

Silver Signature Sanctuaries

Mediterra Courses Earn Recertification from Audubon International

EDITOR'S NOTE: Here is yet another example of how responsible development can allow man to co-exist with nature. Congratulations to Bonita Bay Properties.

By Cheryl Garn

The golf courses at Mediterra, championship courses designed by Tom Fazio, have received recertification as Audubon International Silver Signature Sanctuaries. The Club at Mediterra is the world's only 36-hole facility to carry Audubon International Silver Signature Sanctuary program status.

"Audubon International is proud to recognize Mediterra as a leader in environmental stewardship and resource conservation," said Bud Smart, director of environmental. "The recertification of The North and South courses as Audubon International Silver Signature Sanctuaries is another example of The Bonita Bay Group's philosophy of environmentally sensitive development."

The Bonita Bay Group, the developer of the 1,697-acre master-planned community, is an international leader in the Audubon International program, with more golf holes certified through the Audubon Signature Program than any company in the world.

Recertification signifies that a site and its management are committed to environmental quality and sustainability, the main components of the Audubon program. To achieve recertification, work begun the previous year continued in six key areas: site assessment, wildlife habitat enhancement and management; waste management; energy efficiency; water quality and conservation; and inte-



Win – win – win! Homes, golf course and wildlife co-existing lakeside at Mediterra. Photo courtesy of Bonita Bay Properties.

grated pest management. Silver designation includes two additional steps: the preparation of a natural resource management plan by environmental planning experts from the Audubon International Institute and the submission of periodic status reports plus participation in on-site audits by Audubon International.

Smart conducted an audit of the courses in June. The audit report confirmed the benefits of the golf course as wildlife habitat with the number and diversity of several species increasing substantially. One example of the wildlife diversity, noted in the audit, was the presence of small, medium and large gopher tortoises thriving within the gopher-tortoise preserve.

Another benefit of the site enhancements completed on The North and South courses was the increase in the community's native and migratory bird populations. The enhancements, which included reforestation, preservation of Mediterra's 400 acres of wetlands and the installation of 73 bird boxes, have proven to be successful in attracting native species. During a Christmastime bird

survey, more than 612 birds were counted in 40 different species.

"We are extremely proud to receive the Silver Signature Sanctuary designation a fifth year in a row," said Joey Garon, vice president of operations for The Bonita Bay Group. "This is a true barometer of our commitment to the environment and doing the right thing at Mediterra, and we look forward to a strong, continuing relationship with Audubon International to ensure continued preservation, enhancement and management of both The South and North courses."

The Bonita Bay Group is developing Mediterra with the same commitment to meticulous planning, environmental stewardship, integrity and attention to detail that is evident at its flagship community, Bonita Bay. Bonita Bay received the development industry's highest international honor when it was named the Outstanding Large-Scale Community of the Year by the Urban Land Institute.

Mediterra recently has been named Community of the Year by the Collier Building Industry Association for the fourth consecutive year and



Lake shorelines buffered with native plants protect the water quality of the golf course lakes. Photo courtesy of Bonita Bay Properties.

received the Award of Excellence for Open Spaces from the Florida Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects. The community is being created with the intimacy, charm and classical style of the Mediterranean region of Europe. The overall master plan for the 1,697-acre community may include up to 950 residences and more than 1,000 acres of open space. Residents are eligible for membership in The Club at Mediterra, which offers a 25,000-square-foot clubhouse, named best clubhouse in 2004 by the CBIA, and a tennis, swim and fitness center in addition to the two Fazio golf courses,

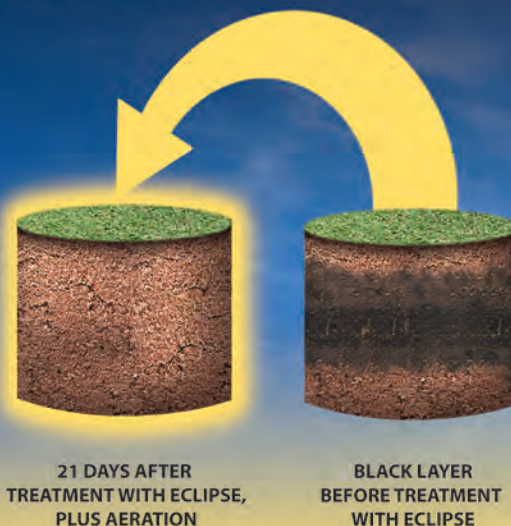
The private Mediterra Beach Club on the Gulf of Mexico features an elevated swimming pool, expansive sundeck, and indoor and al fresco dining overlooking 200 feet of shoreline. All residents enjoy miles of bicycle paths and nature trails leading to a series of themed neighborhood parks.

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Parque Celestial, featuring an array of astrological references, was awarded the American Society of Landscape Architects' Florida Chapter Award of Excellence. The community's second park, Calusa Play Park, offers children and adults an opportunity to learn more about the Calusa Indians, the earliest inhabitants of Southwest Florida.

The Club at Mediterra has been honored with the 2002 Environmental Leaders in Golf Award from the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America and Golf Digest magazine in the private course category.

Scott Whorral, CGCS director of golf operations at the Club at Mediterra takes the lead in all aspects of the Audubon certification program. He is also the past recipient of the 2002 Environmental Leaders in Golf Award in the private sector from the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America and Golf Digest magazine.

Orchid Island G&BC Florida's 71st to be Certified by ACSS

Orchid Island Golf & Beach Club has achieved designation as a "Certified Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary" by the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary System, the educational division of Audubon International. Matt Turner, superintendent, and Peggy Ogden, Audubon coordinator, have led the effort to obtain sanctuary status on this course and are being recognized for Environmental Stewardship by Audubon International. Orchid Island Golf & Beach Club is the 71st course in Florida and the 570th in the world to receive the honor.

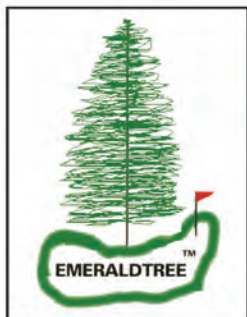
"The Orchid Island Golf & Beach Club has shown a strong commitment to its environmental program. They are to be commended for their

efforts to provide a sanctuary for wildlife on the golf course property," said Shawn Williams, staff ecologist for the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Programs,

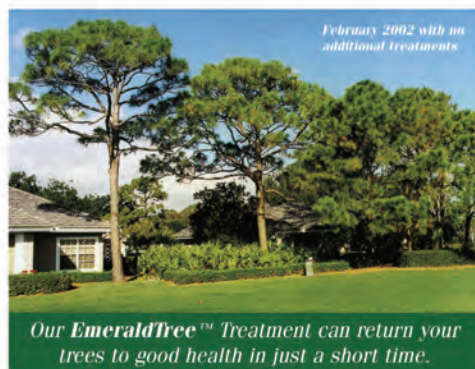
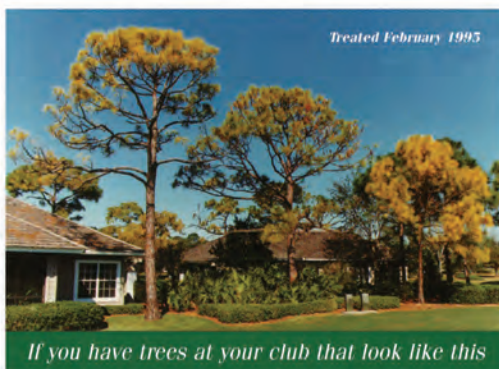
"To reach certification, a course must demonstrate that they are maintaining a high degree of environmental quality in a number of areas," explained Williams. These categories include environmental planning, wildlife & habitat management, outreach and education, chemical-use reduction and safety, water conservation, and water quality management.

"The members of Orchid Island are very proud to receive this certification," states Rob Tench, general manager. "Our members are all very concerned about our environment and enjoy the beautiful wildlife throughout our wonderful community. We are especially proud of our diverse bird population. For many years we have been fortunate to have scores of white

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