

## PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release.

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Caption: Author Noah Strycker kicks off the 2018 lecture series on Jan. 19.

### **‘Ding’ Darling lecture series visits Gulf of Mexico, puffins, and sea turtles**

Self-proclaimed “bird nerd” Noah Strycker starts out the 2018 “Ding” Darling Friday Lecture Series, which runs Jan. 19 through April 13. The author set a worldwide Big Year record in 2015, and his book about the experience, *Birding Without Borders: An Obsession, A Quest, and the Biggest Year in the World*, released last month. The lectures take place in the “Ding” Darling Visitor & Education Center Auditorium at J.N. “Ding” Darling National Wildlife Refuge on Sanibel Island.

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 series features noted authors, photographers, and experts in nature-related fields.

Noted bird activist, Dr. Stephen W. Kress, also joins the lineup to talk about his book *The Puffin Project: An Improbable Quest to Bring a Beloved Sea Bird Back to Egg Rock*. Other lectures will examine Antarctica, the Gulf of Mexico, coral restoration, and swallow-tailed kites.

The free lectures will be held twice each Friday (except on Feb. 9), at 10 a.m. and 1 p.m. The season’s complete schedule is listed below. Book signings follow all starred (\*) lectures. Visit [dingdarlingsociety.org/articles/lecture-and-film-series](http://dingdarlingsociety.org/articles/lecture-and-film-series) for further information on lecturers.

Seating for the lectures is limited and available on a first-come basis. 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 free Visitor & Education 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](http://dingdarlingsociety.org/articles/lecture-and-film-series).

\*Jan. 19 – Author Noah Strycker, *Birding Without Borders: An Obsession, a Quest, and the Biggest Year in the World*

\*Jan. 26 - Author Jack Davis, *The Gulf: The Making of an American Sea*

\*Feb. 2 – Author James McClintock, *Lost Antarctica: Adventures in a Disappearing Land*

Feb. 9 – NO LECTURE

Feb. 16 – Impersonator Joe Weigand, “Theodore Roosevelt Speaks out on Conservation”

\*Feb. 23 – Author Stephen Kress, *The Puffin Project: The Improbable Quest to Bring a Beloved Sea Bird Back to Egg Rock*

\*March 2 – Author Larry Nielsen, *Nature's Allies: Eight Conservationists Who Changed Our World*

\*March 9 – Author Kevin Karlson, *Birds of Prey: Hawks, Eagles, Falcons, and Vultures of North America*

\*March 16 – Author Tom Butler, *Wildlands Philanthropy: The Great American Tradition*

\*March 23 – Photographer-sound recordist Gerrit Vyn, *The Living Bird: 100 Years of Listening to Nature* March 30 – Artist and author Dawn and Blair Witherington, *Our Sea Turtles: A Practical Guide for the Atlantic and Gulf, from Canada to Mexico*

April 6 – Mote Marine Researcher Dr. Erinn Muller Mote Marine, “Coral Restoration”

April 13 – Avian researcher Dr. Kenneth Meyer, “Swallow-tailed Kites: 10,000 Miles to Survival”

\*starred lecture indicates book signing to follow

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](http://dingdarlingsociety.org) or contact Birgie Miller at 239-472-1100 ext. 4, or [dingdarlingsociety@gmail.com](mailto:dingdarlingsociety@gmail.com).

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