

## PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

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Event Logo attached

CAPTION for head: High bidder on the Jim Sprankle Green Heron necklace slider also wins leadership of the Sprankle Feather Club for one year.

### **One-of-a-kind art, excursions go on auction block for Go Wild for ‘Ding’**

Carvings by famed bird sculptor Jim Sprankle and a guided fly-fishing adventure in Idaho are among the unique items that go on the auction block at the sixth annual fundraiser for the “Ding” Darling Wildlife Society-Friends of the Refuge. Go Wild for “Ding” – In the Nest takes place on Wednesday, Feb. 14, 2018, at The Community House on Sanibel Island.

This year’s Go Wild theme continues a series of annual bird events to benefit the wildlife and conservation and education efforts at J.N. “Ding” Darling National Wildlife Refuge on Sanibel.

Each year, world-renowned sculptor Sprankle carves a feather pin to keep with the Go Wild theme. The bid winner becomes a member of the exclusive, 50-member Sprankle Feather Club, which flocks together for a special annual event. This year’s signed and hand-carved, hand-painted pin will be modeled after the feather of a green heron.

Sprankle has also carved a green heron necklace slider. Winner of that auction item becomes the head of the Feather Club for the coming year, helping to plan 2019’s feather club event.

The fly-fishing excursion to Idaho includes airfare for two, a two-night stay in the guest cabin of artist Ed Anderson, a guided and outfitted day of fly-fishing on the Boise River, and two meals for two in Boise restaurants.

Other banner items for the live and silent auctions include a hinged, porcelain egg hand-painted with refuge scenes by Patty Sprankle; a signed print by the late island artist Ikki Matsumoto; a private refuge tour for 10 led by Ranger Toni Westland; a bird woodcarving by Gary Eigenberger; a 14K gold baby birds' nest charm from The Cedar Chest Fine Jewelry; a pickleball clinic for four with lunch at Sundial Beach Resort; and a private beer-brewing party for up to four with Deputy Refuge Manager Nate Caswell.

Those unable to attend the event may bid on auction items remotely by contacting DDWS executive director Birgie Miller at 239-472-1100 ext. 4 or [director@dingdarlingsociety.org](mailto:director@dingdarlingsociety.org).

“For this year’s theme we showcase baby birds,” said Miller. “Plan on joining us for tasty dishes generously donated by Sanibel Catering Company by Bailey’s, unique nature-themed auctions, and live entertainment.”

“Seating is limited and we once again anticipate a sold-out crowd,” said event committee member and DDWS president Mike Baldwin. “We encourage people to reserve early. Only 50 reservations remain.”

Admission to the Feb. 14 event is by reservation only. Tickets to the Go Wild at “Ding” party are \$125 each. To reserve your spot, register at [tinyurl.com/gowild2018](http://tinyurl.com/gowild2018). Or call 239-472-1100 ext. 4 or email [sarah@dingdarlingsociety.org](mailto:sarah@dingdarlingsociety.org) to make reservations. For more information, visit [dingdarlingsociety.org/articles/go-wild-for-ding](http://dingdarlingsociety.org/articles/go-wild-for-ding).

Event sponsorships are available; for more information, contact Miller at 239-472-1100 ext. 4 or [director@dingdarlingsociety.org](mailto:director@dingdarlingsociety.org).

The following sponsors have already pledged their support for Go Wild for “Ding” – In the Nest. **Champion Level:** Mark & Gretchen Banks, Wayne & Linda Boyd, John & Kathy McCabe, Sanibel Catering Company by Bailey’s, Jim & Patty Sprankle, Bill & Diane Valerian; **Guardian Level:** Doc Ford’s Rum Bar & Grille, Ed Anderson Art; **Protector Level:** Sarah Ashton & Jim Metzler, Mike & Terry Baldwin, Barefoot Charley’s Painting Company, Peter & Paula Bentinck-Smith, Cedar Chest Fine Jewelry, Doug & Sherry Gentry, Island Paws & Over Easy Café, Geoffrey & Karen Moss, Queenie’s Ice Cream, Ron E. & Josephine Smith, Hank & Linda Spire, Times of the Islands; **Defender Level:** 50% Off Framing, Jerry Edelman & Maryanne Daly, Escott Betzig Charitable Fund, Greenwood Consulting, Island Inn, Phyllis Gresham, Mitchell’s Sandcastles, John & Kay Morse, Sanibel Moorings, Stewart & Sons Insurance Inc., Superior Title Services.

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 [director@dingdarlingsociety.org](mailto:director@dingdarlingsociety.org).

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