

PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release.

Contact: Chelle Koster Walton

239-699-4754

ChelleTrav@aol.com

Puffin Project topic of ‘Ding’ Darling lecture

Dr. Stephen W. Kress, director of National Audubon Society's Seabird Restoration Program, has helped restore populations of some of the world's rarest seabirds -- puffins and terns -- in Maine. On Friday, Feb. 23, he will be presenting two free programs at 10 a.m. and 1 p.m., part of the 2018 “Ding” Darling Lecture Series at J.N. “Ding” Darling National Wildlife Refuge on Sanibel Island.

Author of a number of bird-related books, Kress recently co-authored *Puffin Project: An Improbable Quest to Bring a Beloved Sea Bird Back to Egg Rock*. His presentations shed a beam of hope and inspiration onto the dire global outlook of dwindling seabird populations as he shares the success of restoration projects in the Gulf of Maine.

Kress began Project Puffin in 1973 and remains its director. He also manages National Audubon's Maine Coastal Island Sanctuaries and directs the Audubon Camp on Maine's Hog Island. As a laboratory associate at the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology in Ithaca, N.Y., Dr. Kress teaches an annual birding course called Spring Field Ornithology.

He will sign copies of his book, available in the Refuge Nature Store, following the two lectures. Proceeds from Nature Store sales directly benefit refuge wildlife, education, and research.

HighTower/Thomas & Swartz Wealth Management sponsors the 12-lecture series with support from the “Ding” Darling Wildlife Society-Friends of the Refuge (DDWS). The free lectures are held twice each Friday (except on Feb. 9), at 10 a.m. and 1 p.m. The season's remaining schedule is listed below. Book signings follow all starred (*) lectures.

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.

*Feb. 23 – Author Stephen W. Kress, *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, *Florida's Living Beaches: A Guide for the Curious Beachcomber*

April 6 – Mote Marine Researcher Dr. Erinn Muller, “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 or contact Birgie Miller at 239-472-1100 ext. 4, or dingdarlingsociety@gmail.com.

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