John Silvia, Mitchell’s SandCastles, Palm Printing, Sanibel-Captiva Kiwanis Club, George & Wendy Schnapp, Winston & Barbara Spurgeon

SNOWY EGRET SPONSORS

Ambu Yoga, Anisa Stewart Jewelry, Colony Inn, Bob & Kemba DeGroot, Dave Horton, Island Therapy Center, Panther Printing, Jim & Anne Scott, Nancy Tome.

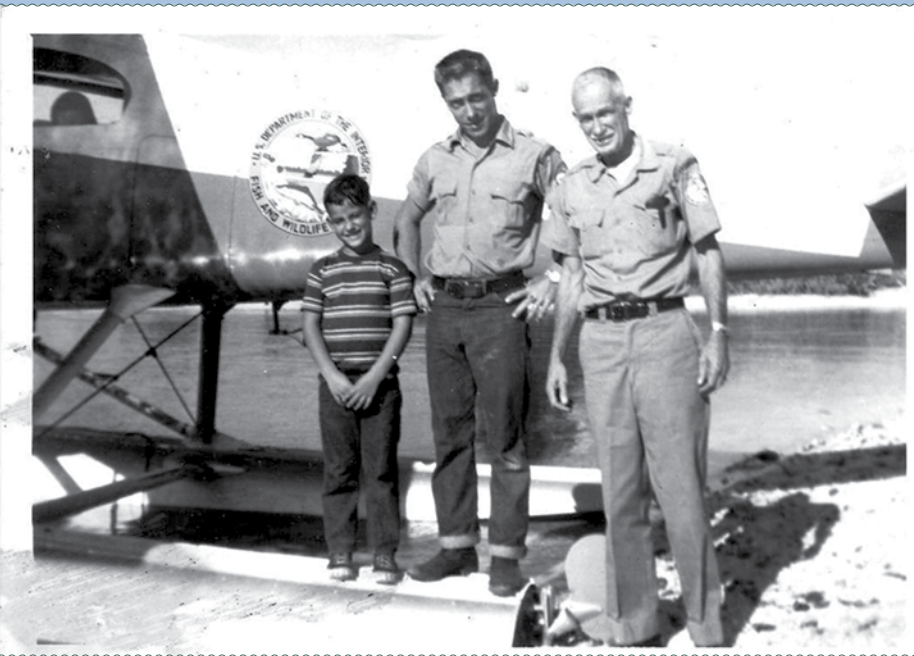
Woodring 100th Anniversary Exhibition

To celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Woodring Home, now encompassed within “Ding” Darling NWR boundaries, the Refuge will partner with the Woodring family for a special two-month-long exhibition in the free Visitor & Education Center Auditorium.

The exhibition’s public unveiling will take place at 9 a.m. on Wednesday January 23. Through March 25, the exhibition will be open Saturday through Thursday (closed Fridays) and will feature historic black-and-white images by the late Charlie McCullough, a professional photographer who lived next door to the home, and artifacts from the home and the Sanibel Historical Museum & Village that chronicle the landmark and the family’s life on Sanibel Island. Nationally renowned Teddy Roosevelt repressor Joe Wiegand will make a special guest appearance on January 23, and Ralph Woodring will recount stories about growing up in the home and on the island. Presentations will take place at 9 a.m. and 3 p.m. that day, with a free showing of the film at 1 p.m.

The “Ding” Darling Wildlife Society and Lee County Conservation 20/20 collaborated together in acquiring the 6.56-acre Woodring Point property in 2013 with funds raised by a DDWS capital campaign and through funds from the 20/20 program. The Refuge manages both properties as part of the Refuge complex.

“We are thrilled to host this temporary exhibit, which will demonstrate the deep history represented by the Woodring Point property and the strength of partnerships in preserving island history and the habitat for the wildlife both on the land and in the water,” said DDWS Executive Director Birgie Miller.



(Above) The Refuge connection: Ralph Woodring, Jr., with former Refuge Ranger Charles LeBuff and first Refuge Manager Tom Wood.



(Left) Part of the exhibit will be devoted to preservation of the Woodring Home and land in partnership with “Ding” Darling Wildlife Society in 2013.

Boy Scout Merit Badge University

On November 17, the Refuge and “Ding” Darling Wildlife Society hosted their first Merit Badge University for registered Boy Scouts of America. Scouts had the opportunity to earn up to two out of six badges — Bird Study, Cycling, Environmental Sci-



ence, First Aid, Fish & Wildlife Management, and Fishing. Seventy Scouts attended the inaugural Badge University.

“We had a great first turnout,” said program organizer Ranger Monica Scroggin. “We hope to expand to more opportunities for boy and girl scouts in the future. Thanks to everyone — sponsor LCEC, staff, Tarpon Bay Explorers, DDWS, interns, and volunteers — who made this possible.”



Volunteer Ed Combs helped Scouts earning their Bird Study badge.



More Solar at the Refuge

Work has completed on installing solar panels on the roof of the “Ding” Darling Visitor & Education Center, the final phase of the Refuge’s solar installation. DDWS has plans to create interactive solar components and exhibits inside and outside the Center as part of the project, which was made possible by donations from Fred and Alice Stanback and our 2015 San-Cap Solar Connect program. San-Cap Solar Connect brought affordable solar conversion to island residents and businesses through cooperative buying.

'Ding' Days Photo Contest

On October 13, "Ding" Darling Wildlife Society announced the winners of its annual "Ding" Darling Days Amateur Nature Photography Contest at a special Conservation Art Day presentation.

Judges had selected three winners and 11 honorable mentions out of 121 entries from 20 states, the Netherlands, and Switzerland. All photograph entries were shot at the Refuge complex.

First place went to Frank Brinker of Oberageri, Switzerland, for his Great Blue Heron portrait titled "Shakin'." Contest judge Holly D. Smith, city of Sanibel councilwoman, remarked on its stunning depth-of-field and unique capture. "I love its personality, pure and simple," she said of the bird's disheveled appearance, looking as though it was shaking water from its feathers.

John Hoyt from Lewes, Delaware, took second place with a black-and-white close-up of a female Anhinga. "It's so strikingly artistic with dramatic lighting and great detail," said judge Chelle Koster Walton, a Sanibel photojournalist.

In third place was Cheri Hollis from Sanibel, with a Blue-winged Teal shot titled "True Blue." "She actually got all the fine details of the duck, even the color under its wing, and the ripples in the water," said Refuge Ranger Monica Scroggin, the third judge.

"We always choose three judges for the contest," said Terry Baldwin, who coordinates the contest along with DDWS development officer Sierra Hoisington. "A Refuge staff member, a professional photographer, and a member of the Sanibel community."

The winning photographs and honorable mention award entries will be on display in the Refuge Education Center throughout the year. To view the other top-ranking entries, visit dingdarlingsociety.org/articles/photo-contests.

New Refuge Water Quality Study

The "Ding" Darling Wildlife Society is supporting water quality studies at the Refuge that involve fish sampling. The Avian Research & Conservation Institute (ARCI) in Gainesville, who also is conducting Reddish Egret and Mangrove Cuckoo studies at the Refuge through DDWS support, took fish samples along Wildlife Drive and at Bunche Beach before and after last year's catastrophic red tide and algae events.

ARCI Executive Director Ken Meyer expects results from October's testing early this year. The scientists are comparing number of species found, size, and how many fish per species. They will also be testing the fall's catch for brevetoxins from red tide.

"Although we don't have results in yet, I can say there are some apparent differences from pre-red tide sampling," said Dr. Meyer. Incidentally, tracking data showed that only one of the three Reddish Egrets ARCI has tagged along Wildlife Drive left after the height of the red tide in October. It migrated to the Ten Thousand Islands area and has not yet returned.

To learn more about how you can support research projects such as this and other conservation work at the Refuge, contact DDWS at 239-472-1100 ext. 4 or by emailing director@dingdarlingsociety.org.



"Ding" biology intern Michelle Martin assisted with the October research. Here, she measures the water level in a throw trap off Wildlife Drive. Image courtesy of Amanda Powell, ARCI



Second-place winner: John Hoyt's "Female Anhinga"

GO WILD FOR "DING" CALL OF THE OSPREY

FEBRUARY 13, 2019
5:30 - 8:30 P.M.
SANIBEL COMMUNITY HOUSE

\$150 PER PERSON

TO MAKE YOUR RESERVATIONS CALL DOT VOORHEES AT 239.472.1100 EXT. 239.

THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS

CALL OF THE WILD

CHAMPION

GUARDIAN

PROTECTOR

DEFENDER

Interested in becoming a sponsor? Call Dot Voorhees at 239.472.1100 ext. 239.

2019 Refuge Wish List

Membership donations and annual gifts are essential for the "Ding" Darling Wildlife Society to continue its support of conservation and education efforts at the J.N. "Ding" Darling National Wildlife Refuge. Below are just a few unique giving opportunities on our wish list this year to enhance the impact of support at the Refuge. To see the scope of the Society's impact and for more ideas and opportunities for giving, please visit dingdarlingsociety.org.

All gifts are tax deductible.



Honor Gift: Any Amount

An gift in their honor of a loved one to the "Ding" Darling Wildlife Society is a wonderful way to tell friends and family that you love them. Send a general gift or designate it to a specific area by indicating, for example, "Your gift helped a class dissect owl pellets at the Refuge."



Compound Binocular Microscope: \$400 per microscope or \$2,400 for a class set of 6

More than 250 classes from around the area come to the Refuge by bus each year. Many of these kids are missing the link between science and wonder. Seeing the details of a spore of pollen or the intricacies of algae up close through a microscope can ignite a passion for conservation and exploration in children that will continue throughout their lives. **Consider also supporting a set of Prepared Microscope Slides with your donation - \$60 per set of 25 slides.**



Everyday Education Supplies: \$50 per class or \$12,500 per year

From owl pellets to nature journals to pencils, countless classroom supplies are in demand by our educators to support the 5,000 children who come to the Refuge annually. With an ever-decreasing federal education budget, we hope that you will choose to support our educators, who tirelessly educate and inspire our next generation of conservation stewards.



Portable Smartboard: \$2,000

Our education team prepares many in-class lessons and discussions for the days kids need an escape from the Florida rain and heat. A portable Smartboard would make these programs much more interactive where the school children could match which animal made what sound, see their microscope findings projected on the screen, and play Wildlife Jeopardy.



Support an Intern Stipend: \$200 per week or \$10,400 per year

Throughout the year, we have several interns from across the country come to the J.N. "Ding" Darling National Wildlife Refuge to gain experience and help fill in gaps with staffing cutbacks in the fields of non-profit management, education, biology, and visitor services. These interns, usually recent college graduates, provide invaluable support to the Refuge while gaining hands-on, practical experience as they enter their career field.



Trail Cameras: \$300 per camera or \$1,200 for a set of four cameras needed total

Our biology team conducts research in many different parts of the Refuge using trail cams. Whether it's looking for bobcats and following their movements or seeing what species inhabit the restored portion of the Bailey Tract, much can be learned by these simple yet informative devices.



For more information about making a gift to support an item on the Refuge's 2019 Wish List, please contact the "Ding" Darling Wildlife Society at 239.472.1100 ext. 4.

45/82 Society



Together, through planned giving, we can continue the education and conservation efforts at the J.N. "Ding" Darling National Wildlife Refuge.

Continue Your Impact

Many of our members help shape the future of the Refuge by designating the "Ding" Darling Wildlife Society as a beneficiary in their estate plans. They become members of the **45/82 Society** (signifying the year of the Refuge's establishment in 1945 and the year of the Society's founding in 1982). A combination of large and small planned gifts received throughout the years has enabled the "Ding" Darling Wildlife Society to continue its support of the Refuge in areas of land acquisition, education, research, and other important conservation efforts.

Supporting these efforts through your estate is easier than you may think.

"I think my favorite place on earth would be the "Ding" Darling National Wildlife Refuge on Sanibel Island in Florida"

- Dr. Robert G. Meeker

The sons of the late Dr. Robert G. Meeker recently set up an endowment fund with the "Ding" Darling Wildlife Society to generate funds for the Refuge into the future.

Sample Language for Your Plan

If you wish to name the "Ding" Darling Wildlife Society in your estate plans or name us as a beneficiary of your retirement accounts or life insurance, please name us 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]."

Our tax identification number is: 59-2240895

"It is an honor and a privilege to be associated with the Refuge, and it is our ongoing hope that this fund will not only promote and encourage conservation and respect for the natural world but will also inspire the next generation of naturalists"

- David Meeker, Dr. Meeker's son

By creating a personal legacy, you also create a lasting legacy for the Refuge. Your gift through your estate plan, large or small, is critical to the Refuge's future survival. We would like to recognize you as a member the 45/82 Society, unless you prefer anonymity. **If you have already remembered the "Ding" Darling Wildlife Society in your estate plans, please let us know so we can thank you and make a plan to fulfill your wishes at the time the gift is realized.**

Thank You for your commitment

For more information on how to leave a lasting gift for conservation, please contact Executive Director Birgie Miller at 239-472-1100 ext. 4 or director@dingdarlingsociety.org, or visit our website at dingdarlingsociety.org/articles/leave-a-legacy.



STAFF NEWS

New DDWS Director of Development

Lynnae Messina recently stepped into the full-time position as DDWS' Director of Development. She works with Executive Director Birgie Miller in strengthening and enhancing overall development efforts to support the Refuge. A native of the Chicago area, Lynnae has lived in Lee County with her husband for four years and most recently served as assistant to the chief foundation officer for Lee Health Foundation in Fort Myers. She graduated from Illinois State University and has logged nearly 11 years of experience in nonprofit work.



Lynnae Messina

"Lynnae will bring strength to our team with her skills in communication, management, and fundraising," said Birgie. "Described by her colleagues as a dependable, driven leader, successful with building strong relationships and enhancing the mission of the nonprofit she is a part of, Lynnae has a history of successfully managing projects and meeting goals."

A lifelong outdoors enthusiast, Lynnae says she is looking forward to fundraising to support the Refuge in protecting wildlife and its habitat.

"We always think that things in nature are taken care of, but that's not the case," said Lynnae. "I'm excited to further that cause. That's what makes this job so great – just to be able to be out in nature, the wonder and beauty of it all."

Welcome Development Officer

Welcome to Dot Voorhees our new DDWS Development Officer. She joins fellow Development Officer Sierra Hoisington to support fundraising efforts for the Refuge. A native of Katonah, New York, Dot brings more than 15 years of experience in nonprofit events management, marketing, and communications to the "Ding" team. Most recently she was in charge of events and communications for the Friends of the John Jay Homestead in Katonah for 10 years.



Dot Voorhees

Dot has served as a consultant working with clients from around the country on market research for television advertising and has put to use her biology degree from the University of Miami as a wildlife researcher.

"Dot and her husband, Scott, recently moved to Fort Myers and the 'Ding' team is very lucky to have her as its newest member," said DDWS Executive Director Birgie Miller. She will head events and communication coordination for DDWS. In her spare time, she plans on exploring the refuge. "I love being outdoors and am an avid birdwatcher, so the Refuge is a wonderful place to be," Dot said.

Introducing New Nature Store Assistant

Carrie Harmon, along with Chris Galloway, now serves as support staff for DDWS' Refuge Nature Store Manager Ann-Marie Wildman. A native of Casper, Wyoming, Carrie moved to Sanibel from Fort Collins, Colorado, with her then-fiancé Paul in August 2017, about two weeks before Hurricane Irma hit. The two married on September 18, 2018.

Carrie worked previously as assistant store manager at The Bait Box on Sanibel Island. She also works part-time for the Condominium Associations of Sanibel Island and volunteers for a number of charitable events, including DDWS' Go Wild for "Ding" fundraiser in February and "Ding" Darling & Doc Ford's Tarpon Tournament in May.

"We went to the Nature Store holiday shopping event in 2017 and not only took care of all of our Christmas shopping but also befriended many of the Society and Refuge employees," said Carrie. "The evident passion and vibrancy of everyone involved with the Refuge and the legacy of 'Ding' inspired us to find ways to give back to the Refuge and help in whatever way we could."

"Carrie's enthusiasm and energy have already proved invaluable in the Nature Store and beyond," said Ann-Marie. "She has quickly become an asset to the entire 'Ding' team."



Carrie Harmon

This Season's DDWS Interns

Two interns joined the DDWS team in September. April Boehnen and Chris Gutierrez will be working fulltime until June 2019 to support the Refuge.

April, who graduated from Ohio State University in May 2017 with a major in animal sciences and minors in agricultural communications and wildlife, comes to the Refuge from an animal care internship at Safe Haven Wildlife Sanctuary in Imlay, Nevada.

"I'm most excited about being able to combine my interests of wildlife and graphic design," said the Grafton, Ohio, native. "This internship allows me to explore a different side of the wildlife field than I've experienced. I'm also looking forward to learning the behind-the-scenes aspects to a national wildlife refuge."



Chris Gutierrez and April Boehnen

Chris hails from Holbrook on Long Island, New York, and came to "Ding" Darling from a summer internship at Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge in Virginia.

"The island is beautiful. It's like living on vacation," he remarked. "The wildlife is awesome and we're not



Shay Hart and Emily Herz

even into the peak of bird season yet. Just walking to work I get to see animals that the average person may never get to see in their lifetime."

Chris graduated in May from Alfred University, a small private college in upstate New York, with a degree in finance and economics.

New Education Interns

The Refuge welcomed two new education interns to its staff this fall. Shay Hart and Emily Herz will be assisting Conservation Educator Sara Hallas this season.

Shay, a graduate of the University of Nevada, Reno, with a bachelor's degree in biology and an ecology focus, most recently worked as a naturalist at the Great Basin Institute in Reno.

"I am also interested in outdoor education," said the Nevada native. "Right now, I'm working with school groups and focusing on environmental education. I have already seen so many new plants and animals that you would never find in the desert!"

A native of Meriden, Connecticut, Emily graduated from the University of Maine in May with a bachelor's degree in wildlife ecology and a minor in education.

"I love getting to explore ecosystems that are new to me and learning about the diverse wildlife that is on the island," she said shortly after her arrival.

"Our interns bring youthful energy, enthusiasm, and creativity to the Refuge team," said Supervisory Refuge Ranger Toni Westland. "At the same time, the program gives students and recent graduates an opportunity to learn hands-on about the environment and Refuge operations."

The Refuge supports interns with free housing, while DDWS provides living stipends and other benefits for about a dozen interns each year. Without this funding, the internships would not be possible. To learn about supporting the intern program contact Birgie Miller, DDWS Executive Director, at 239-472-1100 ext. 4.

FOLLOW AND LIKE US

DDWS is currently active on three social media platforms. Please "LIKE" us on **Facebook** (join our 12,200 fans!) by searching for "Ding" Darling Wildlife Society." (You can also "LIKE" the Refuge by searching for its "Official" page.) **Instagram** users can find us at [@dingdarlingwildlifesociety](https://www.instagram.com/dingdarlingwildlifesociety), where our numbers top 7,400 followers. Also visit our YouTube channel by searching "ding darling wildlife society."



2019 Lecture Series

The 2019 “Ding” Darling Friday Lecture Series, which runs January 25 through April 12, features a line-up of celebrities in the world of birds, butterflies, and conservation. From birds of the Arctic and North American owls to Monarch Butterflies and Burmese Pythons, the season promises to be one of the Refuge’s best yet.



HighTower/Thomas & Swartz Wealth Management sponsors the free 12-lecture series with support from the “Ding” Darling Wildlife Society. The lectures take place in the Visitor & Education Center Auditorium twice each Friday (except on February 8), at 10 a.m. and 1 p.m. Look below for the full schedule and visit dingdarlingsociety.org/articles/lecture-and-film-series for more details.

Seating for the lectures is limited and available on a first-come basis. Early arrivals can save their seat and one extra with personal items and then can explore the Visitor & Education Center or Indigo Trail before the lecture starts. Saved seats must be filled 15 minutes before lecture time or they risk reassigning.

Note: Opinions expressed in guest lectures do not necessarily reflect the views of Refuge and DDWS management, staff, and Board of Directors.

- *January 25 — Author Debbie Miller, *Arctic Wings: Birds of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge*
 - *February 1 — Author/photographer Richard Crossley, *The Crossley ID Guides: Waterfowl*
 - February 8 — NO LECTURE
 - *February 15 - Author Paul Bannick, *Owl: A Year in the Lives of North American Owls*
 - *February 22 - Author Anurag Agrawal, *Monarchs and Milkweed: A Migrating Butterfly, a Poisonous Plant, and Their Remarkable Story of Coevolution*
 - *March 1 — Author Warner Shedd, *Owls Aren’t Wise & Bats Aren’t Blind: A Naturalist Debunks Our Favorite Fallacies about Wildlife*
 - March 8 — Yve Morrell, “The Big Year: A First for Women”
 - March 15 — Jeremy Conrad, “Sea Level Rise: Globally & Locally”
 - March 22 — Dusty “Wildman” Crum, Robbie & Geoff Roepstorff, Mike Kirkland, “Pythons: The Hunters, the Science”
 - March 29 — Marine scientist Lauren Blickley, “Drastic Plastic - Turning the Tide on Plastic Pollution”
 - April 5 — Ornithologist Dr. Jerry Lorenz, “Flamingos & Spoonbills: Pink Canaries in a Coal Mine”
 - *April 12 — Author Denege Patterson, “Five Islands Never Flooded: A Tour of the Islands of Pine Island Sound”
- *starred lectures indicate book signing to follow



A page from Bannick’s Owl: A Year in the Lives of North American Owls

2019 Film Series

The 2019 Biweekly Film Series runs on every other Wednesday from January 9 through April 3 at 1 p.m. Admission is free. “Ding” Darling Wildlife Society hosts the



free film showings in the “Ding” Darling Visitor & Education Center with sponsorship from Sanibel Captiva Beach Resorts. Seating is limited and on a first-come basis. A short discussion will follow each film to allow visitors to gain more from their documentary-viewing experience by

listening to other people’s points of view and analyzing what they just watched.

Check out the schedule below and visit dingdarlingsociety.org/articles/lecture-and-film-series for more info.



- January 9 - *RiverBlue*
- January 23 - *Untold Stories: Sanibel I*
- February 6 - *A Plastic Ocean*
- February 20 - *Saving Sea Turtles: Preventing Extinction*
- March 6 - *JANE*
- March 20 - *NATURE: Invasion of the Giant Pythons*
- April 3 - *Saving Atlantis*

Big Step Toward Land Acquisition

In November, the Lee County Board of Commissioners voted unanimously to move our 68-acre Wulfert Bayous acquisition project into the next phase of potential purchase through Lee County’s Conservation 20/20

Program. This vote was crucial to move this project forward through the process.

Many thanks to all of our supporters for helping to make this happen, from those who contacted the com-

missioners by email and phone, to the leaders of the homeowners associations on Sanibel, Committee of the Islands, and Erick Lindblad of Sanibel-Captiva Conservation Foundation, who all sent letters of support for this acquisition.

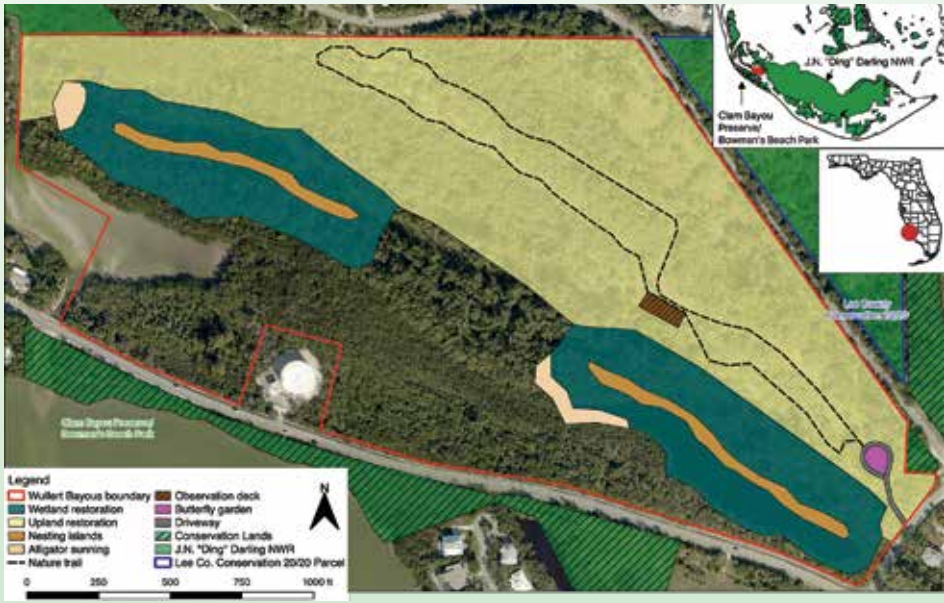
From here, the Lee County 20/20 staff will begin the process for possible acquisition of the 68-acre parcel. The “Ding” Darling Wildlife Society has committed to raising a partial match of the county’s investment. We will keep you posted as actions develop.

SPECIAL thanks to:

Sanibel Mayor Kevin Ruane — The Mayor met individually with each commissioner to encourage support of this acquisition. Even during the water crisis and time-consuming responsibilities with the City and beyond, he took the time to do this, and it had a great impact on the vote.

John McCabe & Marc Giattini — Both John and Marc have spent a tremendous amount of time working hard behind the scenes to get DDWS and the property to this stage.

Interested in learning more about this project and what you can do to help make the acquisition a reality? Call Executive Director Birgie Miller at 239-292-0566 or email her at director@dingdarlingsociety.org.



75th Celebration Kicks Off

In 1945, in fear for the wildlife and wetlands that claimed most of Sanibel Island, Jay Norwood “Ding” Darling succeeded in petitioning for the creation of the Sanibel National Wildlife Refuge.

As today’s J.N. “Ding” Darling Refuge approaches its 75th anniversary in 2020, staff and the “Ding” Darling Wildlife Society are gearing up to celebrate now through the milestone year. They have released the official 75th anniversary logo, featuring whimsical wildlife art by artist Lynne Egensteiner and the slogan “A Legacy of Protecting Wildlife.”

“Seventy-five years, that’s huge!” said Supervisory Refuge Ranger Toni Westland. “And we plan on celebrating it big time, starting now and continuing through December 2020, the official anniversary date.” Highlights of the anniversary season will be an exhibit beginning January 2019 to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Woodring Home (see page 3), now part of the Refuge; a Clyde Butcher photography exhibition starting the end of 2019; special offers at Tarpon Bay Explorers, the Refuge’s recreation concession; one-of-a-kind 75th logo and “Ding” cartoon items in the Refuge Nature Store; and other unique celebratory events and programs throughout the years.

Free Winter Programs

The Refuge has announced its calendar of daily free tours and programs. The seasonal calendar begins on Monday, January 7, and runs through Sunday, April 28. Daily programs begin at 8:30 a.m. and include such diverse activities as Nature Photography, Beach Walk, Endangered Species, and Indigo Trail Walk.

For a full calendar of programs and tours and descriptions, visit dingdarlingsociety.org/articles/free-refuge-programs. (They are also included on the centerfold calendar in this newsletter.) Free educational

programs are made possible through support from the “Ding” Darling Wildlife Society.

“Jay Darling would surely be proud of how far the Refuge has come since its inception,” said Refuge Manager Paul Tritaik. “We have added acreage to the complex, built a Visitor & Education Center with the help of our friends group, educated hundreds of millions, and, most importantly, given wildlife a safe haven.”

For more information about “Ding” Darling’s 75th celebration as it becomes available, visit www.ding75.org.



Guided Indigo Trail Hikes start each Saturday at 1 p.m.

New Hobie Tours

Contact Tarpon Bay Explorers at 239-472-8900 or tarponbayexplorers.com for information on its new pedal-driven Hobie Kayak Tours for exploring or fishing.



IN THE REFUGE NATURE STORE

We have asked some of our wonderful volunteers for their favorite Refuge Nature Store picks. Here we share store volunteer Cathy Swerdlick’s favorites and her comments about them.

Cathy has volunteered at the Refuge for six years, first at the Front Desk and for four years in the store. She spends about nine months a year on Captiva Island, the rest of the time in Rhode Island. “All of the staff and store visitors love Cathy’s positive energy and quick smile,” said Store Manager Ann-Marie Wildman.

“Cathy is an integral part of our store team, and we are so grateful to have her on board.”



Ladies Sea Turtle V-neck T-shirt: Cathy owns a complete collection of “Ding” tees in every color. Here, she wears one of her favorites. “They’re all adorable!”

Luc Century Ornaments and Bowls: “I love Luc’s story, having been involved with the Vietnam War Memorial and living here on the island, designing our Christmas ornaments each year. I get one every year.”

Recycled Glass Jewelry: “It comes in so many fun colors and styles inspired by the sea.” Remember, DDWS members receive a 10% discount at the Nature Store. Profits from all Nature Store sales go directly to the Refuge for educational programs and wildlife research.

MEMORIAL AND HONOR GIFTS
September 1 – November 30, 2018

Memorial gifts and gifts made in honor of special occasions are a wonderful way to pay tribute to family and friends who are 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:

Edythe Anthony	Sheila Rodriguez
Andrew Barton	Amy Simkowitz Rogers
Bill & Janet Bergemann	Susan Raber Satterfield
Haig Chongoushian	Joseph Sberna, M.D.
Rosalie Courter	Thomas and Doris Schreier
Michael F. Cuscaden	Thomas A. Sharp
Dr. David Drachman	Dr. and Mrs. Charles A. Slanetz, Jr.
Mr. and Mrs. Edson Eldredge	Lois Smith
Maggie & John Foskett	Stanley LaVere Smith
Virginia Horner	Whitman Smith
Wren Jones	Edward J. Stanek
Frank & Ettie Kehoe	Gene Steele
John & Priscilla Kennedy	John and Ellen Stevens
John Klemmer	Anna Faye Trent
Mrs. Belle M. Knight	Janet Veo
Doris Lathrop	Gordon Webb
Bette Levin	Carl L. Wedekind, Jr.
John A McCloud	Jim Wellman
Dr. Robert G. Meeker	Nora Wells
James Lee Nichols	Alexander Zaboronak
Dr. Kristin Pancner	Bertram & Marilyn Zheutlin

We recently received gifts in HONOR of the following:

Bill and Karen Aarons	Birgit Miller
Iver Brooks	Norman Miller
Ralph and Audra Clarkson	Meg Patterson
Jeff Combs	Dan Reehorst
Dr. Golde Corneliuson	Nancy Repking
“Ding” Darling Wildlife Society Employees, Interns, and Volunteers	Dr. Jill Savage
Mark Gutierrez	Jordan Kate Schnell
Jane Hanks	Linda Seifert
Ed Henson	Jim Sprinkle
Donald Herman	Patty Sprinkle
Mary Ann Lannoye	Staff and volunteers of the Refuge
Marriage of Matthew and Catherine Dordal	Norma Walley
	Barbara Webb
	Gordon Wells





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

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239-472-1100, ext. 4
dingdarlingsociety.org
office@dingdarlingsociety.org

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PHOTO CONTEST WINNERS



Frank Brinker's "Shakin'" photograph of a Reddish Egret took first place in the 2018 "Ding" Darling Days Amateur Photography Contest. See page 4 for more winners.