It's got the one-two, knockout punch of a champion

UHS's new Banol C combines the power of two top fungicides to attack tough diseases

Banol* C is a unique combination of propamocarb (Banol*) and chlorothalonil (Daconil*), two of the most widely known and widely used

fungicides available on the market today.

Instead of tank mixing a systemic and contact fungicide as many experts suggest, Banol® C is the competitive, one-step alternative for controlling diseases caused by Pythium, Phytophthora, Rhizoctonia and other

environmental problems on both established and overseeded turf as well as ornamentals.

It is an excellent curative treatment and is also a top-notch preventative product with long lasting residual control. The active ingredients in Banol® C have proven their dependability over the years in university trials and through the satisfied experience of turf and ornamental managers.

Banol is a registered trademark of AgrEvo
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Banol® C is not currently registered for use in California or for use on sod farms in Arizona. Please see package label for details,

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UHS Banol®C

Turf and Ornamental Fungicide

Banol® C is a strategic and effective element in a successful Integrated Pest Management (IPM) program – whether it's on golf course greens, tees and fairways, athletic fields, commerical and residential lawns, cemeteries or parks.

It works to alleviate and prevent a wide spectrum of problems such as Pythium blight and damping off, root rot, dollar spot, leaf spot, red thread and brown patch on turfgrass and is also labeled for Pythium, Phytophthora and other diseases in select ornamentals.

Banol® C is an excellent curative treatment, rapidly absorbing the systemic component through the roots, stems and foliage of plants to disrupt the growth of fungus. When prime disease conditions are present, it is also a top-notch preventative product because it helps form a powerful protective barrier against fungi on plant surfaces, even after excessive exposure to moisture. Banol® C's multi-site mode of action has long lasting residual control, protecting plants from future outbreaks when applications are repeated at recommended intervals.

Conveniently packaged in a 2.5 gallon container, Banol® C is compatible with several other disease and insect control products. This flowable concentrate is easy to handle and because it is non-phytotoxic, has low environmental impact and is safe to use on new seedlings or transplants when used as directed.

As with any product, always read and follow label directions carefully before using.

For Control of Turfgrass Diseases:

Brown Patch (Rhizoctonia spp.)
Leaf Spot/Melting Out (Drechslera spp. including D. poae, D. siccans, Bipolaris sorokiniana, Curvularia spp.)
Gray Leaf Spot (Pyricularia grisea, P. oryzae)
Red Thread (Laetisaria fuicformis)
Pythium Blight (Cottony Blight, Grease Spot)
Dollar Spot (Sclerotinia homeocarpa)

It may be used immediately after germination to control Pythium damping-off in turf, or on established turf to prevent or control Pythium Blight and/or the diseases noted above.

For Control of Pythium and Phytophthora, Rhizoctonia and other diseases on Ornamental Plants:

Azalea, Carnation, Chrysanthemum, Easter Lily, Ferns, Geranium, Impatiens, Lobelia Pansy, Petunia, Poinsettia, Violet

Banol® C is also recommended for prevention of root rot and damping-off caused by Pythium sp. and Phytophthora sp. at all stages of ornamental propagation.

Circle No. 110

Product Information

ACTIVE INGREDIENTS:

Propamocarb + Chlorothalonil Contains 6.25 lb. active ingredient per gallon, 750 grams per liter

FORMULATION:

Flowable fungicide concentrate

PACKAGING:

2.5 gallon container 2 x 2.5 gallon case

GENERAL DOSAGE RATES:

TURF: per 1,000 square feet
Preventative: 2.75 - 6 fl. oz./2.5 gal. water
Curative: 6 - 8 fl. oz./2.5 gal. water
ORNAMENTAL:

4 - 6 fl. oz./10 gal. water

COMPATIBLE WITH:

Chloroneb Iprodione
Chlorpyrifos Thiram
Diazinon Triadimefon
Ethazol Trichlorfon

For control of other soil borne diseases such as Fusarium sp. Banol® C can be tank-mixed with thiophanate-methyl.

Use the full rate of each and follow all directions and restrictions appearing on the labels of these products.

Do not combine Banol® C in the spray tank with pesticides, surfactants or fertilizers, unless your prior use has shown the combination physically compatible, effective and noninjurious under your conditions of use. Do not combine Banol® C with Dipel 4L, Foil, Triton AG-98, Triton B-1956 or Latron AG98 as phytotoxicity may result from the combination when applied to some species on the label.

USAGE NOTES:

Banol® C should always be used in conjunction with good turf management practices.

Banol® C may be used in greenhouses. Not for field nursery use.

Banol* C is not currently registered for use in California or for use on sod farms in Arizona. Please see package label for details.



Embracing the Environment

Continued from page 20

fore he joined Olde Florida in 1992. But knowing that the Rees Jones-designed course was designed with environmental preservation in mind, Davis sought to educate himself extensively. He credits Naples superintendents Tim Hiers (CGCS at Collier's Reserve CC) and Gary Grigg (CGCS at Royal Poinciana GC) for their sound advice.

Key to Davis' success is his motivation to enlighten himself and others that golf courses can have a positive impact on the environment. Davis often takes that message to schools, where his philosophy is that today's students could be tomorrow's EPA officials and government legislators.

"My increased knowledge of the environment and golf has enabled me to speak intelligently to our course's members and the general public," Davis says. "My employer looks at me as more than just a grass grower."

So do other employers. Davis says he has turned down several job offers, including one from an unnamed golf course on the East Coast that would have doubled his salary.

"Most everyone is driven by money," Davis says, "but the No. 1 aspect I look at in a job is appreciation. And if I'm appreciated, I'll probably be financially rewarded."

Like Davis, CGCS Charlie Passios is a more marketable superintendent because of his environmental proficiency and his willingness to put that know-how into action. Passios was recruited by Siasconset, Mass-based Nantucket GC in 1996 to be its golf course manager. The money is good, says Passios, who previously worked as golf course manager at the Hyannisport Club in Hyannisport, Mass. But he took the job mainly because it's a great gig. The club opened last year and was rated best new private golf course by *Golf Digest* magazine.

Passios was also intrigued by the environmental challenges the course presented. The people of Nantucket rely on one water supply, and Passios knew that the island's lawmakers imposed strict regulations to protect that water.

A reason that Passios got the job is because he's an expert in water quality issues. Back in the mid-1980s at Hyannisport, Passios was heavily involved in the "Cape Cod Study," an EPA-sponsored research project that refuted claims by special interest groups that pesticides and chemicals applied to golf courses were contaminating the water supply.

Passios was instrumental in the construction of Nantucket from the outset. He talks excitably about an endangered species program for rare plants and another project to protect coastal grasslands. "There's more here

than most superintendents will ever experience in their careers," Passios says with pride.

Ted Horton can also make that claim. He has one of the great jobs in golf — vice president of resource management at Pebble Beach Co. — and is regarded as a consummate environmentalist. Like Passios, Horton had an excellent resume to help him get the job.

"I'm absolutely enthralled with the properties we're maintaining," he says.

Horton's prior experience — 14 years at Mamaroneck, N.Y.-based Winged Foot GC and 12 years at Rye, N.Y.-based Westchester CC — helped lead to his appointment at Pebble Beach, where he has worked for nearly seven years. While at Westchester, Horton took an environmental approach by instituting the club's first recycling program and organizing area green industry leaders to meet with the county's drought emergency task force to develop a water usage program during dry spells. Horton also convinced Westchester CC officials to install reservoirs and a pumping station to become independent of the municipal water supply.

Horton enjoys working on the magnificent Pacific Coast near Monterey, Calif., but he didn't take the job at Pebble Beach for the view — or the prestige or the money. They were all determining factors, but the main reason that Horton and his wife went West is so they could be near their son, who lives in Los Angeles.

Cashing in, sleeping in

Former superintendent Tom Stone admits that money was the "driving force" for him to form a consulting firm, NaturGolf, in 1996. Stone saw a niche market and a lucrative opportunity. "But my work has become an obsession," he says. "I love what I'm doing."

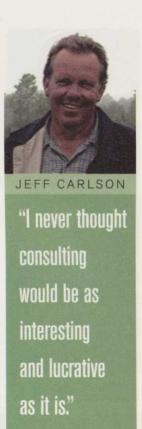
Jeff Carlson won GCSAA's 1998 Environmental Steward Award for public courses while he was superintendent at Widow's Walk GC in Scituate, Mass. Today, Carlson is the president of Wild Side Golf Management & Consulting in North Eastham, Mass. "I never thought consulting would be as interesting and lucrative as it is," Carlson says. "And I don't miss getting up at 4 a.m."

Carlson and Stone are two of many eco-golf experts who are taking their shows on the road.

"I love going to the different golf courses," Carlson says. "The industry is rapidly changing in regard to the environment. It's a whole new industry out there."

With NaturGolf, Stone saw an opportunity to assist superintendents in preparing their courses for certification by the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program. "So many times I've heard superintendents say that they have the resources and can do all the work

Continued on page 24



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Embracing the Environment



"It's a great job.

There's more
here than most
superintendents
will experience
in their careers."

Continued from page 23

— but that they need help with the plans," he notes.

Stone says water management is another area where superintendents, especially in Florida, need assistance. He says Florida is running short on water, and golf courses there will soon have to cut back their usage. He says he can help them determine watering priorities and water-quality management planning.

Davis has also found time to consult, as well as write articles and narrate videos on golf and the environment. "Environmentalism is a selling tool," he says in reference to securing the extra work.

But superintendents had better be well-informed in the subject if they're trying to market themselves as environmental authorities to move up in their careers. Passios warns that superintendents who are winging it will get burned in the end. He says some superintendents who claim they are environmental authorities often end up misrepresenting and embarrassing themselves.

"They leave themselves exposed and it backfires on them," he says.

Nancy Sadlon, executive director of the Alliance for Environmental Concerns, says superintendents need to keep abreast of regional environmental issues if they want to be authorities. "Different regions have different hot spots," she adds.

Environmental consulting is the rage, but Carlson is not worried that the field will become crowded with pretenders. "If you have a passion about what you do and you work hard and do a good job, you'll find plenty of work."

While they are recognized for their environmental convictions, Carlson and the others are realists. Their slogan is not "organic or bust."

"I'm not on a kick to eliminate pesticides," Davis says, stressing that a superintendent's No. 1 duty is "growing great grass" to appease a course's customers. "Pesticides are safe and effective when applied according to label directions."

Passios is irked at environmentally fervent superintendents who declare that all-organic is the only approach to turfgrass management, yet their golf courses

Doing the Right Thing

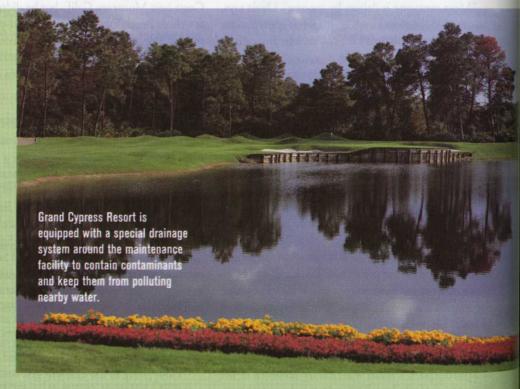
By Larry Aylward

hey say that Tom Alex runs a model maintenance facility when it comes to environmental awareness. Alex appreciates the plaudit, but the director of golf course maintenance at Orlando's Grand Cypress Resort didn't become an environmentalist to earn praise from his peers.

"It's the right thing to do," Alex says humbly when asked about his tidy reputation. "I have two children, I live on a lake, and I'm an outdoorsman. I'm genuinely concerned about the environment."

Alex says he has always been on nature's side, but a few incidents that happened several years ago spurred him to take golf course environmentalism to a level that might even make Rachel Carson proud.

In 1988, a representative from Florida's Department of Agricultural Services stopped by Grand Cypress for an inspection and discovered fungicide residue in soil that was off limits to chem-



icals. Alex was angry. He knew a strong rain could have washed the residue into a nearby creek.

"The residue shouldn't have been there," Alex maintains, explaining that a worker had mistakenly discarded the fungicide from a sprayer.

The other incident occurred in 1991 when Grand Cypress spent nearly \$100,000 to repair

underground storage tanks that were leaking diesel fuel. "We took out about 2,000 tons of contaminated material," Alex says.

Both mishaps were accidents, but that didn't stop Alex from stepping up his environmental approach through education and action. As part of the process, Alex constructed a drainage system resemble unkempt city parks. "That's selling the wrong picture," he adds.

Onward, upward

Carlson, 50, eventually wants to leverage his experience and environmental knowledge into owning a golf course similar to Widow's Walk, regarded as the nation's first environmental demonstration project.

Carlson attempted to purchase Widow's Walk earlier this year but was underbid by a local management company. "It was disappointing, but such things happen for a reason. I've kept busy with the consulting, and I've worked on some good projects," he says.

Forty-one-year-old Passios, 42-year-old Stone and 55-year-old Horton say they are content in their current positions. But that doesn't mean they're not thinking about the future.

"Do you have a crystal ball?" Passios asks.

Quimbey's goal is to keep quality superintendents who are environmentally informed from leaving for other jobs. The key is to show them your appreciation, says Quimbey, adding that the average stay of superintendents at ClubCorp courses has been about 17 years since the company began 42 years ago.

"If I received recognition and credit for my contributions, I wouldn't want to leave," Quimbey says.

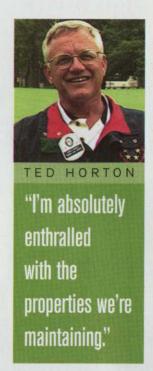
Davis knows that feeling, but he still believes he owes it to himself to re-evaluate his career goals. The 32-year-old has been at Olde Florida for seven years in his first stint as a superintendent and is regarded as one of golf's top young superintendents.

And because he's passionate and knowing about the environment, he's as marketable as Star Wars movie merchandise.

"If you're up to date on the environment, you become a more desirable employee," Davis says.

It ain't easy being green but it's worth the pain, says columnist Joel Jackson. See page 40.

Golf has experienced an improbable green conversion, says publisher/editor Pat Jones. See page 46



to negate the possible contamination of nearby streams and wetlands with fertilizers, pesticides and other chemicals. The objective of the drainage system is to contain and collect, Alex says.

A closed loop

It's a sunny, cool Florida morning and Alex is conducting a tour of the maintenance facility. He points to a drain located at a pesticide tank filling station and explains that any chemicals spilled during loading will drain into a sump and can be pumped back out and into the tank.

Standing inside the repair shop, he points to another drain bordering the building's open front. He explains that all solvents and oil that drip from repaired equipment are washed into the drain and circulated to an oil-water separator.

A drain in the lapping pad area performs the same function. So does the drain at the cleaning station, where nearly 60 workers wash and wax mowers and other equipment at the end of a working day. The waste water flows through three screens to capture grass clippings and other debris before being pumped.

Alex adds chemicals to the separator to dissolve oil. The water from the separator flows to a sewage treatment plant about a mile way, and is later used to irrigate the course.

"It's all underground piping, and it's a closed

loop," Alex says of the drainage system that he installed with the help of employees skilled in concrete, metal and electrical work. Because he didn't have to hire outside help, construction expenses didn't break the maintenance department's budget, Alex says.

Recycling of tires, batteries, oil filters and chemical drums is also part of Alex's environmental program. "A lot of it is common sense," Alex says. "You don't chuck batteries and oil filters. You don't dump waste oil."

But a lot is based on sound management. For instance, there's the daily mower check when mechanics inspect bed knives and reels. If they can't cut paper, the bed knives must be faced before the mowers are allowed back out on the course. Also, all fast-moving mower parts are replaced every five years. The bottom line: Well-maintained equipment is easy on the environment, Alex believes.

Finding a way

Education, perhaps, is the key to Alex's environmental program. Alex, who has worked in the industry for more than 20 years, recalls the 1970s when heavy-metal pesticides were to golf courses as disco was to dance bars. "We used a lot of it," Alex says of the hazardous chemical. "It wasn't cool, but we didn't know that then."

Most superintendents weren't thinking about

the impact that such chemicals might have on golf courses in 20 years. But today, the future is top of the mind for Alex. "We're looking at the long haul. And if you do that, the environmental side of golf management is a natural fit."

Alex is content with his maintenance facility, even proud. He has given tours to his peers who are interested in adopting similar programs. But he understands that many golf courses don't have the money to overhaul their maintenance facilities. His advice to them is to do like he did: move slowly and implement one corrective step at a time.

Which brings Alex to his last incomplete environmental task. Flies buzz his head when he nears a reeking dumpster packed with decaying grass clippings. He can bear the stink, but he's bothered when nitrates drain out of the dumpster with water after a hard rain.

Alex says it would take four full-time employees and new equipment to implement a grass clipping recycling program. While he's an environmentalist, Alex admits he sometimes has to take off that hat and look at the big picture.

"It's still a lot less expensive to put the grass clippings in a dumpster and have them hauled away," he says, thinking like a businessman.

But he vows to rectify the situation. "It's the last thing I've got to clean up," he says.

He knows it would be the right thing to do. ■

Inside Golf's Augustian Program



Undaunted by criticism and misconceptions, Ron Dodson pioneers and expands a program to forge a sometimes uneasy alliance between golf and the environment

STORY AND PHOTOS BY MIKE PERRAULT, ASSOCIATE EDITOR

ENVIRONMENTALIST RON DODSON has long endured critics' pot shots at both himself and his nearly decade-old Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program for Golf Courses.

"There are people who think we're getting filthy rich off the program," says Dodson, president and CEO of Selkirk, N.Y.-based Audubon International, a small, non-profit organization in no way affiliated with the 1.5-million-member National Audubon Society. "Others say I'm a crook, a fake, that I'm sleeping with the enemy.

"The truth is, I get paid about half as much as my counterparts (CEOs of environmental non-profits)," Dodson counters, adding that less than 10 percent of Audubon International's nearly \$900,000 in revenues last year were used to cover administrative costs. He bristles at environmentalists' accusations that he has "sold out" to the golf industry, confident in his belief that partnering with individuals and organizations to improve the environment is more effective than confronting them.

Surprisingly, the program that partners superintendents and Audubon International was created after a New York superintendent merely sought environmentally friendly management advice to cope with unruly skunks on his course. But in the years since, the program's evolution and impact have dramatically altered the perceptions that many superintendents, golfers, the general public and even staunch environmentalists have about the delicate link between golf and nature.

Man on a mission

Dodson found his calling and founded Audubon International almost out of desperation. In 1987, he was laid off as regional vice president of National Audubon Society's New England territory, along with more than two dozen other employees who were victims of budget cuts. Dodson wagered his personal savings and used two environmental consulting contracts as collateral for a bank loan to reconstitute the defunct Audubon

Society of New York State, later creating the subsidiary Audubon International.

For a time, Dodson's move was mired in controversy, as the National Audubon Society responded with a lawsuit claiming he inappropriately used the Audubon name. But a judge admonished the two environmental groups, noting that "birds of a feather" should work together. Dodson won the right to use the name.

Backed by all-important financial and moral support from USGA, Dodson began the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program for Golf Courses with hopes of enticing 100 course members in the inaugural year. When 150 joined, he and USGA officials felt they were on the right track.

A new, positive spin

Dodson's cooperative approach and certification methodology rub some environmentalists the wrong way, but those who know the former high school biology teacher say he has Continued on page 28 One Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program member hauled a carved tree (left) from Canada to Audubon International's New York headquarters as a gift.

Inside Golf's Audubon Program

Continued from page 27

always had a tendency "to break out of the box."

Ted Horton, vice president of natural resources for the Pebble Beach Co., applauds Audubon International's cooperative approach, noting it has been "very forward in its thinking as an environmental group — ahead of everyone else — building partnerships with the golf course community to get something accomplished instead of fight, fight, fight."

What keeps Dodson going amid the occasional verbal barrages are enthusiastic superintendents like Peter Salinetti at Schulyer Meadows Club in Loudonville, N.Y., who contend the program has changed how they

Ron Dodson and his son, Eric, use maps to chart golf courses that are part of the Cooperative Sanctuary Program. Eric has developed an extensive Web site for Audubon International at www.audubonintl.org.



feel about themselves, their jobs and their roles as stewards of the environment.

And although superintendents, architects, golf club managers, developers and others reap rewards through involvement with various Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary programs, they note that the programs have, in turn, benefited golf. "Until the program came along, there was nothing that effectively showed that golf courses are environmental attributes," says Dave Fearis, GCSAA president and certified superintendent at Blue Hills CC in Kansas City, Mo.

What is certain is that the program has changed the way many superintendents, assistants and crew members think about ecologically sound land management and conservation of natural resources. And instead of superintendents being blamed for everything from causing breast cancer among women to endangering birds and animals, the program through word of mouth and publicity has fostered a greater understanding of the lengths to which the men and women who manage golf courses will go to protect the environment.

Coping with misconceptions

Even as superintendents report such positive results, only 2,000 of the nation's more than 16,000 golf courses have signed up for the program. Of those, only about 200 courses have been fully certified. After nearly nine years, those numbers are somewhat

disconcerting to Dodson and his staff.

Superintendents say they haven't signed on for a variety of reasons: It's too time consuming, it's expensive to implement environmental changes or it will create unnecessary "regulatory" hoops. Others say it's simply something they don't need.

The contention that the program costs a lot "is absolutely untrue," Dodson insists. "In the end you're going to save money." Indeed, that was the case when Phillip A. Anderson took over as superintendent at Old Westbury G&CC on Long Island, N.Y., which he once referred to as an "intensive care unit." Annual costs for chemical fertilizer and pesticide were \$150,000, but he has cut that budget to below \$8,000 and has become a proponent of organic fertilizers.

Dodson admits that courses in some states may have to take additional steps that government regulators wouldn't require in order to adhere to Audubon International's comprehensive, methodical program involving environmental planning, public involvement, wildlife and habitat management, water quality and conservation and integrated pest management. But he doesn't plan to lower standards of the six-phase certification process. That's what gives the program its value, he says.

Hitting a moving target

Superintendents say, in theory, the Audubon program shouldn't require a lot of extra time because turf managers should employ sound environmental strategies anyway. But documenting it — dealing with the paperwork — often ends up in the superintendent's hands. That involves everything from cataloging plant and animal species to verifying steps to improve biodiversity and reduce pollution and waste. Finding members to get involved can also be tricky.

Some superintendents are able to document their certification measures in less than a year, while others shove the paperwork in a desk drawer and don't get around to certification for years.

Dodson says it's difficult to set up a program that is challenging and achievable for superintendents at both ends of the spectrum. For superintendents like Horton at high-profile courses, the bar may not be high enough. At mom-and-pop courses, it can be too high.

Another difficulty with the program is that it's based largely on the honor system, because Dodson doesn't have the staff to verify that superintendents have completed certification measures. For that reason he periodically mulls scrapping certification altogether.

But Horton is quick to add that he strongly believes the program's shortcomings are offset by the positives that motivate superintendents. "The second you

Continued on page 30



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Inside Golf's Audubon Program

Continued from page 28

get on the program, you can get a win," Horton says.

Dodson has purposely kept the cost to join the program at \$100 to attract more courses, even though his expenses have increased. "I'm not going to be satisfied until I have 50 percent (of all U.S. courses) in the program," he says.

The program has also attracted industry companies. When Rick Geise of Nature Safe approached Dodson to see what his company could do to support the program, Dodson said, "Join." So Nature Safe did. Now the supplier has thousands of acres of corporate grounds certified by ACSP. "We figured we should walk the walk," Geise says.

Not that Audubon

Nothing irks officials at the National Audubon Society like a call from a misinformed media representative — or superintendent — who wants to know more about the Audubon Sanctuary Program for Golf Courses.

"I'd say I get maybe two or three calls a week from people who either are working with Audubon International who think they are working with us, or from

HOLLYHOCK HOLLOW
SANCTUARY

Nature Preserve and Historic Homestead. This Homestead, built by an unrecorded Dutch farmer in 1746 and destroyed by fire in 1989, is the first settlement in the area. Hollyhock Hollow was deeded to the Audubon Society of New York State, Inc., as a bird and wildlife sanctuary and personnel headquarters by ROBERT and LEONA TRAIN RIENOW under whose auspices The Nature Conservancy Chapter system was founded on this estate in August, 1953. It is administered and protected in its natural state according to the rules and by-laws of The Audubon Society of New York State, Inc.

The Hollyhock Hollow
Sanctuary, deeded to the
Audubon Society of New
York State almost a
decade ago, is national
headquarters for the
Society and Audubon
International.

people who are running golf courses who want to get our criteria," says John Bianchi, spokesman for New York City-based National Audubon Society. "I usually say that's not us, not even remotely us."

What compounds the confusion, Bianchi says, is that at times some of the National Audubon Society chapters — which take their own positions since they are their own separate clubs — will oppose the building of a golf course that Audubon International is allied with or associated with. "And that makes for interesting though completely inaccurate newspaper reporting a lot of the time," Bianchi fumes.

"It's a tough situation, and it's one that's not made any easier by the fact that a lot of golf course managers out there are perfectly happy to use the name National Audubon even though they know they're working with Audubon International," Bianchi says.

What bothers many environmentalists about Audubon International is that the non-profit organization certifies courses as Audubon Cooperative Sanctuaries.

"I'd say there's a great deal of debate in the environmental community, not over golf and not over improving management practices on golf courses, but whether we should be certifying golf courses," says David Miller, executive director of the National Audubon Society of New York State (not affiliated with Dodson's Audubon Society of New York State).

Seeking common ground

Much of the soul searching Dodson does about finetuning and improving Audubon International programs takes place inside his rustic, second-story office, which overlooks dense woods and a meandering stream that eventually flows into the Hudson River. The office is inside a renovated farmhouse, part of the sprawling, 140acre Hollyhock Hollow Sanctuary that was bequeathed to Dodson's Audubon Society of New York State.

What Dodson has determined while pacing the hardwood floors and gazing toward the vaulted ceiling is that the partnership approach to environmental stewardship is a double-edged sword. He considers his organization an environmental group first and foremost, but not a regulator. "We're a friend to anyone who believes in sustainable resource management," he says pensively.

He doesn't like the fact that some superintendents get caught up in and set their sights almost solely on the certification aspect of the program, opting not to focus on bolstering their stewardship skills. So he's not sure how he feels about superintendents who hire consultants to get their courses certified. "To me, that defeats the purpose of me saying, 'This is an environmental learning experience.' "

To critics who say Dodson is more concerned with his business and making money, he notes that, ultimately, his goal is to go out of business, to have entire communities working hand in hand to improve the quality of life and the environment.

"We're a little like Jerry Lewis and the Muscular Dystrophy Telethon," Dodson says. "Jerry wants to put himself out of business with a cure for Muscular Dystrophy."

Dodson also wants superintendents to take the next step and become models to developers — to reach out to their communities.

"This program is more than just a gold star in the middle of your forehead."