

Talkin' Bugs

John Cunningham, the certified superintendent at Black Diamond Ranch Golf Course in Lacanto, Fla., recently organized a two-day event designed to teach sixth-grade students about insects.

On Day 1 he taught classes in insect physiology and identification at a local school. On Day 2 he invited 150 students and their teachers to his golf course.

1 Students tour Black Diamond, a 45-hole, Tom Fazio-designed championship course ranked by *Golf Digest* in the "Top 100 in the World." Built on a former stone quarry, the course is the centerpiece of a gated community 90 miles from Tampa.

2 John Cunningham, center, shows students how he uses light traps to capture beetles and determine threshold levels for timely pesticide applications. Light traps were provided by Bayer Environmental Science to help facilitate applications of Merit insecticide.

3 Cunningham tells students about the environmental benefits of golf courses. His program is an example of how superintendents communicate the benefits of golf courses within their local communities.



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seasons. Moede described the phenomenon known as the Pacific Decadal Oscillation, a series of 30-year cycles that rotate between El Nino and La Nina.

"What (forecasters) are saying is that we are coming to the end of a 30-year, mostly El Nino oscillation," Moede said. "They're thinking the trend is shifting to this pattern where more of our seasons over the next 30 years are going to be La Nina weather trends, which mean typically less than normal amounts of rainfall."

Of course, that didn't prevent a few dry seasons over the last 30 years, including 5

inches of rain in 2003-04 and 3 inches in 2001-02.

"There are exceptions to the rule," Moede said. "But as a general rule — 70 percent of the time — you can expect this type of scenario during those El Nino or La Nina weather conditions."

► Noting the recent abundance of rainfall, Anatole Falagan, an official with the region's Metropolitan Water District (MWD), said, "What's critically important this year is that we're trying to store all this water."

Falagan said the MWD covers six counties and 5,200 square miles in Southern California, from

Ventura to the Mexican border. Eighteen million people reside or work in the area, with an annual growth rate of 220,000 people.

Golf courses can do their part to conserve water by adhering to the MWD's Innovative Supply Program, which has offered \$250,000 in grants for concepts with the potential to provide new sources of drinking water in Southern California. The United States Golf Association (USGA) received a \$50,000 grant to study golf course on-site recycling.

"Water recycling is typically associated with the county or city sanitation district," Falagan said. "We

want to see how you can actually do on-site recycling, which means that you're located somewhere on the watershed and you're capturing that wastewater stream as it makes its way down."

With more than 320 golf courses in Southern California, the district and USGA are proposing that at least 250 of those courses use potable water by 2025. The result would be 100,000 acre-feet of savings — an acre-foot is about 326,000 gallons, and provides the needs of two typical Southern California families for a year — that would provide enough supply for 200,000 households, Falagan said.