

PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

Contact: Chelle Koster Walton

239-699-4754

ChelleTrav@aol.com

Caption: Take a virtual paddleboard tour of Tarpon Bay during “Ding” Darling’s online summer camp.

‘Ding’ Darling Virtual Summer Camp starts June 10

Building on the success and popularity of its #DingatHome virtual learning experience, which ran March 23 through May 29, the J.N. “Ding” Darling National Wildlife Refuge education team debuts its free Virtual Summer Camp beginning June 10.

Through July 31, refuge educators will be hosting longer, natural science- and experiential-based learning videos every Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday at 10 a.m. on the refuge’s official Facebook page.

Exploration Wednesday will include activities like paddleboarding in Tarpon Bay and bike safety.

Experimentation Thursday lessons range from making a lava lamp to nature tie-dye. Investigation Friday brings interviews with refuge experts such as Acting Refuge Manager Kevin Godsea, a biologist, and a veterinarian.

“While many families will continue to spend much of their time at home, we wanted to fill in the gap for kids who will be unable to attend day camp this summer,” said Supervisory Refuge Ranger, Toni Westland, who co-heads the project with Conservation Educator Sara Soderholm. Her full-time position is supported by the “Ding” Darling Wildlife Society-Friends of the Refuge.

“The videos will concentrate on teaching moments, but with interactive components that will make kids immediately look forward to the next lesson,” said Soderholm. “They will be archived on Facebook so that families can watch whenever is most convenient, and can even watch them over and over again throughout the summer.”

For more information about “Ding” Darling Virtual Summer Camp, email Soderholm at educator@dingdarlingsociety.org or call 239-472-1100 ext. 236. Visit dingdarlingsociety.org/articles/virtual-summer-camp.

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 director@dingdarlingsociety.org.

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