

PRESS RELEASE

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Captions:

- 1: First Place: Ellen Trevor's "Carry Out Lunch"
2. Rett Hill's "Standing"
- 3: Martha Huard's "Pretty in Pink"

PHOTOJUDGES: This year's judges included photographer Sara Lopez, Bailey's General Store's Calli Johnson, and wildlife refuge specialist Bob Gerwig.

Note to Editors: Please contact me if you wish to receive images of any Honorable Mention winners.

DDWS announces 'Ding' Day photo contest winners

On Dec. 1, 2020, "Ding" Darling Wildlife Society-Friends of the Refuge (DDWS) announced the winners of its 28th annual "Ding" Darling Day Amateur Nature Photography Contest with a special exhibition at the Refuge Visitor & Education Center, part of the "Ding" Day celebration on Sanibel Island.

On Nov. 19, judges had selected three winners and 12 honorable mentions out of 128 entries from 19 states and Switzerland. All photograph entries were shot at the J.N. "Ding" Darling National Wildlife Refuge complex.

"It was a very special photo contest for us this year because of our 75th anniversary," said Sierra Hoisington, DDWS development officer and contest coordinator. "It really makes you think back to a time when the protection of this habitat wasn't guaranteed. If it hadn't been for the work of 'Ding' the man, these wildlife subjects, the beautiful scenery, and the amazing views would not be here for people to photograph and share with the world. Now, more than ever, nature brings us solace and escape to a world away from the news, even if it is just for a little bit."

First place went to Ellen Trevor of Sanibel, Fla., for her great egret portrait titled "Carry Out Lunch." Contest judge and photographer Sara Lopez remarked: "I really love the beautiful reflection in this photograph. It has decent lighting, but my favorite part is the splash connecting the fish to the water that the great egret has captured."

In second place was Rett Hill from Henrico, Va., with a little blue heron shot titled “Standing.” “I like that this photo has a plain background that allows you to focus on the bird that is placed very nicely within the frame,” said Calli Johnson, wine steward at Bailey’s General Store, who also judged the contest.

Martha Huard from Bokeelia, Fla., took third place with a photo of a roseate spoonbill, titled “Pretty in Pink.” “I really enjoyed the crispness of this photograph along with the juxtaposition of the color of the bird versus the color of the sky,” said judge Bob Gerwig, wildlife refuge specialist. “It’s a really nice action shot, but also has hidden interest with the shadows on the wing of the bird.”

“We always choose three judges for the contest,” said Terry Baldwin, a DDWS emeritus board member who coordinates the contest along with Hoisington. “They include a refuge staff member, a professional photographer, and a member of the Sanibel community.”

The three winners received cash awards from DDWS – \$300 for first place, \$225 for second, and \$175 for third. Each honorable mention winner, listed below, received a \$25 award, which reflects a refund of the contest entry fee.

The winning photographs and honorable mention award entries will be on display in the Refuge Visitor & Education Center throughout the year.

To view the other top-ranking entries, visit dingdarlingsociety.org/articles/photo-contests. That page also contains information for entering the Refuge’s 75th Anniversary Celebration photo contest in 2021. The deadline for submissions will be Sept. 15, 2021.

HONORABLE MENTIONS (in alphabetical order):

Teresa Anzalone, Sanibel Island, Fla. – “Showing off Her Pearly Whites”
Mike Bauman, Milford, Mich. – “Heavy Sky over Sanibel Bayou”
Corky Boyd, Sanibel Island, Fla. – “Mating Dance”
Dale Dombrowski, Sun City Center, Fla. – “Breakfast”
William Fischer, Sanibel Island, Fla. – “Flying Mangrove Cuckoo”
Kent Jager, Sanibel Island, Fla. – “Teal Twosome”
Scott Joffe, Highland Beach, Fla. – “The Stare”
Len Littenberg, Hinesburg, Vt. – “Bad Hair Day”
Linda Normoyle, Fort Myers, Fla. – “Almost Camouflaged”

Susan Sherman, Doylestown, Pa. – “Sunset Silhouette”
Marletta Short, Fort Myers, Fla. – “I See You!”
Allen Sparks, Cordova, Tenn. – “Yellow-crowned Night Heron”

“Ding” Darling Day 2020 sponsors included: **Call of the Wild Sponsor:** Jim & Patty Sprankle; **Champion Sponsors:** Bank of the Islands, Jim & Liz Birmingham, Todd & Barbara Bluedorn, Wayne & Linda Boyd, Boomer Duvin & Family, John & Kathy McCabe, Hank & Linda Spire; **Guardian Sponsors:** Doc Ford's Rum Bar & Grille, Margie Furniss & Ed Kfoury, Bill & Laurie Harkey, Rex Martin & Lori Harris, Bill & Diane Valerian, Willow the Whippet; **Protector Sponsors:** Barefoot Charley’s Painting Co. LLC, George & Wendy’s Seafood Grille, Island Sun, Tiffani Kaliko & John Silvia, William & Barbara Millar, Mitchell's SandCastles, Greg & Linda Scherer, Ron E. & Josephine Smith; **Defender Sponsors:** Mike & Terry Baldwin, The Community House, Doug & Sherry Gentry, The Gresham Family, Paul Harmon, Kiwanis Club of Sanibel & Captiva Islands, Sanibel Carts, Sanibel Moorings.

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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