

Shell Point Golf Club

Submitted by Mark Jacobs,
Superintendent

Kyle Sweet and I were talking at my maintenance facility the other day and he reminded me that the *Florida Green* was looking for comments about the 2011 count. We were discussing our Audubon program that we are working on here



Roseate Spoonbill

at Shell Point. I will be conducting a course/maintenance facility tour here in two weeks, which Kyle and Shelly Foy will be attending.

Here are the results from our 2011 Christmas bird count. There are some residents here who have been doing a Christmas bird count on the course since 2002. They are residents of Shell Point Retirement Community and do the count for the Shell Point Golf Club. They toured the entire course. I'd like to recog-

nize Dr. Bill Saunders, Dr. Iver Brook and Ms. Dotty Morrison. These are the folks who organize and conduct the annual counts, and Dr. Saunders also works with us on our environmental programs.

This year the group logged 32 species and 309 birds. The rare sighting of a pair of Roseate Spoonbills was this year's highlight. The Roseate Spoonbill is our rare one. Below is a summary of the total of species and birds over the past nine years.

2002-2011 BIRD SUMMARY:

Year	Species	Count	Most Frequent over the years
2002	32	177	63 Boat tailed Grackle
2003	18	88	25 Great Egret
2004	31	311	81 Mourning Dove
2005	29	650	249 Fish Crow
2006	35	364	126 Double Crested Cormorant
2007	33	871	453 Fish Crow
2008	23	478	310 Common Grackle
2009	33	521	239 Common Grackle
2010	32	257	75 Common Grackle
2011	32	309	46 White Ibis




Common Grackle

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STEWARDSHIP



Earlier in 2011 at the High Ridge course this Screech Owl was spotted in its nest just 30 feet from the 8th green. Submitted by Steve Kuhn

High Ridge Country Club

Submitted by Steve Kuhn, Superintendent

Our 2011 survey was conducted by Linda Barnes of The Audubon Society of the Everglades. It's the 12th straight year they have done it at High Ridge Country Club, representing our geographical area of Palm Beach County.

The counts were down slightly from years past, perhaps due to a major renovation we did in 2010 and the warm winter up north delaying normal migration patterns and timing. Over the years, our property has been privileged to become home to more than 75 different species of birds. This year, seen for the first time ever, were the Black Bellied Whistling Duck and the Parula. The 2011 Count results: 33 species with 261 total birds.

Christmas Bird Count at Heritage Oaks

Report by Frances and Peter Rice

Submitted by Andrew Bell, Superintendent

This year the Heritage Oaks count was 38 Species, 210 birds. Every year near the end of December, Christmas Bird Counts are conducted across North America. In northern Sarasota County, the Sarasota chapter of the Audubon Society coordinates these counts. As part of this effort, we performed a "backyard" Christmas Bird Count here at Heritage Oaks Golf & Country Club.

This year, we noticed fewer species and a smaller number of birds. We surmise that this lower bird count was due to milder weather for much of North America during the autumn and winter, prior to early January. This mild weather up north likely resulted in many birds delaying their migration south. Not found were a couple of Limpkins that we have spotted from time to time along the shores of our ponds. Also, for the first time, we did not find the usual House Sparrows congregating around one home near the north end of Chase Oaks Drive. An interesting bird we did see is a Great Horned Owl. Notably, during October and November, two of them spent many nights on top of our house, loudly hooting.

Our local specialty is the White-winged Doves. They usually are seen at dusk and dawn during the winter perched together in large numbers along Bee Ridge Road Extension on the wires or in a tree. For the rest of the year, they spread out, and some have been seen several miles away. In previous years, we have counted as many as 38, but this year we only saw 20. ■

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FIELD OBSERVATIONS



By *Ralph K. Dain Jr.*,
GCSAA Field Staff
Regional Representative Florida

I recently came across an interesting countdown clock on the Internet that caught my attention.

“There are 297 Days, 8 Hours, and 41 minutes left!” This does not reference the end of the Mayan Calendar on December 21, 2012. But if that does mean the end of the world, then I guess this countdown really does not matter!

This countdown is to January 1, 2013, when all public safety and business-industrial land mobile radio systems operating in the 150-512 MHz radio

Breaker! Breaker! Do You Read Me?

bands must cease operating using 25 kHz efficiency technology, and begin operating using at least 12.5 kHz efficiency technology. For those readers who just thought, “So, what does this mean to me?” It could impact the utilization of the hand held radios currently used for communication and control of your irrigation system.

I am aware of facilities across the country that have paid only small licensing fees because they have newer technology already in operation and others that have paid between \$20,000 to \$28,000 to convert older hand-held radios and irrigation control systems. Regardless of the current status of your system you *will* be required to make this transition by January 1, 2013.

I am including some bullet points from an FCC PowerPoint that detail information pertaining to this process:

- Narrow banding ensures more efficient use of the spectrum and greater spectrum access for public safety and non-public safety users

- Will relieve congestion in and result in increased channel availability for public safety VHF/UHF systems
 - Narrow banding has been consistently supported by the public safety community, including APCO, NPSTC, and other organizations
 - After January 1, 2013, FCC interference rules will not protect non-compliant wideband systems from harmful interference
 - Systems that fail to narrowband by the deadline could create interference or inter-operability problems for systems that have narrow banded
 - Wideband equipment will not be available after January 1, 2013
- GCSAA is currently working on a communication piece to provide more details on this issue. I am always available if you need more information. It is critical that you have this information so you are able to discuss this with the managers and owners of your facility and you are not caught off your guard on this matter.

**The link for information regarding FCC Narrow banding is:
<http://transition.fcc.gov/pshs/public-safety-spectrum/narrowbanding.html>**

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SPRUNG!**



**GREEN SIDE UP
BY JOEL JACKSON**

With a warm winter in general, it's been hard to decipher the beginning of the spring season. In fact, if it weren't for the annual migration of snowbirds, we might not have ever known when the season changed. Temperatures were not the critical factor in turf management so far this year; it was the lack of adequate rainfall that has affected course conditioning the most this year.

The water management districts are getting antsy as the monitoring wells, aquifer levels and rain gauges are getting lower or coming up empty. Now is the time, when water shortages are in the headlines, to remind your club members and course customers that golf water use is only three percent of the total fresh water withdrawals from wells and surface waters. Of the six major water-use categories tracked by the water management districts and the U.S. Geological Survey, golf, as part of recreation, comes in 5th out of the six categories.

What often gets lost when restrictions are placed on golf water use is that every golf facility is a business enterprise, and when you combine all facilities – from the highly visible multi-course resorts to the elegant private clubs to the semi-private and daily fee courses – golf has a \$13.8 billion impact on state and local economies and affects about 167,000 jobs in golf.

Due to the erroneous “rich man’s game” perception, water management districts

often bend to that public misconception when cutting back water use. I give them credit, because they do have a delicate balancing act of conserving resources and providing adequate water for all uses. However, there is a big difference between restricting home lawn watering and providing the water necessary to operate a business like a golf facility. Nobody tells restaurants they can only wash dishes three times per week, but watering greens, tees and fairways for healthy turf to withstand wear and tear during the busy tourist winter golf season, which is our traditional “dry season,” seems to be fair game.

Please make sure your members know how you responsibly monitor and apply water daily to provide excellent fast, firm and healthy turf conditions for their enjoyment and turf survival. Share the advances in irrigation technology and your daily routine for setting up run times for the various zones on your course and how precise your computerized control systems can help

conserve water.

This time of year golf is in the air, literally, as we enjoyed the PGA Tour’s swing through Florida.

Besides making the world aware of several excellent Florida golf venues, charities benefit from the Honda Classic, Doral WGC, Transitions Championship, and the Bay Hill Invitational and in May the Players Championship at TPC as well. These major events coupled with many local charity outings and local superintendent chapter tournaments at your neighborhood courses contribute over \$312 million per year to worthwhile causes.

Won’t you “spring” into action during this active spring season when we have lots of golfers enjoying the weather and our courses to share the positive and pro-active economic and environmental impacts that the Florida golf industry has on your local community and the state. Bullet point fact sheets will be available on our website: www.floridagcsa.com for your use.



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