

Observation Guidelines

Respect wildlife – Remember you are in their home.

At the J.N. “Ding” Darling NWR, we encourage visitors to respectfully enjoy wildlife at a safe distance. However, occasionally some visitors go to extra lengths to enhance their experience without regard to the health and safety of wildlife. This can result in the disturbance or harassment of wildlife. Disturbance or harassment of wildlife is defined as any activity that affects or changes the natural behavior of wildlife, which can be detrimental to the animal’s health, safety, or productivity.

Types of activities that can cause disturbance or harassment are:

- Getting too close to or chasing wildlife
- Using flash photography in close proximity to wildlife
- Playing recorded bird/wildlife calls
- Moving or cutting vegetation near a nest
- Feeding wildlife
- Throwing objects at wildlife

The disturbance or harassment of wildlife on a national wildlife refuge is unethical and illegal, and can result in hefty fines or arrest.

Witnesses to any of these types of violations are encouraged to report them immediately to Refuge Management at (239) 472-1100. Respect wildlife and other visitors when viewing, photographing wildlife.

For an enjoyable visit ...



Leave nothing but footprints; take nothing but pictures. To all who take pictures, use courtesy to fellow visitors and wildlife.



Wildlife Drive is one-way, 15mph road, Seatbelts Required. Cars make good observation blinds because the wildlife have become accustomed to them. For better observation of feeding, resting, and preening birds, minimize noise by turning down radios, closing doors quietly, and speaking softly. Park at the edge of the road, on the right hand side but not where birds are close to the road.



Please place all trash and recyclables in receptacles. otherwise, wildlife could ingest or become entangled in plastic and other trash. They often become ill and die.



Observe all speed zones and closed areas when boating. Manatees can be injured by boat propellers and birds can be disturbed when approached too closely.



Carry binoculars, water, sunscreen, and bugspray

Nature at your fingertips



Download the **FREE Discover Ding Game & Wildlife Spotting App**

Head out on Wildlife Drive and test your knowledge using the first of its kind–place-based nature trivia game that helps you see more (with Seymour)! Share photos & field tips, and see what others are posting even when you return home. Available for both iPhone and Android.

Stay Connected #dingdarlingnwr



@ J.N. “Ding” Darling National Wildlife Refuge (official)
@ “Ding” Darling National Wildlife Society - Friends of the refuge



@ dingdarlingwildlifesociety



@ Ding Darling Wildlife Society



@ DingDarlingWS



Refuge Map

J.N.“Ding”Darling National Wildlife Refuge

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

J.N. “Ding” Darling
National Wildlife Refuge
1 Wildlife Drive
Sanibel, Florida 33957
www.fws.gov/dingdarling
239-472-1100



The National Wildlife Refuge System...

J.N. “Ding” Darling National Wildlife Refuge is one of over 560 refuges in the National Wildlife Refuge System. The System, encompassing over 150 million acres, is the nation’s largest network of lands and waters managed specifically for wildlife. The refuge system is administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, an agency of the Department of the Interior.



This blue goose, designed by Jay Norwood “Ding” Darling, is the a symbol of the National Wildlife Refuge System.



J.N. Darling National Wildlife Refuge



Legend

	Refuge lands		Wildlife Education Boardwalk and Tower
	Refuge lands closed to public access		Visitor/Education Center and Administration Headquarters - Train Ticket sales. Train tickets at Education Center
	Use designated trails only		Canoe/kayak launch site
	Refuge water boundary		Mangrove Overlook
	Canoe/kayak trail		Cross Dike Pavilion
	Foot/bicycle trails		Restrooms
	Walk bikes on all boardwalks.		Clinic for the Rehabilitation Of Wildlife
	Wildlife Drive		Healing Winds Visitor Education Center
	Closed to all access on Fridays.		Sanibel-Captiva Conservation Foundation - Nature Center
	One-way for vehicles and bicycles		Bailey-Matthews Shell Museum
	J.N. "Ding" Darling Wilderness Area		Sanibel Historical Museum and Village
	Motor boat use allowed except in No Motor Zone.		
	No Motor Zone - pole/paddle only		
	Wulfert Flats Pole/Troll Zone		
	Seagrass protection area.		
	No combustion engine zone - petrol/troll only.		

	NEW! Tram pick-up/drop-off: January-April ONLY! Along Sanibel-Captiva Road.
	Fishing access - All refuge waters are open to fishing. Florida State fishing regulations apply. Crabbing permitted, see specific crabbing regulations.
	Tarpon Bay Recreation Area Tarpon Bay Explorers Rentals: kayaks/canoes, bicycles, boats, stand-up paddle boards, guided tours: pontoon boat, kayak, and fishing. Nature gift shop. (239) 472-8900



Indigo Trail
Hiker/biker \$1
Visit **Wildlife Education Boardwalk** along the way

Bailey Tract
Free entry

For more information visit www.fws.gov/dingdaring or call (239)472-1100.

PROHIBITED REFUGE ACTIVITIES

- Hunting
- Bowfishing from land
- Cast netting at water control structures
- Collecting
- Camping
- Feeding or disturbing wildlife
- Unleashed pets
- Drones
- Possession of unauthorized firearms
- Skating/rollerblading/skateboarding
- Crabbing with baited line or trap
- Entering areas that are closed to public
- Using areas after sunset
- Biking against traffic flow on Wildlife Drive
- Entering Wildlife Drive from Wulfert Road

EMERGENCY CALL 911
Sanibel Police Dept. (239) 472-3111