

PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release.

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Caption:

Noted ‘Ding’ Darling lecturer to spotlight the gray owl

Award-winning author and wildlife photographer Paul Bannick will present a program featuring stunning imagery from his books about owls at a special lecture titled “Gray Owl: A Visual Natural History” on Friday, March 12, at 10 a.m. in the Community House at 2173 Periwinkle Way on Sanibel Island.

This season’s “Ding” Darling Lecture Series evolves with the times and persisting distance protocols by moving to the larger venue with lectures through March 19.

Based on thousands of hours in the field photographing, Bannick’s books *The Owl and the Woodpecker: Encounters with North America’s Most Iconic Birds* and *Owl: A Year in the Lives of North American Owls* showcase the author’s love and respect for woodpeckers as well as owls.

“For anyone who appreciates wild things and wild places, each of Paul Bannick’s stunning photographs is worth ten thousand words,” wrote Ted Williams, an editor at *Audubon* magazine.

Bannick’s 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*.

The photographer has appeared on NBC Nightly News, Evening Magazine, and dozens of NPR stations and programs, including Travels with Rick Steves and BirdNote. He will be signing copies of his books following the lecture. The books will be available to purchase that day or in advance from the Refuge Nature Store. Profits from sales benefit conservation efforts at the J.N. “Ding” Darling National Wildlife Refuge.

“Ding” Darling Wildlife Society-Friends of the Refuge (DDWS) hosts the 17th annual lecture series, and Bill and Laurie Harkey sponsor Bannick’s lecture.

The season’s remaining schedule is listed below. Book signings follow both remaining lectures. Seating for the free lectures is limited and available on a first-come basis. About 200 socially distanced seats will be available. Facemasks will be required. DDWS will be filming most lectures and broadcasting them on Facebook Live at www.facebook.com/dingdarling.

Note: Opinions expressed in guest lectures do not necessarily reflect the views of refuge and DDWS management, staff, and board of directors.

Upcoming lectures:

Friday, March 12 - Author Paul Bannick, “Gray Owl: A Visual Natural History,” sponsored by Bill & Laurie Harkey

Friday, March 19 - Author Kirk W. Johnson, *Feather Thief: Beauty, Obsession, and the Natural History Heist of the Century*, sponsored by Ashton Kirchner Group/Keller Williams Realty Sanibel & Captiva, HighTower/Thomas & Swartz Wealth Management, Geoffrey & Karen Moss, and Sanibel Carts

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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