



## Alaqua Lakes Joins Audubon Signature Sanctuary Program

Alaqua Lakes, Taylor Woodrow Communities' newest luxury golf community in Longwood, has been accepted as a registered member of the Audubon International Signature Cooperative Sanctuary Program.

Admission to the Audubon Signature Program is a distinct honor. According to Michael Moser, club operations manager, only eight golf courses worldwide have achieved full certification. The 170-acre golf course at Alaqua Lakes was designed by Tom Fazio and is scheduled to open in September.

Audubon International personnel carefully scrutinize all design and construction plans before development work begins and visit the site regularly to monitor compliance. In addition, the golf course operations must maintain vigorous standards for wildlife management, water quality, integrated pest management (IPM), energy efficiency, waste management and a natural resources management plan that assures a long term commitment to the environment.

"We're thrilled," said Tom Spence, land development manager for Taylor Woodrow at Alaqua Lakes. "The Audubon Signature Program is an important effort that promotes conservation measures which provide large-scale developers with a more environmentally sensitive approach to land management. Taylor Woodrow Communities is a company dedicated to all types of environmental causes and sustainable resources management is an idea everyone should endorse."

"The Audubon Signature Program designation is rare because so few golf courses qualify. Tom Spence has spent nearly three years monitoring water quality and wildlife management efforts here," Moser said. "Alaqua Lakes is a pristine piece of property and we intend to make certain the golf course serves not only as a nurturing habitat for wildlife, birds and native or indigenous plants, but also as a role model for existing and future golf

course developers in Central Florida."

The Audubon Signature Program is the most rigorous — and the most prestigious — of the environmental management programs Audubon sponsors. "They monitor us very closely, literally day by day," Moser noted. "This program will also allow us the opportunity to work closely with the community. We have 'adopted' a local school, Heathrow Elementary, and will spend time educating the children there on the positive effects a golf course has on the environment."

Adam Feltman is the golf course superintendent at Alaqua Lakes. Prior to coming to Alaqua Lakes, Feltman was heavily involved in the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program at the Champions Club at Summerfield in Stuart.

## The Habitat at Valkaria Named Certified Sanctuary

IGM's The Habitat at Valkaria in Malabar has been named a certified Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary.

Awarded by Audubon International through its Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary System, a course must meet requirements in six categories to qualify for certification: Environmental Planning, Outreach and Education, Wildlife and Habitat Management, Integrated Pest Management, Water Conservation and Water Quality Management.

"We try to create more habitat that already exists for the variety of native birds on the course," said Bob Marshall, golf course superintendent at The Habitat for IGM. Along with the help of Lynne Walker, assistant golf course superintendent, we managed to achieve certification by limiting the use of chemicals and creating a safe environment for many of our endangered species of birds." These birds include the Scrub Jay, Bald Eagle and the Sand Hill Crane.

Joellen Zeh, staff ecologist for ACSS praised IGM's employees for enhancing native plantings, protecting wetlands during construction and involvement in community environmental projects.

## Audubon Int'l Launches 'Project Flight Plan'

Audubon International has announced a new wildlife and habitat initiative for 1998 to foster migratory bird conservation across North America called Project Flight Plan. Throughout this year, Audubon International will be asking people to "pledge" their commitment to enhance and protect habitat for migratory birds by undertaking at least one environmental project and participating in the many featured Project Flight Plan events that will be held throughout the year.

Seventy-five percent of the land in the United States is privately owned. For migratory birds to survive, they must find suitable habitat throughout the year on these private properties.

Project Flight Plan is a focused way for Audubon International to encourage migratory bird conservation with private land managers and homeowners and get them actively protecting, improving and connecting habitat for migratory birds across North America.

In 1886, the original Audubon members pledged their support of bird conservation by refusing to wear hats or clothing adorned with bird plumage. Inspired by the first Audubon movement, Audubon International, through the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary System, is asking that individuals sign a pledge card and commit to bird conservation and habitat preservation projects.

In return, Audubon International will send individuals a Project Flight Plan decal, educational information on the bird conservation projects chosen and updates on events and progress concerning Project Flight Plan.

Although Project Flight Plan participants must sign up for at least one project to help migratory birds, there is no maximum limit on the quantity of projects they can engage in.

Projects such as planting native



trees, maintaining bird feeders, limiting mowing of fields, leaving dead standing trees for nesting, connecting existing habitat to create habitat corridors, reducing pesticide use and keeping a bird inventory are just some examples of the many activities individuals can be involved in to help migratory birds.

"If one-thousand individuals pledged to participate in Project Flight Plan with an average of four projects each, that's 4000 migratory bird conservation actions taking place on private land!" said Jean Mackay, director of education for Audubon International.

"An individual's participation in Project Flight Plan can have a significant impact towards migratory bird conservation when added with the hundreds of other Project Flight Plan activities taking place throughout North America. The momentum that is build-

ing for this initiative is thrilling and means great things for improving migratory bird populations in North America."

Audubon International will be hosting and promoting events that tie in with Project Flight Plan throughout

1998. Some of the events this year are The Audubon International Golf Course Birdwatching Open (May 9), Safe Haven for Birds Day (June 13) and Plant a-Tree for Birds Week that will run the week of Sept. 26 through

## Safe Haven Day

The Safe Haven Day in Project Flight Plan is meant to reduce the number of migratory birds killed and maimed as a result of carelessness, inaction and the ignorance of the general public.

Bird hazards include collisions with cars, buildings, windows and power lines; pesticide exposure at feeding grounds in the U.S., Mexico, Central and South America; cat predation; habitat loss and destructing of breeding grounds..

These conditions can be mitigated through environmental stewardship projects through Audubon International and by the following actions such as breaking the reflection on windows with non-reflective coatings or screens, keeping bird feeding areas clean and free of waste and pesticides and not disturbing natural areas during spring and summer months.

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