

PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release.

Contact: Toni Westland

Toni_Westland@fws.gov

239-472-1100 ext. 237

Caption: Free Family Fun Day kicks off “Ding” Darling Days.

NOTE: Short calendar listing included at end.

Save the date for 29th annual “Ding” Darling Days

Mark your calendars for this year’s “Ding” Darling Days birding and eco-festival at J.N. “Ding” Darling National Wildlife Refuge on Sanibel Island, Florida, the week of Oct. 15-21, 2017.

Family Fun Day kicks off the week with free activities on Sunday, Oct. 15. It features all-free refuge tours, live wildlife presentations, a Florida WaterVentures Traveling Lab, a new exhibit debut, archery clinics, hot dogs, a touch tank and butterfly house, and kids’ nature crafts.

Conservation Art Day winds up the celebration on Saturday, Oct. 21, with visits from Federal Duck Stamp and Junior Duck Stamp winners and nature art workshops. The day celebrates the 141st birthday of the refuge’s namesake, father of the Federal Duck Stamp program and Pulitzer Prize-winning cartoonist, Jay N. “Ding” Darling. The refuge will be serving free birthday cake to celebrate the occasion.

Free and discounted birding, biking, kayaking, paddleboarding, sea-life boating tours, and interpretive presentations will fill the week between the two events.

The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, “Ding” Darling Wildlife Society-Friends of the Refuge

(DDWS), and Tarpon Bay Explorers, the refuge's recreation concession, cosponsor "Ding" Darling Days with generous support from the local community and businesses.

Visit www.dingdarlingdays.com for updates on events, information on sponsoring "Ding" Days, or to sign up for e-mail update bulletins. Contact Birgie Miller at 239-292-0566 or director@dingdarlingsociety.org to become a sponsor.

CALENDAR LISTING BLURB

Oct. 15-21, 2017

"Ding" Darling Days

J. N. "Ding" Darling National Wildlife Refuge

1 Wildlife Drive

Sanibel Island FL

239-472-1100

www.dingdarlingdays.com

"Ding" Darling Days' Family Fun Day on Sunday, Oct. 15, kicks off a week of eco-activities with all-free refuge tram tours, live wildlife presentations, hot dogs, kids crafts, and more. Discounted birding, boating, tram, paddleboarding, and kayaking activities fill the week. The 29th annual celebration ends on Saturday, Oct. 21, with Conservation Art Day, where Federal Duck Stamp winners, other artists, cartooning, and a refuge photography tram tour will highlight a day devoted to Jay Norwood Darling's legacy as the first duck stamp artist and a Pulitzer Prize-winning political cartoonist.

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 dingdarlingsociety.org or contact Birgie Miller at 239-292-0566 or director@dingdarlingsociety.org.

###