

## PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

Contact: Chelle Koster Walton

239-699-4754

[ChelleTrav@aol.com](mailto:ChelleTrav@aol.com)

Caption: Live native snakes will be part of the educational efforts at World Animal Day.

### **Live animals highlight of ‘Ding’ Darling World Animal Day**

The J.N. “Ding” Darling National Wildlife Refuge on Sanibel Island celebrates World Animal Day on Friday, Oct. 4, with free, educational live animal presentations and a movie in the admission-free Visitor & Education Center Auditorium.

Starting at 9:30 a.m., Adam’s Animal Encounters presents live native amphibians and reptiles until 11:30 a.m. A free showing of the 53-minute PBS film *The World’s Most Wanted Animal* follows at 12 noon. From 2:15 to 3:30 p.m., Florida Gulf Coast University brings a live native snake presentation to the refuge.

*The World’s Most Wanted Animal* explores the plight of the pangolin, often described as “the most endangered animal you’ve never heard of.” The world’s only scaly mammal, the pangolin lives in parts of Asia and Africa. The animals are currently trafficked at a higher rate than rhinos, elephants, and tigers combined, for medicinal use in China, Thailand, and Vietnam.

In Namibia, conservationist Maria Diekmann found herself on the frontline of the battle to save these wanted animals after unexpectedly becoming a surrogate mother to an orphaned baby pangolin. On an emotional journey, Diekmann travels to Asia to better understand the global issues facing pangolins, before joining forces with a Chinese megastar to help build a campaign to bring awareness to the plight of these surprisingly charming creatures.

World Animal Day strives to improve the status of animals to improve welfare standards around the planet.

“This will be our inaugural World Animal Day, and we invite everyone who cares about wildlife to attend to learn more about our beautiful creatures,” said the “Ding” Darling Conservation Educator Sara Hallas.

For more information about this and other events at the refuge, visit [dingdarlingsociety.org/articles/events](http://dingdarlingsociety.org/articles/events) or call 239-472-1100 ext. 236.

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

###