



www.dingdarlingsociety.org

WINTER 2016

Society Pages

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

ABOUT THE SOCIETY

"Ding" Darling Wildlife Society, the nonprofit Friends of the Refuge organization, supports environmental education, services, land acquisition, research, and conservation at the J.N. "Ding" Darling National Wildlife Refuge Complex. Education and conservation efforts may extend beyond the complex's borders. We partner in these efforts where possible with like-minded conservation organizations.



The Dance of the Reddish Egret

Who doesn't love the Reddish Egret? And this year, with the expansion of the first-of-its-kind Reddish Egret Study at the Refuge, we pay homage to this crazy, beautiful, and largely misunderstood wading bird at our annual fundraiser. Please join us on Tuesday, February 23, 2016, at The Community House for tasty dishes from our local restaurants, a uniquely "Ding" silent auction, live entertainment, and a chance to meet Dr. Ken Meyer, who is conducting the Reddish Egret Study for the Avian Research & Conservation Institute in Gainesville, Florida. Advance reservations are required to attend Go Wild. To reserve your spot or to help sponsor Go Wild, please contact Birgie Miller at director@dingdarlingsociety.org or 239-292-0566.



"Ding" Darling Days just keeps getting better! The weeklong event drew about 7,000 visitors to the Refuge starting on Family Fun Day, Sunday, October 18, through Conservation Art Day on Saturday, October 24. Mark your calendar for the 27th annual "Ding" Darling Days next year October 16-22, 2016.



'DING' DARLING DAYS 2015

'DING' DAYS SPONSORS

We couldn't host "Ding" Darling Days without our generous sponsors. Please thank them and patronize their businesses.

ROSEATE SPOONBILL SPONSORS Doc's Ford Sanibel Rum Bar & Grille. **GREAT EGRET SPONSORS** Wayne & Linda Boyd, George & Wendy's Seafood Grille. **GREAT BLUE HERON SPONSORS** 97.7 Latino & Juan Radio, Arthur Printing, Bailey's General Store, Mike & Terry Baldwin, Bank of the Islands, Island Sun, Jensen's on the Gulf and Marina & Cottages, Jerry's Foods, Mitchell's Sand Castles & Forty/Fifteen Resorts, Ocean's Reach Condominiums, Sanibel Captiva Community Bank, Sanibel Moorings, Spotlight Graphics, Sanibel-Captiva Beach Resorts, Jim & Patty Sprinkle. **REDDISH EGRET SPONSORS** Sarah Ashton & Jim Metzler, Big Red Q Quickprint, Casa Ybel Resort, Sally & Rich Ennis, Florida Weekly, Glen & Phyllis Gresham, Gulf Breeze Cottages, Painting with a Twist, Ed & Lynn Riddlehoover, Sanibel-Captiva Kiwanis Club, Stewart and Sons Insurance, Inc., West Wind Inn. **SNOWY EGRET SPONSORS** Barefoot Charley's Painting Co., John Brennan, Butterfly Estates, The Cedar Chest Fine Jewelry, Charlotte Harbor National Estuary Program (CHNEP), Colony Inn, Jerry Edelman & Maryanne Daly, Grounds by Green Ways, Dave Horton, Island Therapy Center, Over Easy Café, Sallie Rich, Sanibel Art & Frame, Santiva Chronicle, She Sells Sea Shells, Winston & Barbara Spurgeon, Suncatchers' Dream, Tents 'n' Events.



The Sanibel School fourth-grade class recently visited to get their passes.

Every Kid Outside

As part of President Barack Obama's Every Kid in a Park initiative, the Refuge is issuing free annual passes to any fourth-grade student and homeschool equivalent. The passes are valid through August 2016 at any national wildlife refuge, national park or forest, and other federal land for every fourth grader with a pass, accompanying siblings up to age 15, and up to three accompanying adults.

"President Obama's Every Kid in a Park program is part of his ongoing efforts to get kids outside and enjoying nature," said Toni Westland, Supervisory Refuge Ranger. "That has been our goal for years, so we are taking it a step further to encourage fourth graders and their families."

Obtaining the free annual pass — a value of \$80 — requires fourth-grade students to print out a voucher at everykidinapark.gov. Fourth graders complete the voucher and bring it to the fee booth on Wildlife Drive to receive their pass. They must present a printed voucher; electronic forms are not accepted.

"We are shooting to issue the most passes of any national wildlife refuge, and there are more than 550 of them," Toni said. "We've already issued 900 and ordered 800 more with the goal of distributing them throughout the Lee County School District."

For more information, visit everykidinapark.gov. For questions about obtaining a pass at "Ding" Darling, call 239-472-1100 ext. 237.



Learn about Florida manatees at a free program every Sunday at 11 a.m.

Free Winter Programs

From birding and biking the Refuge, to learning aboutigators and crocs, the seasonal calendar of free Refuge programs and tours begins on Monday, January 4, 2016, and runs through April 3.

Daily programs start at 8:30 a.m. and include such diverse activities as Nature Photography, Beach Walk, Birds of Prey in Southwest Florida talk, and Indigo Trail Walk.

"We have something for visitors of all ages," said

Refuge Education Specialist Ranger Becky Larkins. "The free Refuge programs and tours last anywhere from a half hour to two hours."

For a full calendar of programs and tours and descriptions, visit www.dingdarlingsociety.org/programs-tours. Free educational programs are made possible through support from the "Ding" Darling Wildlife Society.



2016 Board Officers (clockwise from bottom left): President Doris Hardy, Vice President Mike Baldwin, Secretary Jim Scott, and Treasurer Vasanta Senerat

Frank Brinker

SanCap Solar Connect

Home and business owners on Sanibel and Captiva islands will be able to realize savings on solar energy conversion through the collective buying power of SanCap Solar Connect, an initiative designed by “Ding” Darling Wildlife Society. Based on the success of a number of initiatives in other states, it is the first-ever community-driven solarize program in Florida.

To participate in the program, home and business owners must sign an installation contract by Feb. 15, 2016. Installation must be completed by year-end 2016 to qualify for the 30% federal tax credit.

The final in a series of free informational Solar Community meetings will take place on Tuesday, January 12, 2016, at 5:30 p.m. in the Visitor & Education Center auditorium. No reservations are necessary to attend.

Representatives from Urban Solar Group, SanCap Solar Connect’s installation partner, and DDWS will be on hand at the meeting to explain how the program works and answer questions. Residents and businesses will be able to schedule free, no-commitment analyses with Urban Solar to receive a bid for installation costs and information on the advantages of a solar energy system.

“Getting into a much more sustainable energy program is very important – getting away from carbon-based energy,” said Mark Anderson, president of Benchmark General Contractors and member of the SanCap Solar Connect advisory committee. “The price of solar systems has come down significantly in the last 10 years. It’s much more economical, and you can arrive at ROIs [returns on investment] sometimes in less than five years. We’ve got a great window of opportunity

here with SanCap Solar Connect. Let’s use it!”

For Sanibel homeowners Douglas McLemore and Judith Rittenhouse, signing on with SanCap Solar Connect was a “no-brainer.” They had been considering solar to lower electric bills and had already started researching the possibility.

“This came along and it was exactly what we were looking for,” McLemore said. “We were very impressed with the amount of work this volunteer organization had done. They took a lot of the guesswork out of it because they knew what they were doing. They saved us time by interviewing, researching, and finding the best quality installers and materials. Plus there’s the significant discount because of volume purchasing.”

The part-time Sanibel couple will see installation begin in December, in time to file for a credit on this year’s taxes. “The process couldn’t have been easier for part-timers like us, who don’t always have great luck finding contractors,” McLemore added. “It provided a lot of comfort.”

Islanders can go online at www.SanCapSolarConnect.org to easily sign up for a free evaluation or simply to receive informational emails. The web site’s FAQ page answers the most common questions about the program and solar energy.

Interested parties can also contact program coordinator Joyce Lathrop at jlathrop@sancapsolar.org or 239-940-8931 for more information and to request a solar analysis.

The SanCap Solar Connect initiative was made possible partially through funding from solar advocates Fred and Alice Stanback.



When Ranger Toni Westland approached Billy Kirkland, owner of Billy’s Rentals on Sanibel, about building bike racks to replace a set that was falling apart in the Visitor & Education Center parking lot, he came up with an even better plan. He could use leftover boards made from recycled plastic for Refuge boardwalk projects to make sturdy, long-lasting racks. He was able to build three of the racks out of project leftovers. “These things will last forever!” said Toni. “A big thanks to Billy.”

Thanks to Our Generous Friends



A big “Ding” thank you to Vortex Optics for the donation of one high-quality pair of binoculars to auction off at our February Go Wild for “Ding” fundraiser, plus 25 pairs for visitors to borrow while touring the Refuge and another 15 pairs to use in Refuge kids’ education programs. We also carry Vortex binoculars in our Refuge Nature Store. Come have a look!



Urban Solar representatives met recently with Richard Johnson, co-owner of Bailey’s General Store on Sanibel Island, and SanCap Solar Connect committee chair John McCabe to discuss a solar system.

Help Wildlife & Conservation with a Year-end Donation



As 2015 draws to a close, please consider the value of making a year-end tax-deductible gift to the “Ding” Darling Wildlife Society to support efforts to protect our wildlife. Your gift will help support the Refuge in areas such as conservation education, water quality, wildlife research, land acquisition, walkways and trails, educational exhibits, intern programs, and preserving and protecting vital land for our current and future wildlife.

STAFF NEWS

Farewell to Lise

Lise Bryant, our Nature Store manager for nearly 15 years, retired from her position in October to pursue her independent artwork and business. "Lise made a true impact on the support the Society is able to provide the Refuge and the impact that this work has had on the millions of visitors and future conservation stewards over the last 15 years," said DDWS Executive Director Birgie Miller. We will miss Lise and wish her the best of luck.



Lise Bryant

Meet Alison

Alison Conger feels she is living her late grandfather's legacy as she steps into the role of Nature Store Manager at "Ding" Darling. "His name was Howard Hendricks, and he volunteered here," Alison said. "He used to carry around a puppet named Pelican Pete to introduce to the children and other visitors."



Alison Conger

"We warmly welcome Alison, with all her vitality and past experience in retail, to the position," said DDWS executive director Birgie Miller.

"I have big shoes to fill, but my feet are nine-and-a-halves, so I think I'm up to it," Alison joked. "It feels like home already after only one week. Being in retail a long time, I know when a job's a good fit."

Alison, a Fort Myers resident for 18 years, worked at the original Chico's on Periwinkle Way on Sanibel Is-

land and later managed Jennifer's clothing store in Fort Myers. A 1997 graduate from Mariner High School in Cape Coral, she is one of four family generations living here, including her 15-year-old son, Noah.

New Maintenance Supervisor

Donnie Swingle took the position of Refuge Maintenance Supervisor in October, having arrived from Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area near Scranton, Pennsylvania, where he also worked with the maintenance crew. "I love every bit of it," he said about his introduction to "Ding" Darling. "The other day I went kayaking and had a dolphin following me around. That was neat."



Donnie Swingle

Welcome Interns

"Ding" Darling Wildlife Society continues its support of the Refuge and DDWS internship programs this fall with the hiring of five new interns.

Shared interns Carrie Alexander and Anna Grubb clocked in for service in September. Carrie, a geology and environmental science student from Hanover College in Indiana, graduated in May 2015. Over the summer she worked as a camp counselor teaching outdoor skills and living in a cabin with 20 13-year-old girls.

Anna hails from Duxbury, Massachusetts. She last worked at the Insect Agroecology Laboratory at the University of Vermont and at a local store in Burlington, Vermont. A graduate from the University of Vermont in May 2015, she has a bachelor's degree in environmental studies with a concentration in ecology and conservation, and minors in zoology and dance.



Jenny Rieke and Jack Cholewa



Anna Grubb, Carrie Alexander and Leigh Gay

Environmental education interns Jack Cholewa and Jenny Rieke arrived early November and visitor services intern Leigh Gay later that month.

Jack, a 2014 graduate from the University of Colorado at Boulder with a degree in ecology and evolutionary biology, came from the Idaho Department of Fish & Game, where he worked as a fisheries data technician assisting research on salmon and smallmouth bass.

Jenny arrived from a two-month environmental education internship at Hawk Ridge Bird Observatory in Duluth, Minnesota. A recent graduate of the University of California Santa Cruz with a bachelor's degree in environmental studies, she spent the fall teaching school groups about raptor migration.

Leigh graduated in 2013 from North Carolina State University in Raleigh, where she earned her bachelor's in zoology. She previously worked with the Audubon Society at a residential environmental education camp in Pennsylvania and as an education intern at Don Edwards San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge.

Smithsonian Exhibit Planned

Stay tuned for information about an upcoming special Refuge exhibit in partnership with The Smithsonian and Florida Humanities Council starting in late October and ending early December 2016. Water/Ways will take a global look at water relative to the environment, culture, and history. In collaboration with other local nature and art organizations, it will also examine the issues and context facing our liquid assets here at home. The Southwest Florida Fine Craft Guild is planning an artful water and nature exhibition during the event. In design right now, the first-of-its-kind Water/Ways will visit only six locations in Florida, including "Ding" Darling.



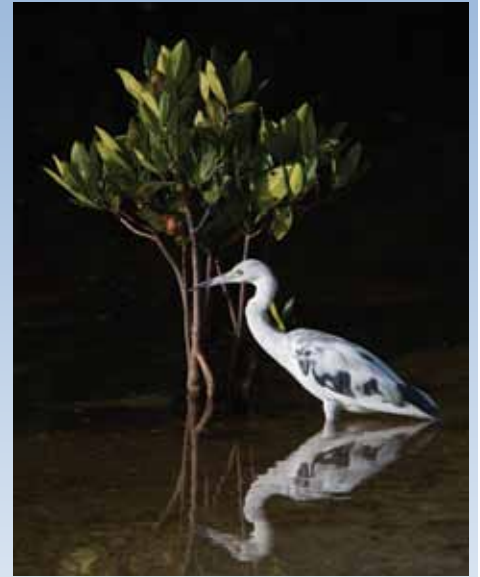
Smithsonian



Low-Income Families Outreach

"Ding" Darling dedicated four weekends in November and December to transporting and hosting families from local low-income neighborhoods to learn about the Refuge and its wildlife and habitat. Targeted areas included Tice, Harlem Heights, and Immokalee. The Refuge treated

families to hikes, tram tours, and family crafts with Spanish interpreters on hand. Thanks to the LAT Foundation, Wells Fargo, and Tarpon Bay Explorers for their support of this program, in keeping with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service's mission to serve the underserved.



Matthew Ryan McFarlane's "Why Did the Heron Cross the Road?" (left) took second place. Ellen Trevor's "Little Blue/First Spring" (right) came in third.

Photo Contest Winners

On October 24, 2015, we announced the winners of our 28th annual "Ding" Darling Days Amateur Nature Photography Contest at a special Conservation Art Day presentation, part of the weeklong "Ding" Darling Days.

Earlier, on October 7, judges had selected 13 winners out of 76 entries from 14 states, Switzerland, England, and Italy. All photographs entered were shot at the Refuge.

"We always choose three judges for the contest - a refuge staff member, a professional photographer, and a member of the Sanibel community," said Terry Baldwin, contest chair.

First place went to Kent Jager of Sanibel Island for his White Pelican portrait. Contest judge Judie Zimmomra, Sanibel city manager, said "The reasons for my choice were the clarity and technical quality of the photo, the impact of light and action on the subject, and the difficulty to capture the photo."

Matthew Ryan McFarlane from Dallas, Texas, took

second place with a shot of a juvenile Yellow-crowned Night Heron. "I loved this photo because the personality of the 'teenager' came out — just a very sassy pose that spoke to me," said Refuge Ranger Becky Larkins, another contest judge. "And I loved the perspective of the blurred trail behind the bird that beckons the viewer to go see why this bird likes this trail — it draws you in."

In third place was Ellen Trevor from Sanibel Island with her juvenile Little Blue Heron shot. Judge Al Hofacker, a professional photographer at Half-Cracker-Photo.com, commented: "I liked it a lot based upon the reflection, which is always tough to get, and the lone red mangrove and its young prop root. I thought it represented a theme of 'Two Young Lives.'"

The three winners received cash awards from DDWS at the presentation on Saturday — \$100 for first place, \$75 for second, and \$50 for third. Each honorable mention winner received a \$25 award, which reflects a refund of the contest entry fee.

The winning photographs and 10 honorable mention award entries will be on display in the Refuge Visitor & Education Center throughout the year.

To view the other 2015 top-ranking entries, visit dingdarlingsociety.org/photo-contests. Stay tuned for news about blank note cards featuring all the winning images, which will be available for purchase in the Refuge Nature Store this season.

HONORABLE MENTIONS (in alphabetical order):

- Frank Brinker, Oberaegeri, CH Switzerland — Fiddler Crab
- Michael Femal, St. Petersburg, Florida — Reddish Egret
- Bill Fisher, Hinsdale, Illinois — Breeding Male Green-Winged Teal
- Peter Garafalo, Astoria, New York — Yellow Rat Snake
- Thomas Korbitt, Bluffton, South Carolina — Osprey
- Jim Lotstein, Canton, Connecticut — Osprey
- Liz Noffsinger, Milford, Ohio — White Pelicans
- Tom Olson, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania — Reddish Egret
- Mike Summers, Cape Coral, Florida — Brown Pelican
- Linda Kerr Wells, Friendsville, Tennessee — Tricolored Heron

Discover Ding App Contest

Our friends at Discover Nature Apps are running a contest through April 2016. Every visitor who downloads the app, takes a tour of the Wildlife Drive, and earns a roseate spoonbill badge wins a cool "Give your phone the bird" shirt. 25+ likes for a

wildlife sighting, photo, or score wins a Discover Nature hat. And the photo, sighting, or score with the most likes will win a topnotch set of binoculars. Look for more details available on the Discover Nature Apps Facebook page. Download the app today — available for both iPhone and Android devices — and come on over.



Thirteen teachers received conservation education grants from the "Ding" Darling Wildlife Society this year.

TEACHER CONSERVATION GRANTS

DDWS recently awarded \$10,000 in grants to conservation education-related projects at 13 different schools in Lee and Collier counties. "This is the 10th year the Society has awarded these teacher grants. The past two years we opened eligibility to a five-county area," says Wendy Kindig, Education Committee Chair. "To date, we have awarded nearly \$58,000 in teacher grants." Kip Koss, "Ding" Darling's late grandson, was instrumental in establishing a conservation grant fund to help local teachers fortify their efforts in inspiring future conservation stewards.

Tarpon Tourney 2016

A 100 percent purse promises to make the fifth annual "Ding" Darling & Doc Ford's Tarpon Tournament on May 7, 2016, the hottest competition on the water. It pays out every penny of entry fees (\$500 per boat of up to four) as tournament awards. The Captain's Dinner takes place the evening prior, May 6, at Doc Ford's Rum Bar & Grille on Fort Myers Beach. Doc Ford's Rum Bar & Grille and Diversified Yacht Services have already stepped up to once again sponsor the tournament. If you are interested in sponsoring this event to benefit Refuge wildlife and education, please contact Birgie Miller at director@dingdarlingsociety.org or 239-292-0566.



Kids Fishing Derby 2015

Saturday, November 28, 2015, marked the fifth annual free Kids Fishing Derby on the Sanibel Causeway. Sixty-five kids up to age 15 participated to win awards and prizes. The event was made possible by support from DDWS, The Historic Bait Box, Trophy Case of Fort Myers, Sanibel Island Fishing Club, and Lee County Parks & Recreation.

Longtime Volunteer Mourned

On September 10, 2015, longtime volunteer and generous donor Mary Lou Schadt passed away at age 91 in Cassopolis, Michigan. A volunteer for more than 30 years, Mary Lou put in 3,186 hours as a Refuge Rover and in other capacities. One of her proudest Refuge moments was guiding then President Jimmy Carter through the Refuge. She will also be remembered for her gracious support of the "Ding" Darling Wildlife Society Scholarship Program.



Mary Lou

"Mary Lou was a great teacher of shorebird identification," said Ranger Jeff Combs, volunteer coordinator. "She helped many volunteers learn what characteristics to look for and made the classes very fun. She will be greatly missed here at 'Ding' Darling."

2016 Lecture Series

Sex, Drug, and Sea Slime; Ditch of Dreams; The Plant World of the Calusa; and Rain: The book titles to be featured in the 2016 "Ding" Darling Nature Store Friday Lecture Series are as intriguing as varied. The series takes place in the "Ding" Darling Visitors & Education Center Auditorium starting Friday, January 8, and ending April 15.

HighTower Advisors of Fort Myers and Mike and Terry Baldwin are sponsoring the 2016 lecture series with support from the "Ding" Darling Wildlife Society. Because of their popularity, the free lectures will take place twice each Friday, at 10 a.m. and again at 1 p.m.



The season's complete schedule is listed to the right. Book signings follow all of the starred (*) lectures. Visit dingdarlingsociety.org/lectures for lecture descriptions.

Seating for the lectures is limited and available on a first-come basis. Arrive one hour early to assure seating. Early arrivals can save one seat each 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.

As usual, Wildlife Drive is closed on Friday, but visitors are welcome to enjoy the free "Ding" Darling Visitor & Education Center and recreational opportunities at Tarpon Bay Explorers, the Refuge's official concessionaire located at its Tarpon Bay Recreation Area.

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



- *January 8 — Cindy Bear & Martha Kendall — *The Plant World of the Calusa: A View from Pineland*
 - January 15 — No lecture
 - *January 22 — Cynthia Barnett — *Rain: A Natural & Cultural History*
 - January 29 — Dr. Ken Meyer, ARCI — The Dance of the Reddish Egret - From "Ding" to North Florida
 - *February 5 — Ellen Prager — *Sex, Drugs and Sea Slime: The Ocean's Oddest Creatures and Why They Matter*
 - *February 12 — Don & Lillian Stokes — Better Birding
 - February 19 — No lecture
 - February 26 — Jerry Lorenz — Roseate Spoonbills in Florida Bay: Pink Canaries in a Coal Mine
 - *March 4 — Steve Noll — *Ditch of Dreams: The Cross Florida Barge Canal and the Struggle for Florida's Future*
 - *March 11 — Leslie Kemp Poole — *Saving Florida: Women's Fight for the Environment in the Twentieth Century*
 - March 18 — Emily Stokes, Reef.org — Invasion of the Lionfish
 - March 25 — Ian Bartoszek — Pythons in Paradise: Collaborative Burmese Python Research in SW Florida
 - April 1 — "Teddy Roosevelt Reprisal" by Joe Wiegand
 - *April 8 — John H. Hartig — *Bringing Conservation to Cities: Lessons from Building the Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge*
 - *April 15 — Sandra Friend & John Keatley — *The Florida Trail Guide*
- *Starred lectures indicate a book signing to follow.

2016 Film Series

The fourth annual "Ding" Darling Wednesday Film Series kicks off its bi-monthly showings this winter with a schedule of eight films.

"Ding" Darling Wildlife Society-Friends of the Refuge hosts the free film showings in the Visitor & Education Center with sponsorship from Sanibel-Captiva Beach Resorts. Seating is limited and on a first-come basis.

Below are the season's scheduled films. All films begin at 2:30 p.m. For full descriptions of the films, please visit www.dingdarlingsociety.org/films.



- January 6 — *From Billions to None: The Passenger Pigeon's Flight to Extinction*
- January 20 — *The Cove*
- February 3 — *Vanishing of the Bees*
- February 17 — *Sand Wars*
- March 2 — *Plastic Paradise: The Great Pacific Garbage Patch*
- March 16 — *Crash: The Tale of Two Species*
- March 30 — *The End of the Line: Where Have All the Fish Gone?*
- April 14 — *Bag It: Is Your Life Too Plastic?*





NEW! in the Visitor & Education Center

A new Refuge Cam mounted on the Wildlife Drive observation tower is up and running, delivering the sharpest, most stunning live feed ever, thanks to support from the Gardner Families and DDWS. The new state-of-the-art camera system sends feed to Visitor & Education Center screens and eventually online at dingdarlingsociety.org. The system includes a camera with the most powerful zoom capabilities available in a 360-degree motorized model. Industry-leading control software allows the video feed to be automatically adjusted for different light levels, contributing to spectacular images, even when the subject is at a great distance and in low or high daytime lighting conditions. The renovation also replaced older solar technology with panels containing additional sensors and voltage regulators to maximize efficiency, the lifespan of the system, and cost-effectiveness.



The 16-year-old Refuge Visitor & Education Center got its first facelift this fall with the renovation of its entryway, a result of 2013's Preservation Capital Campaign. Improvements include digital signage to display Refuge graphics, three interchangeable photo panels, and interactive eDONATE, Cornell E-Bird, and other touch screens. The next Visitor & Education Center project will update the exhibit about our namesake Jay Norwood ("Ding") Darling, Pulitzer prize-winning political cartoonist.

Upcoming Events

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

- Refuge Winter Programs — January 4-April 3, 2016
- Friday Winter Lecture Series - January 8-April 15, 2016
- Biweekly Winter Film Series - January 13-April 6, 2016
- Darling Is Back* Film Sneak Preview — February 9, 2016
- SOLD OUT! Stokes Refuge Tours — February 19, 2016
- Volunteer Luncheon — February 19, 2016
- Go Wild with "Ding" — Dance of the Reddish Egrets — February 23, 2016
- Federal Junior Duck Stamp Judging at the Refuge/Earth Day — April 22, 2016
- Fifth Annual "Ding" Darling & Doc Ford's Tarpon Tournament — May 6-7, 2016
- 27th Annual "Ding" Darling Days — October 16-22, 2016

Scholarships Deadline

March 31, 2016, is the application deadline for a dozen or more separate scholarships from the "Ding" Darling Wildlife Society totaling more than \$10,000 total. High school seniors or college students in or from Lee, Collier, Charlotte, Hendry, and Glades counties intending to pursue degrees in environmental-related studies may apply. Interested students can find more information and printable application forms at dingdarlingsociety.org/student-scholarships.

WOODRING DEMOLITION

Work began this fall on restoring habitat to its natural state at the Refuge's new Woodring Point property, purchased last year through funds raised by DDWS' Preservation Campaign. Crews took down one of the property's derelict outbuildings and have begun work removing exotics.



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.



MEMORIAL AND HONOR GIFTS

SEPTEMBER 1, 2015 – NOVEMBER 30, 2015

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:

- | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Dr. Christina Barkley | Elaine Jacobson |
| Derek L. Barter | Karen Lord |
| Erhart Becker | Chuck Raber |
| Betty Bruce | Florence Savage |
| Angela Chatwin | Mary Lou Schadt |
| Marcia Cohen | Richard Schrier |
| Mabel S. Deng | Judy Steger |
| Wally Faster | Nora Wells |
| Christine Glancy | Thomas C. Wright, Sr. |

We received gifts in HONOR of the following:

- | | |
|---------------------|-------------------------|
| Lisa Claypool | Jim Sprinkle |
| Kay Goffenburg | Gordon and Barbara Webb |
| Marilyn Kloosterman | |

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'DING" DAYS PHOTO CONTEST



Kent Jager of Sanibel Island took first place for his white pelican portrait in this year's "Ding" Darling Days Amateur Nature Photography Contest. See page 5 for more contest results.

