

PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

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Caption: Shay Hart and Emily Herz

Refuge welcomes two education interns

Two education interns joined the team effort at J.N. “Ding” Darling National Wildlife Refuge in September. Shay Hart and Emily Herz plan to stay through the school year as part of the refuge’s internship program supported by the “Ding” Darling Wildlife Society-Friends of the Refuge (DDWS).

Hart, a graduate of the University of Nevada, Reno, with a bachelor’s degree in biology and an ecology focus, most recently worked as a naturalist at the Great Basin Institute in Reno.

“I am also interested in outdoor education,” said the Nevada native. “Right now, I’m working with school groups and focusing on environmental education. I have already seen so many new plants and animals that you would never find in the desert!”

A native of Meriden, Conn., Herz graduated from the University of Maine in May with a bachelor’s degree in wildlife ecology and a minor in education.

“I love getting to explore ecosystems that are new to me and learning about the diverse wildlife that is on the island,” she said shortly after her arrival.

DDWS provides living stipends and other benefits for about a dozen interns each year. The refuge supports interns and resident volunteers with free housing.

“Our interns bring youthful energy, enthusiasm, and creativity to the refuge team,” said supervisory refuge ranger Toni Westland. “We are so thankful to our friends group! Without them, our internship program would not be possible, which would leave us woefully understaffed as refuge staff continues to shrink due to budget cuts.”

To learn about supporting the refuge intern program, contact Birgie Miller, DDWS executive director, at 239-472-1100 ext. 4.

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 director@dingdarlingsociety.org.

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