

PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

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Caption

New exhibits heighten refuge's Bailey Tract experience

Ongoing habitat restoration and trail improvement projects have been giving the J.N. "Ding" Darling National Wildlife Refuge's satellite Bailey Tract campus a facelift. The crowning touch was installed this week: two new kiosks at the entrance and seven interpretive panels along the more than 3-1/2 miles of trails.

Welcome panels let visitors know how to budget their time visiting the greater refuge areas and what kind of wildlife they might expect to see at Bailey Tract. Along the 100-acre freshwater tract's trails, signage educates about specific site features such as the endangered Sanibel rice rat, birds, pollinators, and the history of the Bailey Tract. Other tract wildlife includes alligators, river otters, gopher tortoises, bobcats, and nesting colonies of black-necked stilts.

Admission to Bailey Tract is free and open to hikers and cyclists. It is open daily sunrise to sunset. Access is available from Tarpon Bay Road and Island Inn Road.

"The Bailey Tract is something of a hidden secret on Sanibel," said Supervisory Refuge Ranger Toni Westland. "Just steps off busy Tarpon Bay Road, you feel as though you are miles away from civilization. We hope the improved signage gives visitors a new understanding of this sanctuary for some of the island's most charismatic wildlife."

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.

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