

PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release.

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Caption DSC09341: Dusty “Wildman” Crum with a Burmese python he captured in the Everglades. Photo by Joey Waves.

Caption:

‘Ding’ Darling lecture series headlines Crossley, flamingos, and python hunters

The 2019 “Ding” Darling Friday Lecture Series, which runs Jan. 25 through April 12, features a line-up of celebrities in the world of birds, butterflies, and conservation. From birds of the Arctic and North American owls to monarch butterflies and Burmese pythons, the season promises to be one of the refuge’s best yet. Lectures take place in the “Ding” Darling Visitor & Education Center Auditorium at J.N. “Ding” Darling National Wildlife Refuge on Sanibel Island.

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 series features noted authors and experts in nature-related fields.

One highlight of the season brings together Dusty “Wildman” Crum, a python hunter who has made a number of national TV appearances, with fellow python hunters and Sanibel bankers Geoff and Robbie Roepstorff, and Mike Kirkland, invasive animal biologist for the South Florida Water Management District and manager of the Python Elimination Program, on March 22.

Richard Crossley -- an internationally acclaimed birder, photographer, and award-winning author of “The Crossley ID Guide” series -- makes a first-time appearance for the series, and ornithologist Dr. Jerry Lorenz will return to talk about flamingos and roseate spoonbills.

The free lectures will be held twice each Friday (except on Feb. 8), at 10 a.m. and 1 p.m. The season's complete schedule is listed below. Book signings follow all starred (*) lectures. Visit dingdarlingsociety.org/articles/lecture-and-film-series for further information on lecturers.

Seating for the lectures is limited and available on a first-come basis. Early arrivals can save their seat and one extra with personal items and then can explore the Visitor & Education Center or Indigo Trail before the lecture starts. Saved seats must be filled 15 minutes before lecture time or they will be given to the next people waiting in line.

As usual, Wildlife Drive closes on Friday, but visitors are welcome to enjoy the free Visitor & Education 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.

*Jan. 25 – Author Debbie Miller, *Arctic Wings: Birds of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge*

*Feb. 1 – Author/photographer Richard Crossley, *The Crossley ID Guides: Waterfowl*

Feb. 8 – NO LECTURE

*Feb. 15 - Author Paul Bannick, *Owl: A Year in the Lives of North American Owls*

*Feb. 22 - Author Anurag Agrawal, *Monarchs and Milkweed: A Migrating Butterfly, a Poisonous Plant, and Their Remarkable Story of Coevolution*

March 1 – TBA

March 8 – Yve Morrell, “The Big Year: A First for Women”

March 15 – Jeremy Conrad, “The Biological State of the Refuge”

March 22 – Dusty “Wildman” Crum, Robbie & Geoff Roepstorff, Mike Kirkland, “Pythons: The Hunters, the Science

March 29 – Marine scientist Lauren Blickley, "Drastic Plastic - Turning the Tide on Plastic Pollution"

April 5 – Ornithologist Dr. Jerry Lorenz, “Flamingos & Spoonbills: Pink Canaries in a Coal Mine”

*April 12 – Author Denege Patterson, “Five Islands Never Flooded: A Tour of the Islands of Pine Island Sound”

*starred lecture indicates book signing to follow

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

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