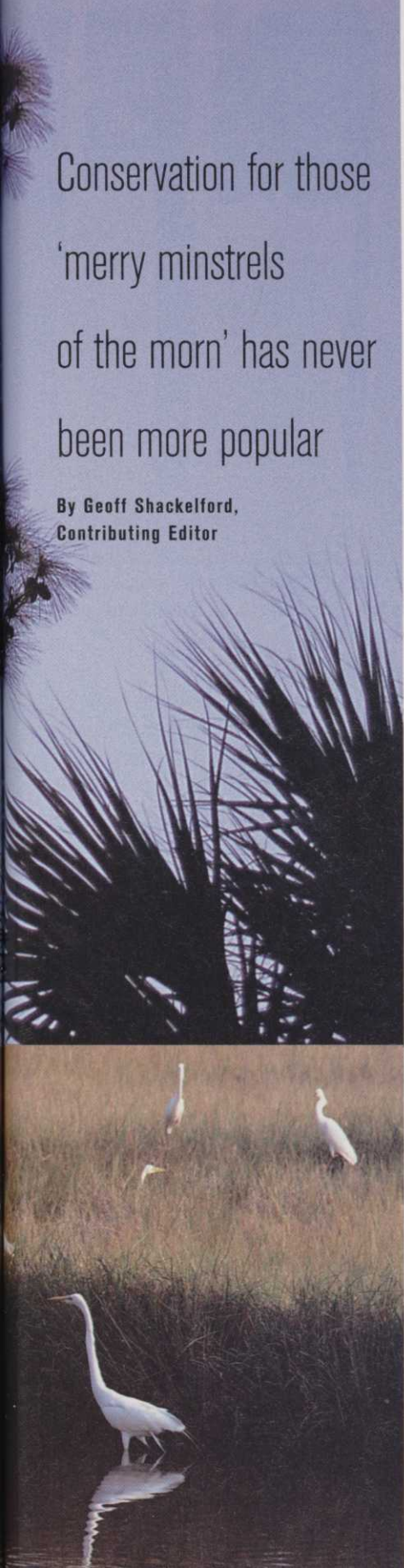


Conservation for those  
'merry minstrels  
of the morn' has never  
been more popular

By Geoff Shackelford,  
Contributing Editor



PHOTOS COURTESY OF COLLIER'S RESERVE

PHOTO: MIKE KLEMM

“**N**atural” and “environmentally friendly” are words often associated with golf courses. Unfortunately, they are often self-aggrandizing declarations from course owners or superintendents hoping to curry favor with environmentalists, win awards or captivate golfers who prefer to play amid the least man-made settings as possible.

Few courses today achieve a truly natural feel of playing amid natural grasses, native plant material or side-by-side with wildlife. Much of this can be blamed on modern-day golfers who prefer sanitized and easy-to-play courses. Unfortunately, this attitude has its roots in golf's history. Architect A.W. Tillinghast wrote in 1923: “It must be remembered that the great majority of golfers are aiming to reduce their previous best performance by five strokes if possible. If any one of them arrives at the home-teeing ground with this possibility in reach, he is not caring two hoots whether he is driving from nearby an ancient oak of majestic size and form or a dead sassafras [tree]. If his round ends happily, it is one beautiful course. Such is human nature.”

But all is not awful in golf's environmental world. In fact, it's getting better. An increasing number of golfers are noticing those ancient oaks of majestic size.

The industry has responded with genuine efforts in the last 10 years to improve its environmental practices. The campaign has led to innovative programs, better maintenance practices and an emerging trend toward retro-natural golf.

More superintendents and golfers than ever appreciate the outdoor setting of golf, including seeing the wildlife enjoying the land as much as the golfers do. Golfers especially love birds, and will generally support efforts by superintendents to bring more species to their courses. Golfers' affinity for birds is reflected in society's overall love of birds. In 1996, Americans spent \$3.5 billion on food, baths, houses and related items for birds.

But how does one go about attracting more birds to a course, particularly ones already built with no thought to bird habitats in mind? It means overcoming old stereotypes and education, but it can be done.

### Uphill battle

Twenty years ago, many superintendents were hesitant to attract birds to their courses because wildlife groups were quick to accuse golf courses of being poor wildlife sanctuaries. Older pesticide protocols provided the groups with ammunition for their accusations, and superintendents worried they could be labeled mass murders of birds because of their chemical use.

*Continued on page 42*

The preferred system for attracting birds is establishing large "corridor" paths to provide space for a variety of species to nest.

*Continued from page 41*

Other misconceptions also plagued superintendents from wanting to attract wildlife to their courses. Some believed that creating wildlife habitats after courses were complete would be prohibitively expensive and require too much additional work. Such assumptions often led superintendents to conclude that bird habitats on their courses were hardly worth the effort. (There was also a misperception that the water, seed and trees on golf courses would be enough to attract birds naturally.)

But those outdated ideas have changed over the last several years, and more superintendents are willing to expend the time and effort needed to create naturalized areas on their courses. Now instead of being blasted by environmentalists for attracting rare birds to their courses, superintendents are often embraced for being environmental champions.

#### Nothing beats research

Superintendents who want to create bird habitats usually have a personal interest in the species and a tolerance for areas on the courses that aren't highly manicured. These natural areas provide living spaces for indigenous birds, which are attracted to native plant material.

Unfortunately, developers often strip this vegetation from many courses during construction or later eradicate it to clean up courses to appease golfers who suffer from the Augusta syndrome. It's been a long road to educate golfers about the importance of natural areas, but superintendents' efforts seem to finally be bearing fruit.



PHOTO COURTESY OF COLLIER'S RESERVE

Collier's Reserve CC in Naples, Fla., features bird houses throughout the course. Specific bird houses will attract specific species.

In the past 10 years, a significant trend for golf courses is the return of these areas to non-irrigated native prairie grasses, which more golfers consider an acceptable look today. Such areas attract more birds.

#### Where to start?

Scott Gillihan, author of *Bird Conservation on Golf Courses* (Ann Arbor Press, 2000), knows something about attracting birds to golf courses, and his book is great reading material on how to do so. Gillihan and the Audubon International program advocate the return of large areas of native plant material to make these areas more habitat-friendly. Ultimately, however, superintendents' determination will establish how involved they want to get in attracting interesting birds to their courses.

The preferred system for attracting birds is establishing large "corridor" paths to provide space for a variety of species to nest. Since that's rarely feasible on an existing course without undertaking a large and expensive program, conservation possibilities still exist on smaller scales.

If the creation of bird habitats is a pet project for the maintenance staff or a green chairman, you can use Gillihan's book as a guide or consult with a local ornithologist to determine

*Continued on page 44*



PHOTO: MIKE KLEMM

# Water.

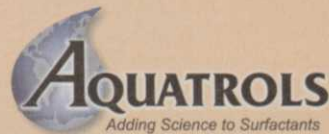


**Our most precious natural resource becomes more expensive and less available every year.**

Water is critical to your business – from the establishment and maintenance of healthy roots for uniform, vigorous turf to the distribution and effectiveness of soil-targeted chemicals and fertilizers.

Aquatrols offers you a proven, comprehensive line of water management tools that make sure water and chemicals reach and stay where they are needed most – the rootzone. And because you'll need to use less water, more of your profits stay where they belong, too.

**Isn't it time to take a closer look?**



CIRCLE NO. 119



*Continued from page 42*

the needs of local or migrating birds, particularly when it comes to what native plant material attracts them. Also, with a small investment, quality birdhouses and feeders specific to the species you want to attract can be purchased, though Gillihan advocates going native before turning to man-made birdhouses.

To build a quality habitat on an existing

course, Gillihan suggests facilities determine which birds are potentially present and which missing or uncommon birds a course would like to attract. It's important to attract a variety of species because it leads to a healthier overall environment for the animals, he says.

Local bird watchers and environmentalists can compile a list of birds present on a course at a reasonable cost, while also providing information the necessary basic habitat re-

# A better bermuda. Count on it.

## 1 DARKER

Bull's-Eye has a deep blue-green color that's shades darker than other bermudas.

## 4 QUICKER

Bull's-Eye transitions from winter overseeding faster than other bermudas and recovers quicker from injury.

## 2 TOUGHER

Bull's-Eye resists scalping and stands up to wear and shade better than other bermudas.

## 5 SPORTIER

Bull's-Eye has a tight canopy of stiff leaves for better footing on sports fields and a better lie for golf.

## 3 EASIER

Bull's-Eye has no seedheads and slower vertical growth for less mowing. Takes a reel or rotary mower.



**BULL'S-EYE**  
Bermuda



Life is Short. Sod it!

For details, call 800/447-1840.  
www.westcoastturf.com.

## Piped-in Sounds Are For the Birds

Last year, CBS received calls from avid bird watchers who said they were perplexed by the singing of certain birds during golf telecasts. One caller insisted the sounds made by one bird were those of a canyon wren, a bird never seen east of Texas. But there he was, chirping up a storm at the Warwick Hills Golf & CC near Detroit during the Buick Open.

Another bird watcher heard the whistle of a white-throated sparrow during the PGA



PHOTO COURTESY OF COLLIER'S RESERVE

Championship at Valhalla GC in Louisville, Ky, in August 2000. Unfortunately, that bird is not seen in the South during the summer, and it's doubtful he was a visitor to the corporate tent village.

CBS eventually confessed to its piped-in bird sounds, justifying its action as adding "ambient sound" to the telecasts. Apparently, the production staff first tried to attract the sounds of local birds by placing trays of seed near their on-course microphones. After that experiment failed, they used recorded sounds to lend a sense of naturalness to the golf, although better research would have prevented the use of bird sounds not native to the area.

— Geoff Shackelford

quirements for those species. They can educate superintendents on how to get the most out of feeders, which foods attract certain birds, how to place birdbaths appropriately, and how to use brush piles for many habitats.

If you want to your course's bird habitat to shine and perhaps receive recognition for your efforts, a \$150 membership in the Audubon International's Cooperative Sanctuary program will provide you with the latest news and education about environmentally sound land and resource-management techniques.

The primary benefit of the Audubon program, as well as the USGA's Wildlife Links Committee, is recognizing superintendents and architects for quality work. This is important considering that most golfers often need to see and learn from examples before allowing their own courses to "go native" to attract birds.

There are other fine examples of golf courses that have become bird habitats, but it's important that each course take its own path based on incorporation of indigenous environments, Gillihan stresses. The bottom

## Birdcall

For information on attracting birds to your golf courses, check out these sources:

- **Bird Conservation on Golf Courses – A Design and Management Manual** (Ann Arbor Press, 2000), by Scott Gillihan
- **Audubon International**  
([www.audubonintl.org](http://www.audubonintl.org))
- **USGA Wildlife Links Advisory Committee**  
([www.usga.org/green/environment/wildlife\\_links](http://www.usga.org/green/environment/wildlife_links))
- **Coveside Bird Boxes**  
([www.coveside.com/default.asp](http://www.coveside.com/default.asp))

line is that birds can be great for golf.

"Birds are an obvious choice for enhancement activities on golf courses," Gillian says. "Birds interest people because of their singing, their color, their interactions with each other and their food gathering and nesting activities. Healthy populations of birds indicate a healthy environment and a healthy golf course." ■

*Geoff Shackelford, the author of this story, can be reached at [geoffshackelford@aol.com](mailto:geoffshackelford@aol.com)*



**All the benefits of slow-release nitrogen without the added cost.**

No expensive coatings. No extra processing. No long-chain molecules to breakdown. And, better yet, no compromised results. UMAXX™ stabilized nitrogen offers the benefits of an elite slow-release nitrogen without actually being one. It's different. It's stabilized nitrogen. Which is uniquely manufactured to give your course – and your budget – more green. For complete details or to learn how to put UMAXX into your fertility program, call (888) 546-4104 or (888) 425-8732, or visit [www.stabilizednitrogen.com](http://www.stabilizednitrogen.com).

**UMAXX**  
STABILIZED NITROGEN FERTILIZER

THE LONGER LASTING NITROGEN SOURCE FOR LESS.

CIRCLE NO. 122

**B**ethpage State Park's long-awaited U.S. Open arrives next month, and no person's legacy figures to be celebrated more than architect A.W. Tillinghast. After all, he designed four of the five courses at Bethpage, right?

Well, some will argue that the Black Course is actually a Joe Burbeck design. The great Tillinghast only routed the course and supposedly lost interest during its construction when Burbeck decided to build things his own way in the early 1930s. Since Tilly didn't inspect the final Black Course design, some golf historians say the design isn't his.

If that's how we're going to determine who gets credit for a design, then there are plenty of modern giants who haven't been doing as much designing as thought. So it's unclear why older architects — like Tillinghast at Bethpage or Alister MacKenzie at Augusta National — lose credit for their works if it's proven they missed their courses' opening-day schmoozefests or weren't around for the construction of their designs as much as previously thought.

Tilly routed Bethpage's four courses, spending many days walking the Black Course property and laying out what may be one of the top five routings in America. If you prefer a course sequenced in such a way that it takes the golfer on a journey unlike anything else in golf, you'll love the Black Course. The property is impressive and Tillinghast took great advantage of its features.

As for the rest of his career, Tilly was a giant of all things in golf when the game was still new to America. If his portfolio of classic courses were matched up against other famous American architects, it wouldn't be a close contest. Tilly could give any of our modern masters three courses aside and still have the match closed out by the 12th tee.

Tilly was everywhere. He lived golf, and he wrote about it with insight and wit. Tilly took beautiful photos of golfers and courses before people did such things. He collected early golf art and even dabbled in it himself.

Frank Hannigan, golf writer and USGA's former senior executive director, says Tilly was the "patron saint" of the USGA Green Section. After watching Pine Valley GC and Merion GC grow into classics, Tilly translated his eye for art, his

## A Worthy Toast to A.W. Tillinghast

BY GEOFF SHACKELFORD



TILLY LIVED GOLF.

HE WAS AN

INDUSTRY GIANT

FOR THE AGES

sense of beauty and his nose for interesting golf into a wide portfolio of interesting designs.

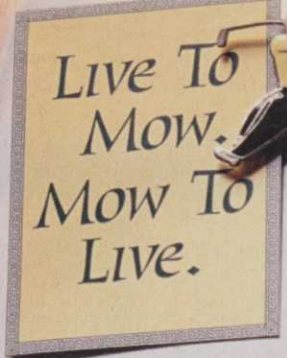
Tillinghast toyed with a variety of styles, but kept his courses consistently compelling despite the quirks he presented golfers. Contrary to myth that has since been retracted by the man who spread it, Tilly built some brilliant par 5s along with plenty of awesome par-4s. Take note of holes four and five at Bethpage Black. They are classic Tilly — beautiful, bold, tough and fun. And because the holes use the terrain so beautifully, they feel completely original.

Later in life, Tillinghast grew disenchanted with architecture and life in general. After he quit designing, he journeyed the country as a consultant to make ends meet. (He told PGA pros that their courses could save money by filling in unnecessary bunkers.) Later, he set up an antique shop in Beverly Hills, Calif., before dying in obscurity in 1942.

Thanks to several people, we know more about Tilly than ever before. Hannigan penned an epic 1974 article that awakened us to the man's accomplishments. Golf writer Ron Whitten and architect Geoffrey Cornish figured out which courses were his, clarifying the man's travels and legacy even further. Recently, golf historians Rick Wolffe, Stuart Wolffe and Bob Trebus started the Tillinghast Society, complete with a Web site devoted to the man and capped off by three books compiling Tilly's timeless essays.

Add the USGA's idea to bring the Open to Bethpage along with the rejuvenation of this world-class facility, and the full picture of Tillinghast as an architect is becoming complete. Through his writings, his courses and his love for golf, we now know he was a giant. He's first team All-American in golf — the greatest designer of courses this country has ever produced.

*Geoff Shackelford can be reached at [geoffshackelford@aol.com](mailto:geoffshackelford@aol.com).*



YOU USED ME  
YOU TOOK ME  
FOR GRANTED  
I COVERED FOR YOU  
ALL WINTER  
WELL NOW IT'S SPRING  
AND I'M GONE!

THANKS XOXO -

TRANSIST 2200



Use it. Abuse it. Take away its charge card. Transist 2200 just doesn't care. Transist 2200 is engineered to not only take your abuse and cover for you, but to go away when you want it to.



When it comes to overseeding and nurse grass applications this is it! Transist is the only ryegrass specially developed for overseeding

applications. And Transist 2200 is greener, denser and finer leafed than ever. It establishes quickly in the fall, looks great and performs well all winter, and goes away quickly and completely in the spring.

Don't even bother comparing it with typical annual ryegrasses. Transist is the result of an exhaustive eight-year series of hybrids, with

patent pending on the development process. It is ideal for applications where high turf quality and high performance are necessary, but a perennial ryegrass would be too persistent. Best of all, it makes itself scarce when it's no longer wanted. Don't you wish everybody would do that?







## If you're *not* using 26GT<sup>®</sup>,

### You're either spending too much . . .

*Too much time. Too much money.* And you aren't getting better brown patch or dollar spot control for your extra investment, either. Switch to Chipco<sup>®</sup> 26GT and improve your situation on all three counts.

26GT acts fast and hits hard, starting to knock down mycelium within 24 hours of application — even when the disease is at the height of its power. (Faster knockdown means faster turf recovery, of course.) 26GT lasts longer than the competition, too — fourteen days or more, twice as long as chlorothalonil. And broad-spectrum Chipco 26GT works as both a preventative and a curative against dollar spot and brown patch.

Could we make it any easier? Sure: You can tankmix 26GT with other fungicides (we have a few that'll work nicely) for season-long control.

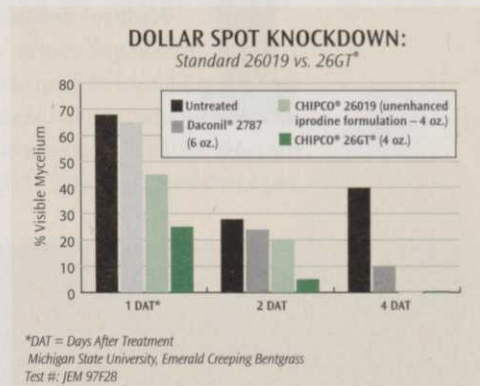
And, finally, 26GT will cost you about 32% less than what you'd spend for chlorothalonil.

### . . . or getting short changed.

Although the active ingredient in 26GT is one you've known and loved forever, Chipco has invested heavily in formulation improvements. Originally known as Chipco 26019, the product was so significantly enhanced in 1997 that it demanded a new name. While the active ingredient remains unchanged, 26GT delivers quicker knockdown of brown patch and dollar spot (up to 48 hours faster than 26019) without sacrificing its excellent 14-day residual.

There's a two-part lesson here: First, remember that an active ingredient alone doesn't make a product great. Second, remember that we at Chipco are continually striving to make great active ingredients perform even better.

*Save more, and get more. Use 26GT.*



**26GT**<sup>®</sup>

# Jack's Right-Hand Agronomic Man

Ed Etchells has made a distinguished career out of watching over Nicklaus-designed golf courses

BY LARRY AYLWARD, EDITOR

**I**f Muirfield Village GC is Jack Nicklaus' baby, then Ed Etchells is Nicklaus' long-time babysitter. Nicklaus designed and built his dream golf course, which hosts the Memorial Tournament, near his hometown in Columbus, Ohio, in the early 1970s. "It represents what I believe and love about the game," Nicklaus says.

Etchells, who has looked after Muirfield's agronomic challenges and needs for nearly 30 years, could say the same thing. While he's not as intimately attached to Muirfield as Nicklaus, the course is still close to his heart.

Etchells was Muirfield's maiden superintendent, spending six years at the course in the 1970s. When Etchells left Muirfield in 1978 . . . well . . . he really didn't leave.

Since then, Etchells has served as Nicklaus' right-hand agronomic man, overseeing many of Nicklaus Design's courses worldwide. He visits Muirfield monthly to meet with superintendent Mike McBride and evaluate the course.

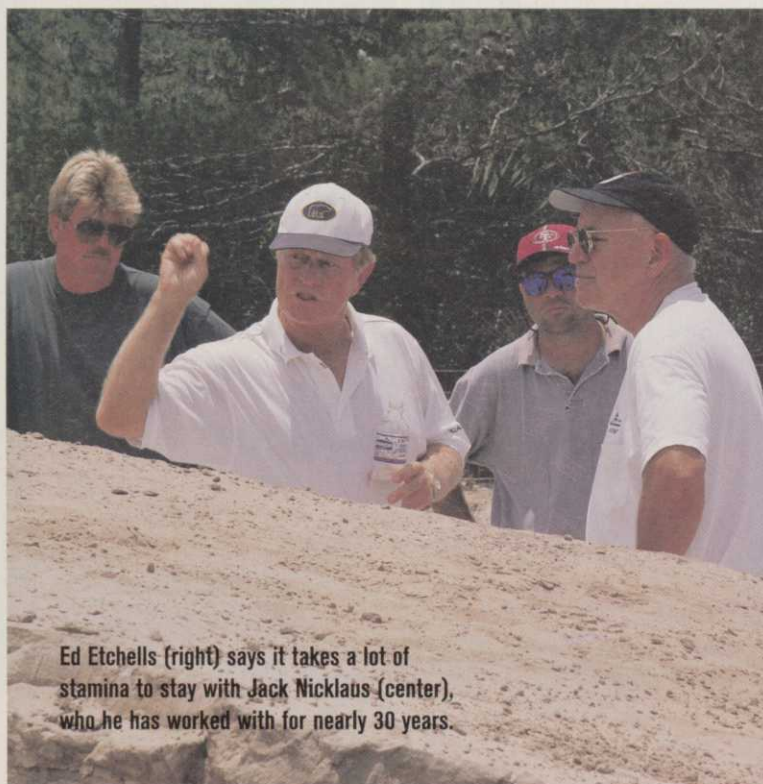
Etchells knows the ins and outs of Muirfield's fairways, tees and greens even better than the Golden Bear. "I know things Jack will *never* know," he quips.

## Lasting relationship

Etchells' career with Nicklaus took a recent twist. He recently left Nicklaus Design after a 29-year career, including 20 years as president of Golfturf and 12 years as senior vice president of Nicklaus Design, both divisions of Golden Bear International. But when Etchells left Golden Bear International last December, he took Golfturf with him and added it to his own agronomic consulting and turfgrass maintenance firm — Greens Management Co., based in Tequesta, Fla. David McIntosh and Ed Hodnett, agronomists with Golfturf, joined Etchells.

"I'm grateful for the many years I've been

*Continued on page 52*



Ed Etchells (right) says it takes a lot of stamina to stay with Jack Nicklaus (center), who he has worked with for nearly 30 years.

PHOTO BY JIM MANDEVILLE