

## PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

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Caption: Ed Anderson took inspiration from roseate spoonbills, the refuge's official 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary birds, during his 'residency.'

**75<sup>th</sup> anniversary artist 'in residence' exhibition opens Feb. 25 at 'Ding'**

Idaho wildlife artist Ed Anderson kicked off the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration of the J.N. "Ding" Darling National Wildlife Refuge last summer with an eight-week artist "in residence" educational program, where he gathered inspiration during daily visits to the refuge. The results of that inspiration – about a dozen paintings and art journal entries – will go on exhibit in the Visitor & Education Center Auditorium Feb. 25 through April 24, 2020.

The exhibition opens on Feb. 25 at 9 a.m. with a reception featuring refreshments and an artist appearance that will include a "live paint" performance. Admission to the exhibition is free Saturday through Thursday 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. During his exhibition, the Refuge Nature Store will also be selling one-of-a-kind souvenirs featuring Anderson's art to benefit conservation and education efforts at "Ding" Darling.

"Our refuge was created by conservation artist Jay Norwood 'Ding' Darling in 1945, so it's more than fitting that we began celebrating our 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary with interpretive art programs," said supervisory refuge ranger Toni Westland. "Darling, who created the Federal Duck Stamp program, designed the first duck stamp and the refuge system's Blue Goose logo. He won the Pulitzer Prize twice for his popular political cartoons, many of them conservation-related, throughout the 1920s and 30s."

During his artist "in residence" program, Anderson was involved in a number of projects focused on wildlife and journaling art. He mentored students from Quality Life Center of Southwest Florida and PACE Center for Girls, engaging them in mural projects. He also did pop-up art sessions along Wildlife Drive and conducted formal art and journaling workshops and demonstrations.

“It was exciting to be inspired by the refuge’s beauty and some of ‘Ding’ Darling’s famous conservation cartoons,” said Anderson. “Darling could be considered one of the original wildlife doodling storytellers, and that’s essentially how I work.”

Anderson’s fine art has been published in publications around the United States including *Gray’s Sporting Journal*, *Backcountry Journal*, and, locally, *Gulfshore Life*. In the interest of conservation, he has donated his work to DDWS, Bonefish & Tarpon Trust, Captains for Clean Water, and various other non-profits. He has been visiting Sanibel Island since his childhood, for some 40 years.

For more information about Anderson’s work, visit [edandersonart.com](http://edandersonart.com). To read about his “Ding” Darling artist “in residence” programs, which was sponsored by the S. Kent Rockwell Foundation, go to [dingdarlingsociety.org/articles/artist-in-residence](http://dingdarlingsociety.org/articles/artist-in-residence).

The refuge’s 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary culminates on Dec. 1, 2020. To learn more about year-long activities, visit [ding75.org](http://ding75.org).

#### 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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