

Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program

Ron Dodson

Audubon International, Inc.

Goal:

- *To promote ecologically sound land management and the conservation of natural resources.*

Cooperators:

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A cooperative effort between the United States Golf Association (USGA) and Audubon International, Inc., this program promotes ecologically sound land management and the conservation of natural resources. Its positive impact extends beyond the boundaries of the golf course and helps benefit the community beyond.

There are six different categories in which golf courses apply for certificates of recognition: environmental planning, wildlife and habitat management, member/public involvement, integrated pest management, water conservation, and water quality management. Audubon International provides each golf course with one-on-one assistance in devising an appropriate environmental plan.

1. Environmental Planning

Each course generates a written plan that outlines their goals and proposed projects. It provides a useful tool for golf courses to monitor progress in meeting their goals.

2. Wildlife and Habitat Management

Management of non-play areas is crucial to providing habitat for wildlife on the golf course. Emphasis is given toward maintaining the best possible habitat for the course, considering its location, size, layout, and type of property.

3. Member/Public Involvement

Gaining the support of golfers for an environmental program is an essential ingredient. Focus is placed on generating public awareness through education.

Recognition of well-done tasks continually reinforces the worth of the program.

4. Integrated Pest Management

A comprehensive and responsible program to control pests will ensure a healthy environment for both people and wildlife. Managing turf areas with environmental sensitivity requires educating workers and members about plant management, pesticide application, and use of fertilizers.

5. Water Conservation

Consumption of precious water resources is an issue at most golf courses. Attention is directed toward improving the efficiency of irrigation systems, recapturing and reuse of water sources, maintenance practices, and turfgrass selection. The needs of fish and wildlife are considered throughout the water conservation process.

6. Water Quality Management

Questions abound concerning the impact of golf course chemical use on the water quality of lakes, streams, and groundwater sources. Strategies are devised to monitor water quality, protect wetlands, reduce erosion, filter runoff, and, if warranted, improve conditions.

No restrictions are placed on the property as a condition of participation in the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program. All decisions concerning the implementation of program suggestions remain with the golf course superintendent and course officials.

Each course pays a \$100 annual fee to participate in the program. Among the benefits golf courses receive are a resource inventory handbook that helps develop an environmental plan, and a one-year subscription to Field Notes, the Cooperative Sanctuary newsletter.

Audubon International is one of more than 500 Audubon Societies in the United States. It is not affiliated with the National Audubon Society. Audubon International is completely independent, separately incorporated, and is guided by its own Board of Directors.

More than 1,800 golf courses from around the country have joined this program, including more than 55 facilities receiving full certification by fulfilling requirements in all six categories. Some of these sanctuaries include:

- *The Links at Spanish Bay, Pebble Beach, California*
- *Collier's Reserve, Naples, Florida*
- *St. Charles Country Club, St. Charles, Illinois*
- *Prairie Dunes Country Club, Hutchinson, Kansas*
- *Applewood Golf Course, Golden, Colorado*

Inquiries about the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program for Golf Courses are always welcome. Contact the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program at:

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Table 19. Number of active courses in each state and Canada that participate in the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program for Golf Courses (as of December 31, 1996).

State	Number	State	Number
Alaska	1	Nebraska	7
Alabama	16	Nevada	9
Arkansas	8	New Hampshire	8
Arizona	36	New Jersey	55
California	115	New Mexico	3
Colorado	40	New York	102
Connecticut	32	North Carolina	39
Delaware	7	North Dakota	2
Florida	192	Ohio	65
Georgia	29	Oklahoma	11
Hawaii	12	Oregon	39
Idaho	4	Pennsylvania	63
Illinois	120	Rhode Island	5
Indiana	38	South Carolina	31
Iowa	17	South Dakota	2
Kansas	17	Tennessee	26
Kentucky	19	Texas	74
Louisiana	5	Utah	4
Maine	24	Vermont	7
Maryland	24	Virginia	31
Massachusetts	58	Washington	35
Michigan	102	West Virginia	35
Minnesota	52	Wisconsin	57
Mississippi	4	Wyoming	4
Missouri	28	District of Columbia	2
Montana	6	Canada	149
Total			1822