During the 2014 U.S. Open at Pinehurst No. 2 — which, as of press time, was underway — the golfing public got to see something they might not be used to on the pristine courses that host TV golf: weeds.

Or, better put, native vegetation.

“The definition of a weed is technically a plant that’s out of place,” says Danesha Seth Carley, Ph.D., a professor of crop science at North Carolina State University. “Part of managing this vegetation is just realizing that while some of them you might consider a weed in a golf course environment, we actually liked them here (at Pinehurst No. 2).”

With the renovation of Pinehurst No. 2, the course was brought back to what it looked like when Donald Ross built it: sweeping sandhills with wiregrass spotting the landscape. As the crew removed all the overseeded bermudagrass rough, they had to forget one type of maintenance, and learn another.

“(The maintenance team) asked us to come in and help them identify the vegetation, and then take it a step further: help them with potential ideas on how to manage vegetation, whether they wanted to keep it or remove it or even move it around to different places,” Seth Carley says. The project, funded by Bayer and conducted by N.C. State, allowed the crew to learn the ins and outs of this new vegetation as it sprouted up around the course.

Tom Rufty, Ph.D., professor of environmental plant biology at N.C. State, believes the 2014 U.S. Open may be the coming out party for this type of maintenance.

“The big driver is economics. The cost of pesticides and fertilizers is going up and budgets are tight,” he says. “Lowering resource use only makes sense.”

Pinehurst Resort & CC completed the acquisition of National GC under terms finalized with current club owners, the Robinette family. The Jack Nicklaus Signature Design course, also located in the Village of Pinehurst, N.C., opened in 1989 and is the only course by the famed designer in the Sandhills region.

The course will be named Pinehurst No. 9 and is immediately available to Pinehurst CC members. Pinehurst Resort guests will begin play at No. 9 in early July. Pinehurst recently completed a $4 million renovation of its clubhouse and has plans for an expansive, multi-million dollar aquatics facility targeted for completion in summer 2015.

Jacobsen recently named Rob Cooke territory sales manager. As a part of Jacobsen’s sales team, Cooke will be responsible for supporting dealers and customers in eastern Canada and will be based in Ontario.

Cooke has over 17 years of experience in the golf and municipal markets, serving a variety of sales and service roles at Vaden Bussche Irrigation, Rain Bird Canada, SMART Watering Systems and Holmes Irrigation/Aqua Turf Canada. Cooke is a certified irrigation designer, water conservation manager, landscape irrigation auditor and irrigation contractor.

“This position is critical for Jacobsen as we continue to develop and grow long-term relationships with dealers, customers and associations in eastern Canada,” says Ric Stone, VP of sales and marketing for Jacobsen. “Rob’s golf irrigation background has given him a great understanding of the Canadian turf industry and will help us expand our reach in eastern Canada.”
Golfdom’s big haul

Golfdom won seven Turf and Ornamental Communicators Association (TOCA) awards in 2012, and we were happy.

Golfdom won nine TOCA awards in 2013, and we were proud.

This year, Golfdom hauled in 21 TOCA awards — more awards than all of our competitors combined — and we just don’t know what to do with ourselves. The awards included nine firsts, ten merits, one Gardner (a ‘best in show’) and the Plant Health Writer of the Year award, sponsored by Bayer, and presented to columnist Karl Danneberger, Ph.D.

“It’s hard to be humble about the results of the 2014 TOCA awards,” says Pat Roberts, publisher of Golfdom. “We underwent a major redesign of the magazine in 2013, led by (editor) Seth Jones and (designer) Pete Seltzer. The resulting 21 awards are the result of that redesign. They emphasize that this publication is the industry leader in editorial, design and photography. And that’s something the entire team is exceptionally proud of.”

Of note, the Golfdom Daily (www.golfdom.com/blog) won “best blog” for the third consecutive year. For a complete list of Golfdom’s TOCA awards, see page 20.

Toro rocks the bell

Now that’s the way you celebrate 100 years of business.

The Toro Co. visited the New York Stock Exchange recently and was given the honor of ringing the closing bell to commemorate the company’s upcoming 100th anniversary. The official 100th anniversary is next month (July 10th), but the company is celebrating all year.

The Toro Co. offers irrigation equipment, mowers, utility vehicles, cultivation equipment and more.

To learn more about Toro’s 100 years in the business, visit www.toro.com/100, and to share your own story, use the Twitter hashtag #Toro100 or visit the company’s Facebook page.
We Are Golf took to Washington D.C. in May for National Golf Day. This was the seventh year for the event where leaders in the industry discuss the economic, environmental, charitable and fitness benefits from the game of golf with government leaders. Representing the golf industry were leaders from the USGA, GCSAA, CMAA, NGCOA, PGA Tour, the PGA of America and World Golf Foundation.

Miehls replaces Corbett Schnatmeyer, who moved from the West Coast to cover the T&O market in the Northeast after Allan Dufoe was named to the newly created position of T&O key account manager and nursery and greenhouse market lead.

A recent graduate of the University of California, Riverside, Miehls holds a bachelor’s degree in biological sciences and a master’s degree in plant biology. She conducted her thesis project on salinity and water management of perennial ryegrass.

2014 National Golf Day takes the Capitol

Throughout the day, over 120 Congressional meetings took place. According to the We Are Golf website, industry leaders discussed the game’s tax benefits to local communities along with other benefits golf provides society.

"Today we stood together in D.C. to represent the two million men and women whose livelihood depends on the golf industry," said Steve Mona, CEO of World Golf Foundation and administrator of We Are Golf. “Our unified voice helps Congressional members better understand the profound influence golf has on the American economy.”

Joel Jackson, CGCS-Ret., is senior contributing editor for Golfdom.