

## PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release.

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Caption

### **Big pink birds topic of ‘Ding’ Darling lecture**

Historical accounts report flocks of up to 2,500 American flamingos in Florida Bay. Although those days have vanished, birders have been sighting flamingos more regularly in recent years. Dr. Jerry Lorenz, state research director for Audubon Florida, has publicly challenged the theory that these are only escapees from tourist attractions. He believes historic populations and climate change may contribute to today’s flamingo sightings.

Having studied roseate spoonbills in Florida Bay for nearly 30 years, Dr. Lorenz is well-versed on the plight of big pink birds. He will present two lectures “Flamingos & Spoonbills: Pink Canaries in a Coal Mine” at J.N. “Ding’ Darling National Wildlife Refuge on Sanibel Island on Friday, April 5, at 10 a.m. and 1 p.m. -- part of the 2019 “Ding” Darling Friday Lecture series.

Dr. Lorenz’s work banding and tracking spoonbills explains why it took so long for spoonbills to recover from plume hunting and why spoonbills in Florida Bay continue to decline while most other wading birds in the Everglades region recovered quickly after the plume trade ended. He will also speak to the recent flamingo phenomenon.

Audubon state research director since 2005, Dr. Lorenz serves as a member of the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council and is a founding member of the Florida Oceans and Coastal Resources Council.

HighTower/Thomas & Swartz Wealth Management sponsors the 11-lecture series with support from the “Ding” Darling Wildlife Society-Friends of the Refuge (DDWS). The free lectures are held twice each Friday through April 12 at 10 a.m. and 1 p.m. The season’s remaining schedule is listed below. Book signings follow starred (\*) lectures.

Lectures take place in the admission-free “Ding” Darling Visitor & Education Center. 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 risk being reassigned.

As usual, Wildlife Drive closes on Friday, but visitors are welcome to enjoy the 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](http://dingdarlingsociety.org/articles/lecture-and-film-series).

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](http://dingdarlingsociety.org) or contact Birgie Miller at 239-472-1100 ext. 4, or [dingdarlingsociety@gmail.com](mailto:dingdarlingsociety@gmail.com).

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