

PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release.

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Caption: Jack E. Davis' latest work follows the bald eagle through history.

'Ding' lecture series presents new bald eagle book by Pulitzer-winning Davis

From Pulitzer-winning author Jack E. Davis, the publication of *The Bald Eagle: The Improbable Journey of America's Bird* has been long awaited. Hot off the presses, the book takes us from the bald eagles' relationship with native peoples to its dawning as an American symbol and imperilment at the brink of extinction. Davis will speak about his book at his free lecture on Friday, March 11, for the "Ding" Darling Wildlife Society-Friends of the Refuge (DDWS). It will take place at The Community House at 2173 Periwinkle Way on Sanibel Island starting at 10 a.m.

Filled with spectacular stories of founding fathers, rapacious hunters, heroic bird rescuers, and the lives of bald eagles themselves—monogamous creatures, considered among the animal world's finest parents—*The Bald Eagle* is a cultural and natural chronicle that demonstrates how the bird's wondrous journey may provide inspiration today, as we grapple with environmental peril on a larger scale.

Davis grew up in Florida and is a professor of history and the Rothman Family Chair in the Humanities at the University of Florida in Gainesville. In 2018, he spoke for the "Ding" Darling Lecture Series after his book *The Gulf: The Making of an American Sea* won the Pulitzer Prize in history and the Kirkus Prize in nonfiction. The book made several "best of" lists for the year, including those of the Washington Post, NPR, Forbes, and the Tampa Bay Times.

The author or editor of 10 books, including the award-winning *An Everglades Providence: Marjory Stoneman Douglas and the American Environmental Century*, Davis has written for the *New York Times*, *Chicago Tribune*, *Tampa Bay Times*, *Orion*, and other publications. His previous recent book, coedited with his former doctoral student Leslie Poole, is *The Wilder Heart of Florida*, a collection of personal essays and poems about natural Florida. In 2019, he was one of 22 recipients nationwide of an Andrew Carnegie Fellowship, awarded to support the writing of *The Bald Eagle*, which published on March 1.

The current season's "Ding" Darling Lecture Series evolved with the times and persisting distance protocols by presenting at a larger off-refuge venue with seven scheduled lectures through March 25.

DDWS hosts the 18th annual lecture series, and Pat Appino, Sonya Keene & John Moy, and In Memory of Roddy West co-sponsor Davis' lecture. The schedule of remaining lectures in the series is listed below; book signings follow both lectures.

Socially distanced seating for the free lectures is limited and available on a first-come basis. Staff will be taking temperatures and distributing a limited number of entry wristbands to attendees beginning at 9 a.m. that day. Guests must be wearing wristbands and facemasks to enter the lecture room. Early arrivals may save their seat and one other with personal items. Saved seats must be filled by 9:45.

Note: Opinions expressed in guest lectures do not necessarily reflect the views of refuge and DDWS management, staff, and board of directors.

Lectures start at 10 a.m. on Fridays at The Community House.

- March 18 – Author Jack Davis, *The Bald Eagle: The Improbable Journey of America's Bird* (co-sponsors: Pat Appino, Sonya Keene & John Moy, In Appreciation of the DDWS Staff Donor, In Memory of Roddy West)
- March 25 – Author Stan Tekiela, *Bird Nests: Amazingly Ingenious and Intricate* (Sponsors: Vortex Optics, A Fellow Minnesotan, The Jenni & Kyle Foundation)

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 or contact Birgie Miller at 239-472-1100 ext. 4, or dingdarlingsociety@gmail.com.

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