



Program Makes Environmental Education Fun, Realistic

It's been said that the world is our classroom.

No one has taken this more to heart than Audubon International, the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA) and Rain Bird.

Based in Selkirk, N.Y., AI launched its Cooperative Sanctuary System to work with private landowners in implementing environmentally sound practices to preserve and enhance natural resources. AI has developed such programs for businesses, homes, schools and golf courses.

"Though many people believe that state or federal governmental agencies and their staffs have sole responsibility for wildlife and habitat protection, it is clear that the majority of real property is owned by private individuals and organizations," says AI President and CEO Ron Dodson.

"Most state agencies do not have the resources to manage private lands. This

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The golf course superintendent profession has been a leading participant

in the Cooperative Sanctuary System through AI's school and golf course programs.

As a national sponsor for the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary program for Schools, GCSAA has partnered with Rain Bird to provide substantial funding and services to promote greater awareness and participation in the program.

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"I cannot think of a better program for the golf course superintendent in which to be involved," says GCSAA President Paul McGinnis. "The profession has a strong commitment to environmental stewardship, and that is demonstrated daily on our nation's golf courses."

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The ability to take that to the classroom and share it with our youth is rewarding and enjoyable.”

By creating a sanctuary on school grounds, students, faculty and parents are able to learn first-hand the techniques that lead to success.

To become certified in the program, schools must meet established requirements in environmental education, wildlife habitat management, waste management and resource conservation. Individuals from the community, such as golf course superintendents provide resources, expertise and supervision to transform school facilities into a certified sanctuary.

Projects include recycling, bird nest boxes, butterfly gardens and nature trails, among others.

“This is a unique opportunity for Rain Bird to take an active role in providing schools with hands-on environmental curriculum,” says Rain Bird President Anthony La Fetra. “Rain Bird is well known for its commit-

ment to the environment, so this project is a natural for us.”

Along with the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program for golf courses, sponsored by the United States Golf Association, the school program was born in 1991 to protect and enhance the quality of the environment on the golf course.

Golf course superintendents are largely responsible for implementing the activities that will lead to certification — a status golf courses achieve by meeting requirements in Environmental Planning, Public Involvement, Integrated Pest Management, Wildlife Food Enhancement, Wildlife Cover Enhancement, Water Conservation and Water Enhancement.

Today, more than 1,800 golf courses participate in the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program for golf courses.

In late 1995, AI and GCSAA began discussing how to share the expertise and success on the golf course with educational institutions.

Rain Bird expressed a desire to be-

come involved in the program in 1996, resulting in a partnership that continues to gain momentum. GCSAA chapters and individual members are adopting schools and developing fund-raising mechanisms to guarantee long-term viability. All parties agree, the success of the program lies not only in implementing sound practices, but continuing for the benefit of others.

For additional information about the ACSP for Schools, contact Audubon International at 46 Rarick Road, Selkirk, N.Y. 12158, 518/767-9051 or GCSAA at 1421 Research Park Drive, Lawrence, Kan. 66049, 800/472-7878.

Editor's Note: This is the third and final GCSAA syndicated article that was distributed nationwide to help promote the superintendent's image to the general public. The next public relations emphasis will be on educating influential golfers and owners at golf courses about the value of the superintendent to the total operation.

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