

PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release.

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Caption:

Bird artist, naturalist to share baby birds at ‘Ding’ lecture

In 2002, Julie Zickefoose, intrigued by the quick development of baby songbirds, began to draw and paint wild nestlings day by day, recording their swift growth and fledging. Over the next 13 years, the artist, writer, and naturalist documented daily changes in 17 bird species from birth to flight.

Zickefoose will discuss her journey and resulting book, *Baby Birds: An Artist Looks into the Nest*, during two free presentations at 10 a.m. and 1 p.m. on Friday, March 17, as part of the 2017 “Ding” Darling Lecture Series at J.N. “Ding” Darling National Wildlife Refuge on Sanibel Island.

In her talk, Zickefoose shares her influences and artistic process for *Baby Birds*, which includes more than 500 artistic life studies. Art and science combine as the scientist’s relentless curiosity joins the artist’s quest for beauty. Attendees will hear how, among other close-encounter experiences, she ended up being foster mother to orphaned hummingbirds, chimney swifts, and bluebirds.

Author of *Letters from Eden* and *The Bluebird Effect* – the latter included on the Oprah Book Club list --Zickefoose is a contributing editor for *Bird Watcher’s Digest*. Following her presentations, she will be signing copies of her book, which are available for purchase in the Refuge Nature Store, proceeds from which benefit wildlife and education at “Ding” Darling.

HighTower/Thomas & Swartz Wealth Management sponsors the free 12-lecture series with support from the “Ding” Darling Wildlife Society-Friends of the Refuge (DDWS). The season’s complete schedule is listed below. Book signings follow all remaining lectures.

Seating for the lectures in the “Ding” Darling Visitor & Education Center Auditorium is limited and available on a first-come basis. Arrive one hour early to assure a place to sit. 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 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.

March 17 – Author-artist Julie Zickefoose, *Baby Birds: An Artist Looks into the Nest*

March 24 – Author Denege Patterson, *A Tour of the Islands of Pine Island Sound: A Geological, Archaeological, and Historical Perspective*

March 31 – Author Will Stolzenburg, *Heart of a Lion: A Lone Cat’s Walk Across America*

April 7 – Photographer-sound recordist Gerrit Vyn, *The Living Bird: 100 Years of Listening to Nature*

April 14 – Author Charles Sobczak, *Alligators, Sharks, & Panthers: Deadly Encounters with Florida’s Top Predator — Man*

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 www.dingdarlingsociety.org or contact Birgie Miller at 239-292-0566, 239-472-1100 ext. 4, or dingdarlingsociety@gmail.com.

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