

The Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program for Golf Courses

Ron Dodson
Audubon International

Objectives:

1. Enhance wildlife habitats on existing golf courses by working with the golf course superintendent and providing advice for ecologically sound course management.
2. Encourage active participation in conservation programs by golfers, golf course superintendents, golf officials, and the general public.
3. Recognize the people who are actively participating in environmentally responsible projects.
4. Educate the public and golfing community about the benefits of golf courses and the role they play relative to the environment and wildlife.

Start Date: 1991

Project Duration: ongoing

Total Funding: \$100,000 per year

Audubon International is dedicated to enhancing wildlife habitats on new and existing golf courses through an array of education, outreach and recognition programs.

Audubon International now has 2,200 golf courses enrolled in its Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary System (ACSS) programs for golf courses. The program provides education and assistance to promote environmental stewardship, conservation of biodiversity, and sustainability in resource management.

At the end of FY 1999-2000, membership in the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program for Golf Courses had risen to 2,129 existing courses. Over the years, member courses earned 480 certificates of achievement in specific subject areas. Forty-seven golf courses were certified as Audubon Cooperative Sanctuaries, bringing the total to 239.

The Audubon Signature Cooperative Sanctuary Program for Golf Courses enrolled 11 new members. The number of certified Audubon Signature Cooper-



Properly maintained water features are beautiful to look at and provide valuable habitat for wildlife.

ative Sanctuaries rose by four, to 19, during the year.

Audubon International also hosted the 4th Annual North American Bird Watching Open on golf courses and conducted its first Managed Lands Survey, gathering data on the impact of program participation in key environmental priority subjects and participant attitudes about the effects of participation. Audubon International staff educated 2,500 people through seminars and lectures over the past fiscal year.

In addition, this year Audubon International expanded the educational materials available for golf course environmental stewardship. President and CEO, Ron Dodson, published the book *Managing Wildlife Habitat on Golf Courses*.

Audubon International developed an Environmental Performance Audit suitable for use in educating golf course superintendents on environmental stewardship. With USGA funding and in cooperation with the Club Managers Association of America, Audubon International expanded that tool into a comprehensive Environmental Performance Auditor Clubs.

The Audubon International Institute developed new sustainable resource management guidelines and a rapid habitat assessment protocol to help in protecting natural resources at Audubon Signature Program member sites.

Over this year, Audubon International also worked in collaborative efforts with many other organizations. These efforts included overseeing research on golf and the environment, producing materials to



The Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Programs helps educate golfers on the environmental issues affecting golf courses.

improve golfer environmental education. Audubon International also participated in the development of the international Valderama Declaration to promote environmentally responsible golf course management, and development of informational materials for public officials for environmental review of new golf courses.

Audubon International also facilitated conservation partnerships between a number of Signature Program member courses and colleges and universities.

Summary Points

- At the end of FY 1999-2000, membership in the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program for Golf Courses had risen to 2,129 existing courses.
- Audubon International hosted the 4th Annual North American Bird Watching Open on golf courses and conducted its first Managed Lands Survey, gathering data on the impact of program participation in key environmental priority subjects and participant attitudes about the effects of participation.
- Audubon International participated in the development of the international Valderama Declaration to promote environmentally responsible management.