

PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release.

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Caption: Images available upon request

Free and discounted tours part of ‘Ding’ Darling Day

As the 75th anniversary celebration at J.N. “Ding” Darling National Wildlife Refuge on Sanibel Island kicks in, staff has planned a “Ding” Darling Day for Sunday, Oct. 20, that will concentrate all the best traditions of the eco-festival into one day of family and conservation art activities, tours, and programs.

New this year, the day begins early with guided refuge tours. Refuge Senior Biologist Jeremy Conrad will lead an 8 a.m. birding tour on Indigo Trail. At 9 a.m., a 4-mile Bike the Refuge Tour will travel down Wildlife Drive and Indigo Trail. Two hikes will take visitors on an Indigo Trail hike: one in Spanish at 10 a.m. and another in English at 11 a.m. All four tours meet at the flagpole in the parking lot of the “Ding” Darling Visitor & Education Center.

Tarpon Bay Explorer does free one-hour narrated tram tours of Wildlife Drive hourly from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Reserve your spot on the tours early by checking in at the tram booth in the parking lot.

Tarpon Bay Explorers is also offering a 25 percent discount on all of its kayak and boating tours throughout the day. See the schedule of tours below. Reservations are recommended at 239-472-8900.

- 10am-12pm Guided Commodore Creek Paddle: \$26.25 Adults, \$22.50 Children
- 11am-12:30pm Nature & Sealife Cruise: \$22.50 Adults, \$15 Children
- 1pm-3pm Guided Commodore Creek Paddle: \$26.25 Adults, \$22.50 Children
- 1:30pm-3:00pm Nature & Sealife Cruise: \$22.50 Adults, \$15 Children
- 5:00pm- 7:00pm Evening Cruise: \$26.50 Adults, \$18.75 Children

- 5:00pm-7:00pm Sunset Rookery Paddle: \$30 Adults, \$22.50 Children

For a full calendar of “Ding” Darling Day’s tours, presentations, and activities, visit dingdarlingdays.com or call 239-472-1100 ext. 237 for more information.

“Ding” Darling Day celebrates the birthday of the refuge’s namesake, father of the Federal Duck Stamp program and Pulitzer Prize-winning political cartoonist, Jay N. “Ding” Darling.

The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, “Ding” Darling Wildlife Society-Friends of the Refuge (DDWS), and Tarpon Bay Explorers cosponsor “Ding” Darling Day with support from the local community and businesses.

Sponsors for the 2019 event include: **ROSEATE SPOONBILL SPONSORS:** Doc’s Ford Sanibel Rum Bar & Grille; **GREAT EGRET SPONSORS:** Mitchell’s Sand Castles, Feather Jim & Patty Sprankle; **GREAT BLUE HERON SPONSORS:** Bailey’s General Store, Mike & Terry Baldwin, Bank of the Islands, Casa Ybel Resort, The Cedar Chest Fine Jewelry, Island Sun/River Weekly, Just Water, Matzaluna The Italian Kitchen, Rotary Club of Sanibel-Captiva, Sanibel Captiva Community Bank, Sanibel-Captiva Kiwanis Club, Sanibel Moorings, Sunny Day Guide; **REDDISH EGRET SPONSORS:** Sarah Ashton - Realtor, RE/MAX of the Islands, The Gresham Family, Island Inn, Jensen’s on the Gulf and Marina & Cottages, Tiffani Kaliko and John Silvia, Dick & Emily Muench, Palm Printing, Stewart & Sons Insurance; **SNOWY EGRET SPONSORS:** Coastal & Heartland National Estuary Partnership, Colony Inn, Kevin & Diane Husk, Island Therapy Center, Panther Printing, Santiva Chronicle, George & Wendy Schnapp, Winston & Gretchen Spurgeon, Nancy Tome, WTLQ, 97.7 Latino and Maxima 97.3 & 95.7.

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 profits.

To support DDWS and the refuge with a tax-deductible gift, visit www.dingdarlingsociety.org or contact Birgie Miller at 239-472-1100 ext. 4 or director@dingdarlingsociety.org.

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