

PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release.

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Caption:

‘Ding’ lecturer follows mountain lion’s journey

In the summer of 2009, a young mountain lion left his home in the Black Hills of South Dakota and set out on a cross-country journey that covered two years and more than 2,000 miles, passing within 30 miles of Manhattan before ending tragically on a Connecticut parkway.

In two free presentations, Will Stolzenburg, author of *Heart of a Lion: A Lone Cat’s Walk Across America*, incorporates images, film, and firsthand accounts of those whose lives were touched by the record-setting cat. They take place at 10 a.m. and 1 p.m. on Friday, March 31, as part of the 2017 “Ding” Darling Lecture Series at J.N. “Ding” Darling National Wildlife Refuge on Sanibel Island.

Stolzenburg has written hundreds of magazine articles about the science and spirit of saving wild creatures. A 2010 Alicia Patterson Journalism Fellow, he is the author of the books *Rat Island* and *Where the Wild Things Were* (recipient of Barnes & Noble’s “Discover Great New Writers” award). In *Heart of a Lion* he discusses the history of man’s relationship with predators, particularly the mountain lion.

Following Stolzenburg’s presentations, he will be signing copies of his book, which are available for purchase in the Refuge Nature Store, proceeds from which benefit wildlife, research, and education at “Ding” Darling.

HighTower/Thomas & Swartz Wealth Management sponsors the free 12-lecture series with support from the “Ding” Darling Wildlife Society-Friends of the Refuge (DDWS). The season’s remaining schedule is listed below; book signings follow all the lectures.

Seating for the lectures in the “Ding” Darling Visitor & Education Center Auditorium is limited and available on a first-come basis. Arrive one hour early to assure a place to sit. Early arrivals can save one seat each and then may 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 closes on Friday, but visitors are welcome to enjoy the center, Indigo Trail, and recreational opportunities at Tarpon Bay Explorers, the refuge’s official recreation concession 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.

For more information, call 239-472-1100 ext. 241 or log on to dingdarlingsociety.org/articles/lecture-and-film-series.

March 31 – Author Will Stolzenburg, *Heart of a Lion: A Lone Cat’s Walk Across America*

April 7 – Photographer-sound recordist Gerrit Vyn, *The Living Bird: 100 Years of Listening to Nature*

April 14 – Author Charles Sobczak, *Alligators, Sharks, & Panthers: Deadly Encounters with Florida’s Top Predator — Man*

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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