

# Wild About Wildlife

## AWARDS GALA

**W**ild About Wildlife (WAW), the Palm Beach-based philanthropic initiative benefiting the **National Wildlife Refuge Association**, hosted its annual awards gala at

The Ben in downtown West Palm Beach.

The event brought together more than 130 conservation advocates, community leaders, and philanthropic supporters, generating over \$320K in gross proceeds. Funds raised will support programs that connect Palm Beach County students with meaningful, hands-on experiences in South Florida's natural environments.

"This year's gathering demonstrated the extraordinary impact our committed community can achieve together," said **Nancy Marshall**, Co-Founder of Wild About Wildlife. "From our earliest fundraising efforts to today, we continue to welcome new champions who share our goal of helping more students experience and appreciate the natural world."

The evening also recognized two distinguished leaders whose work has significantly advanced wildlife conservation and environmental education across South Florida and beyond. **Amy Kight**, CEO of **Busch Wildlife Sanctuary**, received the *Next Generation Environmental Hero Award*, while **Margo McKnight**, President & CEO of **Palm Beach Zoo & Conservation Society**, was honored as *Conservationist of the Year*.

"The passion shared by our honorees and supporters created an atmosphere of genuine connection," said **Dianne Bernstein**, Chair of Wild About Wildlife. "We welcomed both new and returning friends of the mission, strengthening a growing community committed to ensuring future generations develop a lasting relationship with our natural environment."

The program highlighted the impact of the *South Florida Urban Wildlife Refuge Project* and underscored the importance of environmental education throughout the region. A special video presentation featuring local students participating in Conservation Ranger Camp illustrated how *Wild About Wildlife* initiatives are expanding access to outdoor learning experiences and inspiring the next generation of environmental stewards.

Building on this year's momentum, Wild About Wildlife will continue expanding partnerships that increase access to hands-on environmental education for students across Palm Beach County and South Florida.

Wild About Wildlife (WAW) is a Palm Beach-based fundraising and awareness initiative benefiting the



Margo McKnight, Desiree Sorenson-Groves, Amy Kight and Dianne Bernstein



Dianne Bernstein, Rebecca Doane and Nancy Marshall

National Wildlife Refuge Association's *South Florida Urban Wildlife Refuge Project*. Through community events and philanthropic engagement, WAW brings together conservation leaders, civic stakeholders, and residents in support of the Refuge Association's programs serving Palm Beach County and the greater South Florida region. Led by environmental advocates Nancy Marshall and Dianne Bernstein, WAW supports conservation education, habitat restoration, and access to nature by advancing awareness and funding for the Refuge Association's South Florida programs, including Pocket Refuges, Conservation Ranger Camp, and Floating Wetlands — connecting students and families to local ecosystems while fostering environmental stewardship and long-term community resilience.

For more information visit [wildaboutwildlife.org](http://wildaboutwildlife.org).

PHOTOS: COASTAL CLICK PHOTOGRAPHY