

PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release.

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Caption: Plein-air artists will be painting along Wildlife Drive. Admission to the drive is free for Conservation Art Day.

Caption: Five-time winner Joseph Hautman designed the 2016-2017 Federal Duck Stamp featuring trumpeter swans.

Caption: Painting with a Twist of Fort Myers will conduct a hands-on class for painting this bird feather portrait on canvas.

Duck Stamp artists, hands-on workshops headline free Conservation Art Day

Five-time Federal Duck Stamp winner Joseph Hautman from Plymouth, Minn., headlines the eighth annual free Conservation Art Day at J. N. “Ding” Darling National Wildlife Refuge, Sanibel Island, on Saturday, Oct. 22, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Florida Junior Duck Stamp winner Megan Zou will also be on hand.

“Eight years ago we moved the duck stamp artist presentations from Family Fun Day so we could honor the winning artists with a day devoted especially to them,” said Supervisory Refuge Ranger Toni Westland. “So Conservation Art Day is now the time to get your duck stamps signed.”

The event will bring the weeklong “Ding” Darling Days 2016 to a close with the duck stamp artist presentations, nature art, cartooning, photography, and art demonstrations. Admission to Wildlife Drive is free all day, and plein-air artists will be painting along the way.

The first 200 arrivals to Conservation Art Day score a reusable bag with art supplies and an opportunity to “Ask the Artist a Question,” as fine wildlife artist John Brennan demonstrates in the Visitor & Education Center. Select art gifts will be 10 percent off in the Refuge Nature Store.

The Santiva Chronicle Bird Dress-Up Photo Station in the center will allow visitors to take “selfies” and “groupies” to immediately share on social media platforms and via email.

“Conservation Art Day has grown into a day of wildlife art that pays homage to the legacy of conservation art begun by the refuge’s namesake, Jay ‘Ding’ Darling, a Pulitzer Prize-winning political cartoonist and the original duck stamp artist,” said Westland.

Geared toward families and art enthusiasts, the day will offer participants the choice between a photography tram workshop on Wildlife Drive, compliments of nature photographer Terry Baldwin and Tarpon Bay Explorers (for first 30 signups that day); and a Make & Take Feather Portrait class with Painting with a Twist of Fort Myers for the first 25 children who sign up that day.

The day’s full schedule is posted at www.dingdarlingdays.com.

The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, “Ding” Darling Wildlife Society-Friends of the Refuge, and Tarpon Bay Explorers co-host the “Ding” Darling Days. Sponsors include: **ROSEATE SPOONBILL SPONSORS:** Doc’s Ford Sanibel Rum Bar & Grille; **GREAT EGRET SPONSORS:** George & Wendy’s Seafood Grille; **GREAT BLUE HERON SPONSORS:** 97.7 Latino & Juan Radio, Andrew Thompson Company, Bailey’s General Store, Mike & Terry Baldwin, Bank of the Islands, Wayne & Linda Boyd, Cedar Chest Fine Jewelry, Island Sun, Jerry’s Foods of Sanibel, John & Beth Newland, Sanibel-Captiva Beach Resorts, Sanibel Captiva Community Bank, Sanibel Captiva Rotary Club, Sanibel Moorings, Santiva Chronicle, Spotlight Graphics, Jim & Patty Sprankle; **REDDISH EGRET SPONSORS:** Sarah Ashton & Jim Metzler, Karen Bell, Big Red Q Quickprint, Casa Ybel Resort, Jerry Edelman & Maryanne Daly, Sally & Rich Ennis, Florida Weekly, Phyllis Gresham, Island Inn, Jensen’s on the Gulf and Marina & Cottages, Mitchell’s Sand Castles & Forty/Fifteen Resorts, Painting With a Twist, Ed & Lynn Riddlehoover, Sanibel-Captiva Kiwanis Club, Stewart and Sons Insurance, Inc., Suncatchers’ Dream, West Wind Inn, Don & Ann-Marie Wildman; **SNOWY EGRET SPONSORS:** Barefoot Charley’s Painting Co., John Brennan, The Butterfly Estates, Charlotte Harbor National Estuary Program (CHNEP), Colony Inn, Grounds by Green Ways, Intech Printing, Island Cinema, Island Management, Island Therapy Center, Marina Customer Service Training, Over Easy Café, Panther Printing, Sanibel Art & Frame, George & Wendy Schnapp, Select Vacation Properties, Winston & Barbara Spurgeon, Tents ‘n’ Events.

ABOUT DDWS

As a non-profit 501(c)3 organization, DDWS works to support J.N. “Ding” Darling National Wildlife Refuge’s mission of conservation, wildlife and habitat protection, research, and public education through charitable donations and Refuge Nature Shop proceeds.

To support DDWS and the refuge with a tax-deductible gift, visit www.dingdarlingsociety.org or contact Birgie Miller at 239-292-0566, 239-472-1100 ext. 4, or dingdarlingsociety@gmail.com.

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