

Wasp + Weed – Cricket = Good Grass

By Joel Jackson

Research by Dr. H. J. Frank and Andrei Sourakov at the University of Florida and an article by Dan Culbert, Okeechobee County Extension Agent, has given us an opportunity to combine mole-cricket control and water conservation.

Dr. Frank has been researching various biocontrol agents from parasitic nematodes, red-eyed flies and the Larra bicolor “digger wasp.” Each has had its successes and setbacks. The wasp seems to be able to spread and set up new populations. Success, of course, depends on a reliable food source.

It seems that a wildflower known as the false shrubby buttonweed, *Spermacoce verticillata*, may give the wasp a year-round nectar source. Since concerns over water conservation have suggested converting out-of-play areas unirrigated, Florida-friendly native vegetation, perhaps planting native areas with this plant could create a real win-win situation.

The Larra wasp has been sighted in 41 counties so far. How about giving the little buggers a helping hand by planting this nectar source on your course?

Some have suggested a name change to Southern Larraflower for the wasp’s



Larra wasp on Larraflower. Photo by Dr. Lyle Buss.

preference for its size and its shape ideally fits the wasp’s feeding habits. By the way the male does most of the nectar feeding while the female is searching for mole crickets.

Southern Larraflower planting stock can be found at:

Lake Brantley Nursery, (407) 496-0771 in Center Hill and

Lake Brantley Plant Corporation (407-869-6545) in Longwood.



PHOTO BY SALLY SCALERA.

Florida Audubon International Stewards

As I said in my President’s Message in the front of the magazine, the time for accountable documented environmental stewardship is upon us. Just consider the state and local fertilizer ordinances that are coming forward and general concern over state and local water quality issues. Please contact any of these

towards who are ready and willing to help you with the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program. This is a recognized and respected program that will help you and your golf course secure a successful future.

Matt Taylor, CGCSA
FGCSA President

Garth Boline, Superintendent
Chi Chi Rodriguez Golf Course

3030 McMullen Booth Road
Clearwater, FL 33761
727-723-0516
Garthalbert@aol.com

Shelly Foy, Office Coordinator
USGA – Florida Region
PO Box 1087
Hobe Sound, FL 33475
772-546-2620
sfoyl@usga.org

Monica Higgins, Horticulturist
Bay Colony Golf Course
Maintenance
10495 Goodlette Rd. No.
Naples, FL 34109
(239) 598-1600
monicahiggins@yahoo.com

Bob Karnes, Superintendent
Osprey Ridge Golf Course
3451 Golf View Drive
Lake Buena Vista, FL 32830
407-824-2886
robert.karnes@disney.com

Jeff Klontz, Superintendent

Country Club of Florida
54 Country Road S.
Village of Golf, FL 33436
561-732-8317
suptklontz@aol.com
Larry Livingston, CGCS
Camp Creek Golf Club
438 Fazio Drive
Panama City Beach, FL 32413
850-231-7610
livingston@troongolf.com

Todd Lowe, USGA Agronomist
USGA - Florida Region
58 Annapolis Lane
Rotonda West, FL 33947
941-828-2625
tlowe@usga.org

Donald L. Merritt, Principal
Jensen Beach Elementary School
2525 NE Savanna Rd.
Jensen Beach, FL 34957
772-219-1555
merritd@martin.k12.fl.us

Kyle Sweet, Superintendent
The Sanctuary Golf Club

2250 Wulfert Road
Sanibel, FL 33957
239-472-8612
ksweet@sanctuarygc.net

Matt Taylor, Superintendent
Royal Poinciana Golf Club
P.O. Box 7039
Naples, FL 34101
239-261-4987 ext. 101
mattt@rpgolfclub.com

Fred Yarrington, Golf Club Member



Hole-in-the-Wall Golf Club 160