

## PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release  
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Caption:

### **Free Earth Day at the Refuge expands**

Because Earth Day 2019 falls on the Monday following Easter, a day off for Lee County Schools students, J.N. “Ding” Darling National Wildlife Refuge has expanded the free event to include a full day of tours, crafts, films, and programs on April 22.

The refuge will celebrate the 49th anniversary of Earth Day in partnership with the “Ding” Darling Wildlife Society. Take part in recycled earth crafts from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. in the free-admission Visitor & Education Center, where you can meet Bagzilla, a “bag monster” dressed in the average person’s annual plastic bag consumption.

Bike or hike Wildlife Drive for free from 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. Ride your own bike and stop at Tarpon Bay Explorers, the refuge’s official recreation concessionaire, for a free gift.

See below for the day’s schedule of free activities. Short discussions follow all of the films.

7 a.m. – 4 p.m. – Free admission to Wildlife Drive for hikers and cyclists ONLY

9 a.m. – 11 a.m. – Biking the Refuge Tour, bring your own bike and meet at the flagpole

9 a.m. – *Straws* film, 32 minutes, Visitor & Education Center

9:30 – 11 a.m. – Birds & Wildlife Car Caravan Tour, meet at the flagpole

10 a.m. – 3 p.m. ongoing – Recycled nature crafts in the Visitor & Education Center

10 a.m. – *Bag It!* film, 45 minutes, Visitor & Education Center

10 a.m. – 11 a.m. – Beach Walk, meet at Gulfside City Park, city parking fees apply

11 a.m. – 12 noon – Refuge Photo Walk, meet at the flagpole

11 – 11:30 a.m. – Horseshoe Crab Program, Visitor & Education Center

1 – 1:30 p.m. – Gators & Crocs Program, Crossdike Pavilion, Wildlife Drive admission fees apply

1 p.m. – *Addicted to Plastic* film, 53 minutes, Visitor & Education Center

2 – 3:30 p.m. – Refuge Clean-Up, meet at the flagpole

2 p.m. – *Plastic Paradise* film, 57 minutes, Visitor & Education Center

For more information on Earth Day at the Refuge, call 239-472-1100 or visit [dingdarlingsociety.org/articles/events](http://dingdarlingsociety.org/articles/events).

#### 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 profits.

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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