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# News Release



**September 11, 2013      Contact: Monica Harris, Visitor Services Manager – (843) 784-2468**

## **Celebrate National Wildlife Refuge Week with Events at Pinckney Island NWR and Savannah NWR**

Please mark your calendar and plan to join U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service staff and volunteers for a full weekend of fun, educational activities and events in celebration of National Wildlife Refuge Week (always the 2nd full week in October).

Friday, October 11<sup>th</sup>, festivities kick-off with a special screening of the award-winning documentary film, “America’s Darling – The Story of Jay N. ‘Ding’ Darling”, sponsored by the Friends of the Savannah Coastal Wildlife Refuges. The film’s producer, Sam Koltinsky, will be introducing the film, and sharing with the audience, his collection of Ding Darling memorabilia. Darling was a conservationist and a Pulitzer Prize-winning cartoonist who once served as head of the U.S. Biological Survey (forerunner of U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service). He also conceived the idea of the Federal Duck Stamp program and drew the very first Duck Stamp ever issued. The screening will be held at the Palmetto Electric Cooperative building in Hardeeville, SC, and will begin at 7:00 PM. This event is free and open to the public, but seating is limited. Please register to reserve your seat at <http://www.coastalrefuges.org> under the “Coming Events” tab.

Saturday, October 12<sup>th</sup>, a full day of free activities is planned at Pinckney Island NWR from 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM. For this special day, the interior gate will be open at 8:00 AM, and visitors will be allowed to drive through the refuge to the event area. Visitors can participate in naturalist hikes, birding walks, photography workshops, bird banding demonstrations, historical wagon rides, and much more. A live native reptile exhibit will be on display throughout the day, and as a special treat, visitors will get a rare chance to interact with President Theodore Roosevelt! Portrayed by Joe Wiegand, President Roosevelt will give two different presentations that morning; one at 9:00 AM and one at 10:30 AM. Other scheduled programs

(hikes, workshops, etc.) will begin at 10:15 AM, and have limited seating; pre-registration is recommended. The remaining activities and exhibits (reptile display, archery education, saltwater fly tying, orienteering, wilderness awareness, Leave No Trace ethics, etc.) will run throughout the event; no registration is required. Friends of the Savannah Coastal Wildlife Refuges will announce the winners of their 2<sup>nd</sup> annual refuge photo contest and prizes will be awarded. For information on how to participate in the photo contest, please visit <http://www.coastalrefuges.org>. The Friends Group will also be serving hotdogs and drinks, while they last. Parking is limited, so please carpool if possible. For more information, or to pre-register for any scheduled programs, please call (843) 784-9911.

Sunday, October 13<sup>th</sup>, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has partnered with the Savannah Riverboat Company to provide a unique opportunity to visit the Savannah NWR by water. During the 3-hour cruise (1:00 – 4:00 PM), guests will have the opportunity to enjoy a lunch buffet and listen to an interpretive program while traveling up the Savannah River. President Roosevelt, portrayed by Joe Wiegand, will address the audience and then refuge staff will talk about the management of the refuge. This is a family-friendly event with special entertainment planned for children. Reservations for the cruise must be made through the Savannah Riverboat Cruises by calling (800) 786-6404 or visiting [www.savannahriverboat.com](http://www.savannahriverboat.com). The cruise, with the lunch buffet, is \$46.95 for adults and \$25.95 for children 4-12. The cruise only (no lunch) will be \$26.95 for adults and \$16.95 for children 4-12. Concessions may also be purchased on the riverboat.

Pinckney Island and Savannah NWRs are two of over 560 national wildlife refuges located throughout the United States. Pinckney Island, located off U.S. Hwy. 278 near Hilton Head Island, and Savannah NWR, located off U.S. Hwy. 17, are home to bald eagles, neo-tropical migratory songbirds, large concentrations of wading birds and wintering ducks, and American alligators. The Savannah NWR Visitor Center is open Monday – Saturday from 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM; closed Sundays and all federal holidays.

***National Wildlife Refuges...Where Wildlife Comes Naturally!***