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To: Newsletter Editors
Great Lakes Region of
USGA Green Section

From: Jim Latham, Director
Great Lakes Region

Dear Mr. Editor:

Your readers may be interested to learn that the St. Charles Country Club, St. Charles, Illinois, is the first golf course in the continental U.S. to fulfill all the criteria for full certification under the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program. Superintendent Peter Leuzinger is justifiably proud of this accomplishment as are the club members who supported this effort.

It should be noted that the first course to be certified, Kapalua Bay in Maui, Hawaii, was under extreme pressure by environmental groups on an anti-golf development binge. St. Charles was not. Nevertheless, Mr. Leuzinger and the St. Charles Resource Committee have generated a great deal of positive reaction through public involvement and education.

We are pleased that this USGA-sponsored program is making its mark in the Great Lakes Region under the guidance of superintendents such as Pete Leuzinger. Not far behind St. Charles is Treetops Resort in Gaylord, Michigan, where superintendent Bruce Wolfson has fulfilled six of the seven categories required for Certification.

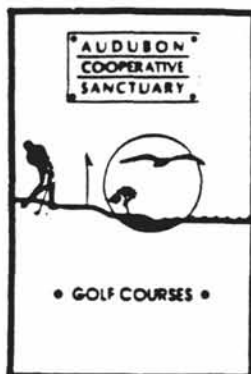
Information on Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Programs can be obtained from any Green Section Regional Office or Golf House.

St. Charles Country Club Recognized for Environmental Excellence

ST. CHARLES, IL — The St. Charles Country Club has been dedicated as a "Certified Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary" by the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary System, a program of the Audubon Society of New York State, and endorsed by the United States Golf Association. St. Charles joined the program in 1991, and is one of the first golf courses in the United States to achieve the "Certified" designation.

"The St. Charles Country Club has shown a strong commitment to and enthusiasm for its environmental program. They are to be commended for their efforts to provide a sanctuary for wildlife on the golf course property," said Jean Mackay, Staff Ecologist for the Audubon Society of New York.

"To reach certification, a course must demonstrate that they are maintaining a high degree of environmental quality in a number of areas," explained Mackay. These categories include: Environmental Planning, Public Involvement, Integrated Pest Management, Wildlife Food Enhancement, Wildlife Cover Enhancement, Water Conservation, and Water Enhancement.



The club has implemented a diversity of conservation and habitat enhancement projects to ensure that St. Charles Country Club is an asset to golfers, wildlife, and the local community. An extensive nest box program provides nest sites for bluebirds, purple martins, wood ducks and bats. They have also increased meadow habitat and created a nature trail to facilitate understanding and enjoyment of the natural areas on the property.

According to Superintendent Peter Leuzinger, "This project has generated a tremendous amount of pride among our members. It has helped us really believe that our golf course is a real asset to the community."

Along with habitat enhancement and sound maintenance practices, educating and involving the public have been strong suits for St. Charles. Scouts, school children and local golf course superintendents have been invited to walk the nature trail, and Leuzinger has given presentations about St. Charles's environmental programs to the local Sierra Club, the Chicagoland Golf Course Superintendents Association, the University of Illinois Horticultural Club and Golf Course Superintendents Association members.

"Our out-reach to the community has reinforced our goals to manage this property with wildlife in mind," said Leuzinger. "We will continue to learn more as we have the opportunity to monitor all kinds of rejuvenated wildlife activity."

For more information on the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary System, contact The Audubon Society of New York State, 131 Rarick Rd., Selkirk, NY 12158, (518) 767-9051.



The Certification Process

Several different Achievement Categories make up the Cooperative Sanctuary System. In order to become Certified, the course must complete and manage certain tasks. Present levels are described below. Application for Certification in any of these categories can be made at any time. Just write to New York Audubon for the "Achievement Category Change Request Form."

CATEGORIES

Environmental Planning — A written plan of action must be prepared and on file with New York Audubon, that details plans for the coming years(s). This plan should summarize planned efforts to increase habitat types on the course, conserve water and increase efforts at integrated pest management.

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