

PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release
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Caption

‘Ding’ awards \$10K in school conservation education grants

(Sanibel Island, FL, November 2016) “Ding” Darling Wildlife Society-Friends of the Refuge (DDWS) recently awarded \$10,000 in grants to conservation education-related projects at 10 different schools in Lee and Collier counties.

Teachers submitted grant applications to the DDWS Environmental Education Committee by Oct. 31, 2016. The committee chose awards based on need and relevance to conservation.

Schools to which DDWS awarded grants this year include Estero High School for its “Recycling Program” project, First Baptist Academy in Naples for its “Greenhouse Effect” project, Lehigh Acres Middle School for its “Friendship, Betrayal & Extinction, Another Normal Day in a Dystopian World” project, Lehigh Elementary for its “Back to Nature: Jump into a Field Experience” and “Marine Ecology Research Aquarium” projects, North Fort Myers High for its “School Pond and Habitat Restoration” project, Patriot Elementary School in Cape Coral for its “The Answer Is Blowing in the Wind” project, Pelican Elementary in Cape Coral for its “Celebrating Birds” project, Robinson Littleton Elementary in Fort Myers for its “Going Batty for Forests” project, Royal Palm Exceptional School in Fort Myers for its “Conservation 911” project, and South Fort Myers High for its “Marine Science in the Classroom” project

“This is the 11th year the society has awarded these conservation teacher grants. The past three years we opened eligibility to a five-county area,” says Wendy Kindig, education committee chair. “To date, we have awarded nearly \$68,000 in teacher grants. We were so impressed by the great projects our teachers and their students imagined this year. The society is pleased to help the future of conservation stewards in this important way.”

Grant recipients report back on their projects to the society and refuge, sending pictures and often thank-you notes from the students, upon completion in June 2017.

In 2017, DDWS will again be awarding up to \$10,000 in teacher conservation grants for schools in Charlotte, Collier, Glades, Hendry, and Lee counties. The grants are funded by monies received from the DDWS Conservation Education Endowment Fund earmarked specifically for education by the late Kip Koss, grandson of Jay N. "Ding" Darling. For information on next year's grants, contact Ranger Becky Larkins at 239-472-1100 ext. 237 or Kindig at wendykindig@aol.com, or visit dingdarlingsociety.org/articles/teacher-grants. Anyone interested in supporting conservation education at "Ding" Darling should visit dingdarlingsociety.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 proceeds.

To join DDWS and support the refuge with a tax-deductible gift, visit dingdarlingsociety.org or contact Birgie Miller at 239-292-0566 or director@dingdarlingsociety.org.

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