



Photo by Kim Sargent

*Hole #11 is a demonstration of design adapting to the natural surroundings.*

## Indian River Club achieves Signature Status

Vero Beach  
development becomes  
third project in the  
world to receive  
Audubon  
International's  
highest award for  
environmental  
stewardship on a  
grand scale

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**O**n November 27, 1995, Ron Dodson, President of Audubon International granted the organization's highest award, that of Audubon Signature Status, to Indian River Club, located in Vero Beach.

The Signature Status award is granted to a new project development which demonstrates and documents programs aimed at environmental awareness, most notably through conservation, efficiency, and the minimization of waste.

Indian River Club is the third project in the world to receive this prestigious award, which reflects the commitment, planning, and implementation by Audubon International.

Indian River Club is a 300-acre, master-planned golf and residential commu-

nity located in south Indian River County. It is the dream of owner Mr. Jeff Reynolds and managing partner Robert Swift, to be a low-density community with no more than 260 residences and 390 memberships, thus assuring lasting beauty and value for homeowners and members.

At the heart of the project is an 18-hole championship golf course designed by Ron Garl. It was built on land offering a diversity of existing landscapes including mature pine and palmetto forests, large oak hammocks, and even the coastal sand ridge containing sand pines and scrub oak habitats.

The construction of the golf course was a challenge readily accepted by the entire development team.

Careful attention was given to the preservation of unique native habitats and landscape which reflect development ideas, especially through input from the Signature Sanctuary Program.

Being sensitive stewards of the land, native material was left in place wherever possible. If development required removal, all that was possible was relocated to enhance the natural beauty of the site.

The golf course was constructed to exacting standards which reflect the ideas of conservation. This includes minimizing turfed areas, thus using less water, and applying irrigation through a computer-assisted delivery system using weather data to determine exact needs.

Landscapes were designed using drought-tolerant, native materials to minimize the need for supplemental water, including vast expanses of native grasses for wildlife enhancement and increased reliance of integrated pest management programs through reduced pesticide and fertilizer use.

Certain areas were set aside as non-developable to help promote the abundance of wildlife located within the community, such as an upland preserve and a dedicated scrub jay habitat enhancement

area.

Conservation extends to all building construction, which must meet guidelines established by Indian River Club for energy and water use efficiency.

Residential landscapes are designed using low-maintenance plant materials indigenous to Florida plantscapes and minimal turf areas.

Irrigation for the entire project is controlled by the grounds maintenance department through the use of the computer-assisted delivery system. Effluent water will be available during early 1996 for the golf course, common areas and residential lawns.

In order to fully implement all conservation, IPM and resource management programs, a highly efficient work area is required.

The center of the Signature Program is the maintenance operations center, or Natural Resource Management Center, as referred to by Audubon International. It must be fully operational to support

ongoing programs such as energy efficiency, water conservation, recycling, waste management (pesticide rinsates, clipping disposal, etc.), and maximizing productivity through design.

While much has been said about the negative impact of golf developments, it is an honor to work with people who take a proactive approach about the benefits of these true natural settings. The real beauty of Indian River Club is its ability to enhance and coexist with nature, the founding principles of sustainable development as set forth by Audubon International.

While tremendous commitment is required to obtain Signature Status, reachable development goals are obtainable through conservation and environmental awareness. Be we cannot stop here. We must continue to educate not only our development, but the entire community concerning these ongoing programs. Together we can all make a difference.



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*Hole #16 shows reduction of maintenance areas due to minimal turf outside of play areas and incorporation of existing plantscapes into the hole design.*