

PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release.

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Captions: LILLIAN: Lillian Stokes leads a bird photography tour.

DON: Don Stokes teaches about bird identification.

Celebrity birders Don & Lillian Stokes return for private refuge birding tours

Nationally acclaimed bird authors, TV personalities, and longtime Sanibel Island winter residents Don and Lillian Stokes will again contribute their time and expertise to lead two fundraising birders tram tours of the “Ding” Darling Refuge on Friday, Feb. 9, 2018. Visitor & Education Center doors open at 7 a.m. for continental breakfast, and trams depart at 7:30 a.m.

Wildlife Drive is normally closed on Fridays, meaning tour participants will have the birds and the Stokes to themselves. Lillian Stokes will speak about and demonstrate bird photography on one of the trams, while her husband, Don, on a second tram, will focus on the principles of bird identification.

Tarpon Bay Explorers, the refuge’s official recreation concession, will be donating the use of two trams. Together, they accommodate 60 passengers, so interested persons are encouraged to make reservations as soon as possible, because the Stokes’ past tram tours have filled up quickly.

Don and Lillian Stokes have authored more than 30 books in their Stokes Field Guides series and once hosted a birding television show for PBS.

“The Stokes are veteran birding experts recognized throughout the country, and they have a huge following,” said Birgie Miller, executive director of the “Ding” Darling Wildlife Society-Friends of the Refuge (DDWS), which is organizing the tours. “This is the sixth consecutive year we have offered the Stokes private birding tours, and they are immensely popular.

“Thanks to their generosity and our partnership with Tarpon Bay Explorers, 100 percent of the proceeds from this fundraiser will benefit wildlife and education programs at the refuge.”

Cost for tour tickets are \$100 each for a half-day tour that includes coffee and continental breakfast and use of spotting scopes on the drive. To make reservations, email sarah@dingdarlingsociety.org or call 239-472-1100 ext. 4. Full, nonrefundable payment is required for reservations.

Below is a schedule of special events planned by DDWS and the refuge for the upcoming season. For details visit dingdarlingsociety.org.

Veteran's Day Weekend (fee-free days on Wildlife Drive) – Nov. 11-12, 2017
Happy Hour Holiday Shopping – Nov. 29, 2017
Estate Planning 101 – Nov. 30, 2017
DDWS Annual Meeting – Dec. 6, 2017
Biweekly Wednesday Film Series – Jan. 10 – April 4, 2018
Friday Lecture Series – Jan. 19-April 13, 2018
Volunteer Awards Luncheon – Feb. 9, 2018
Sixth Annual Go Wild for “Ding” – In the Nest – Feb. 14, 2018
Seventh Annual “Ding” Darling & Doc Ford's Tarpon Tournament – May 11, 2018

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 239-472-1100 ext. 4or director@dingdarlingsociety.org.

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