

PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release.

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Caption:

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‘Honey sommelier’ to talk about becoming an accidental beekeeper at ‘Ding’ Darling

A self-proclaimed “honey sommelier,” C. Marina Marchese was first to create a language and scale for honey flavors and has written books on beekeeping and honey. On Friday, Jan. 31, she will be presenting two free programs at 10 a.m. and 1 p.m. at J.N. “Ding’ Darling National Wildlife Refuge on Sanibel Island.

Based on her book *Honeybee: Lessons from an Accidental Beekeeper* and other bee-related works, the programs are part of the 2019 “Ding” Darling Lecture Series. Marchese also wrote *The Honey Connoisseur* and consults throughout the culinary and apiculture realms. She will sign copies of her books, available at the Refuge Nature Store, which benefits conservation and education programs at “Ding” Darling.

Ten years ago, Marchese fell in love with bees during a tour of a neighbor’s honeybee hives. Surprised to find that allowing docile honeybees to crawl across her hands instilled a serene tranquility and comfort, Marchese quit her job, acquired her own bees, built her own hives, harvested honey, earned a certificate in apitherapy, studied wine tasting to transfer those skills to honey tasting, and eventually opened her own business.

The *Washington Times* called Marchese’s book *Honeybee* “an entertaining and useful primer for the novice and honeybee devotee alike.” One woman’s charming and personal account of abandoning the rat race to live blissfully as a beekeeper and honey entrepreneur, it offers everything there is to know about bees.

HighTower/Thomas & Swartz Wealth Management and Sanibel Carts co-sponsor the free 12-lecture series with support from the “Ding” Darling Wildlife Society-Friends of the Refuge (DDWS). The free lectures take place every Friday at 10 a.m. and 1 p.m. in the admission-free “Ding” Darling Visitor & Education Center Auditorium.

Seating 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 risk being reassigned. This year, DDWS will be filming most lectures and broadcasting them on Facebook Live at www.facebook.com/dingdarling.

As usual, Wildlife Drive closes on Friday, but visitors are welcome to enjoy the Visitor & Education Center, Indigo Trail, Bailey Tract, 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.

The season’s remaining schedule is listed below. Book signings follow all starred (*) lectures. For more information, call 239-472-1100 ext. 241 or log on to dingdarlingsociety.org/articles/lecture-and-film-series.

*Jan. 31 – Author & Honey Sommelier C. Marina Marchese, *Honeybee: Lessons from an Accidental Beekeeper*

Feb. 7 – Zoo Miami Ambassador Ron Magill, “From Butterflies to Lions: A Walk on the Wild Side”

*Feb. 14 – Author Cynthia Barnett, *Rain: A Natural and Cultural History*

*Feb. 21 - Author Jeff Klinkenberg, *Alligator in B Flat: Improbable Tales from the Files of Real Florida*

*Feb 28 – Author Craig Pittman, *Cat Tale: The Wild, Weird Battle to Save the Endangered Florida Panther*

*March 6 – Author & Photographer Paul Bannick, *The Owl and the Woodpecker: Encounters with North America’s Most Iconic Birds*

March 13 – Upcycle Designer Nancy Judd, RecycleRunway.com

*March 20 – Author Eliot Kleinberg, *Black Cloud: The Great Hurricane of 1928*

*March 27 – Author Jack Davis, “All About Eagles and Other Florida Eco-Topics”

*April 3 – Jeri Magg, *Remarkable Women of Sanibel & Captiva*

*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 profits.

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 dingdarlingsociety@gmail.com.

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