

## PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release.

Contact: Chelle Koster Walton

239-699-4754

[ChelleKWalton@gmail.com](mailto:ChelleKWalton@gmail.com)

Images available upon request

Caption:

### **‘Ding’ Darling lecture spotlights owls, woodpeckers**

Award-winning author and wildlife photographer Paul Bannick will present a program featuring stunning imagery from his new book: *The Owl and The Woodpecker, Encounters with North America’s Most Iconic Birds* at special presentations at J.N. ‘Ding’ Darling National Wildlife Refuge on Sanibel Island. The two free programs on Friday, March 6, take place at 10 a.m. and 1 p.m., part of the 2020 ‘Ding’ Darling Friday Lecture series.

Based on thousands of hours in the field photographing, Bannick’s book evokes all 41 North American species of owls and woodpeckers, across 11 key habitats. By revealing the impact of two of our most iconic birds, he has created a unique approach to birding and conservation.

“*The Owl and the Woodpecker* is a monumental work of photojournalism by one of North America’s top wildlife photographers,” wrote Ted Williams, and editor at *Audubon* magazine. “The images you’ll encounter in this book are the result of an encyclopedic knowledge of birds and their habitats, an intense love of nature, and endless patience.”

Bannick also authored the bestselling *Owl: A Year in the Lives of North American Owls* and gave presentations on it last season to full houses. His work has been featured prominently in bird guides from Audubon, Peterson, The Smithsonian, Stokes, The National Wildlife Federation, and Birds of the World; and has appeared in a variety of publications from *The New York Times* and *Birds and Blooms* to *American Way* and the *Seattle Times*.

Bannick has appeared on NBC Nightly News, Evening Magazine, and dozens of NPR stations and programs, including Travels with Rick Steves and BirdNote.

The author-photographer will sign copies of his books, available in the Refuge Nature Store, following the two lectures. Profits from Nature Store sales directly benefit refuge education and research.

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.

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.

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](http://dingdarlingsociety.org/articles/lecture-and-film-series).

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

###