

## Audubon names Collier's Reserve its first 'Signature'

■ Collier's Reserve in Naples, Fla., is the first-ever Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Signature Golf Course.

Collier's was designed by Arthur Hills and constructed according to Audubon's rigorous planning standards and strict environmental disciplines.

Eco-friendly objectives were achieved in five areas: water conservation, wildlife conservation, habitat enhancement, energy efficiency and waste management. For instance:

● The irrigation system was completely re-designed to become a "prescription irrigation" system, adding \$130,000 to its cost. Each sprinkler head is individually chosen and placed, so that neither native vegetation nor lake/river areas would receive unneeded watering, and so the differing needs of the turf types would be met.

● Several hundred thousand native plants not required by permit were installed. More than 80 percent of the course's vegetation is native.

Tim Hiers, a nationally-recognized expert on Integrated Pest Management and a member of the **LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT** editorial advisory board, was hired as golf course superintendent. He was formerly with John's Island Club in Vero Beach.

Initially, the Audubon and Collier's had developed a Naturalization Plan that included objectives, an analysis of existing conditions, a conceptual design plan, and an establishment and maintenance program. Site inspections continued throughout construction.

Collier's Reserve must keep up its standards because Audubon representatives will check it regularly to assure that it continues to qualify for the designation.

Six other golf course projects under construction are now seeking similar recognition. Also, the American Society of Golf Course Architects has announced its intention to use the guidelines for all future courses.



**Hiers: Selected for his knowledge of Integrated Pest Management.**



Once you've determined what areas on your golf course are defined as wetlands, you can take appropriate action, says Nancy Sadlon of the USGA.

## USGA official says: know your wetlands

■ You might refer to that often-damp, low-lying patch of ground on your golf course as a swamp, but, more correctly, it's a wetlands. Treat it with respect.

Nancy Sadlon of the U.S. Golf Association, Far Hills, N.J., describes wetlands as unique ecosystems that:

- 1) provide wildlife habitat;
- 2) filter and break down pollutants coming from runoff;
- 3) play a role in flood protection; and
- 4) offer recreational opportunities to people.

Golf course superintendents must be aware of them because of the growing body of regulations surrounding their preservation and management.

"Some wetlands are easy to recognize. Others aren't so easy to recognize," says Sadlon. Generally they must meet the three "Hs" to be referred to as wetlands:

**Hydrology**—These are areas that are inundated with water for a period of time each year.

**Hydric soils**—Wetlands characteristically have mucky soils.

**Hydrophytic plants**—These areas contain plants that like to have their "feet" wet.

To identify suspected wetlands on your course, examine aerial photographs of the property, review federal and state wetland inventory maps, and check with the soil conservation service to identify hydric

soils which are strong indications of a wetland. Unsure about the permitting process of altering a wetland? Consider hiring a wetland consultant, says Sadlon.

"Before we recognized the value of wetlands, some of these areas would have been filled in to accommodate a cart path or perhaps, even, a fairway," she adds. "We have certainly seen interest and recognition of the value of wetlands increase."

Sadlon says superintendents should protect their ponds and wetlands with silt fences and vegetative buffers to minimize runoff and pollution getting into these areas.

"Something every course can do, whether it's an old course or a new course, is to recognize the value of the plant materials around the edges of the wetlands. It acts as a buff, it enhances wildlife habitat and it adds aesthetics to the golf course," she explains.

The lead agency for wetlands is the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, but the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers regulates the "404 Program" dealing specifically with their management. Sadlon says superintendents should also be aware that wetlands can be protected by local and/or state regulations too.

Sadlon made these comments before 200 turf managers at the Michigan Turfgrass Conference this past January.

—Ron Hall