

## PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

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Caption: Anna Tursky will be assisting with refuge education programming through the school year.

### **Refuge welcomes education intern**

On Dec. 2, education intern Anna Tursky joined the team at the J.N. “Ding” Darling National Wildlife Refuge on Sanibel Island to help with staffing shortages through the current school year, thanks to funding from the “Ding” Darling Wildlife Society-Friends of the Refuge (DDWS).

Tursky, a native of Fond du Lac, Wis., graduated from the University of Wisconsin—Stevens Point in 2017 with a bachelor of science degree in biology, emphasis in aquatic biology.

Previously, she worked two summers as a research tech for the Wagner Lab at Michigan State University on a sea lamprey study and, in between those stints, at a Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources fish hatchery.

“I love being surrounded by so much protected land and wildlife, and that everyone at the refuge is passionate about this area,” says Tursky. She looks forward to sharing her love of conservation with the nearly 8,000 students who visit “Ding” Darling annually on school field trips funded by DDWS.

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

“Our interns bring youthful energy, enthusiasm, and freshness to the refuge team,” said supervisory refuge ranger Toni Westland. “At the same time, the program gives students and recent graduates an opportunity to learn hands-on about the environment and refuge operations while strengthening their ethic of conservation stewardship.”

For more information about the refuge's internship programs, contact Westland at 239-472-1100 ext. 237. To learn about supporting the refuge intern program, contact Lynnae Messina, DDWS associate director, at 239-472-1100 ext. 233.

#### 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).

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