



Hole-in-the-Wall Golf Club.

## On Course *With Nature*

# Great Results

Pictures of success.

BY JEAN MACKAY, NANCY RICHARDSON, AND JEREMY TAYLOR

Putting up nest boxes, planting aquatic vegetation, adding new natural areas, monitoring wildlife activities, leading tours, visiting school classrooms . . . these projects are all in a day's work for the people who spearhead participation in the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program for Golf Courses (ACSP) and the Audubon Signature Program for properties under development. But the results that these

dedicated environmental leaders have achieved are far from ordinary.

Since pictures speak a thousand words, we thought we'd share a small sampling of photographs that speak to the many and varied successes Audubon International program members have achieved. Results like these send a strong message that environmental stewardship is as great for golf as it is for the many wildlife species and natural

areas that give the game its distinctive natural heritage.

### HOLE-IN-THE-WALL GOLF CLUB

*Naples, Florida; ACSP Golf Member since 1992; Certified since 1993*

Club members and staff erected an osprey platform at the course nearly 10 years ago, but for years it remained unoccupied. Last summer, maintenance



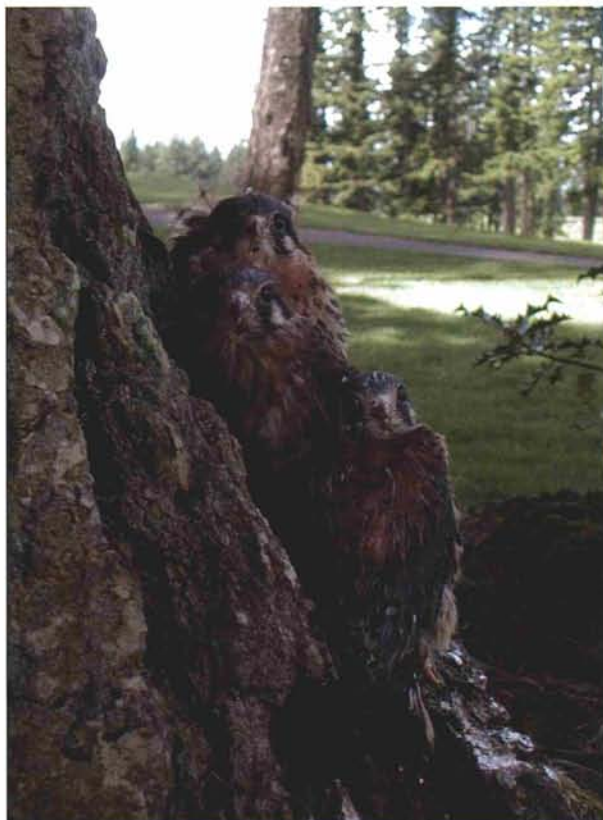
Mississauga Golf and Country Club.

staff reworked the platform, adding two perches and raising the sides so that it would more easily contain a nest and prevent it from blowing off in a storm. Audubon Steward Fred Yarrington reports that after 10 years of waiting, a pair of osprey successfully raised two young this past spring. "It's been a wonderful event," says Yarrington, "and without the ACSP, our membership might not have had the pleasure of watching two healthy birds develop."

### MISSISSAUGUA GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB

*Mississauga, Ontario, Canada;  
ACSP Golf Member since 2003*

When the Mississauga Golf & Country Club was built in 1906, the meandering Credit River that traverses the golf course had little development on its upper tributaries. Today, the river is surrounded by metropolitan Toronto. As a result, spring thaws brought increased urban runoff, flooding,



Stone Creek Golf Club.



LaPlaya Golf Club.

erosion, and ice damage to the golf course. To remedy the situation, Superintendent Bob Brewster began working with regulatory agencies in 1998 to realign the Credit River to pre-1954 conditions. Brewster and his crew have worked diligently each year since to restore a healthy riparian corridor, taking special care to provide fish habitat. They added a number of pools, riffles, and lunkers (sheltered areas for fish that also help to stabilize stream banks) and hydro-seeded terrestrial and aquatic vegetation along the shore. Their efforts resulted in improved water quality and wildlife habitat, reduced erosion, and a visibly pleasing riverbank.

### STONE CREEK GOLF CLUB

*Oregon City, Oregon;*

*ACSP Golf Member since 2004*

American kestrels are found throughout much of the United States and Canada,

preferring open habitat areas where they can hunt for grasshoppers and other insects. The trio of juvenile kestrels in the photograph were caught on film at the base of a dead fir tree that contains their nesting cavity at Stone Creek Golf Club. The birds are ready to fly after a month of parental care in the nest. Credit for providing good habitat for kestrels and other wildlife is due to Superintendent David Phipps and his crew, who maintain the course in a natural style, with 21 acres of grassland and 30 acres of wooded habitats and natural pond edges complementing more manicured in-play golfing areas.

### LAPLAYA GOLF CLUB

*Naples, Florida;*

*ACSP Golf Member since 2002*

Since joining the ACSP in 2002, LaPlaya Golf Club, led by Superinten-

dent Brian Beckner and assisted by local avian expert George McBath, has established a variety of nesting structures on the 155-acre golf course. Eastern bluebirds, great crested flycatchers, red-bellied woodpeckers, Carolina wrens, downy woodpeckers, and purple martins are among the birds that have moved in. But this year, Beckner and his crew were especially pleased to see Eastern screech owls take up residence for the first time, in a nesting cylinder placed in a pine scrub habitat, and 12 wood ducks fledged from nest boxes in the course's lakes. The photograph shows a screech owl in a nest box.

### MESQUITE GROVE GOLF COURSE

*Dyess AFB, Texas; ACSP Golf Member since 2000; Certified since 2000*

In the past five years, Superintendent Danny Walters, along with Natural



Mesquite Grove Golf Course.

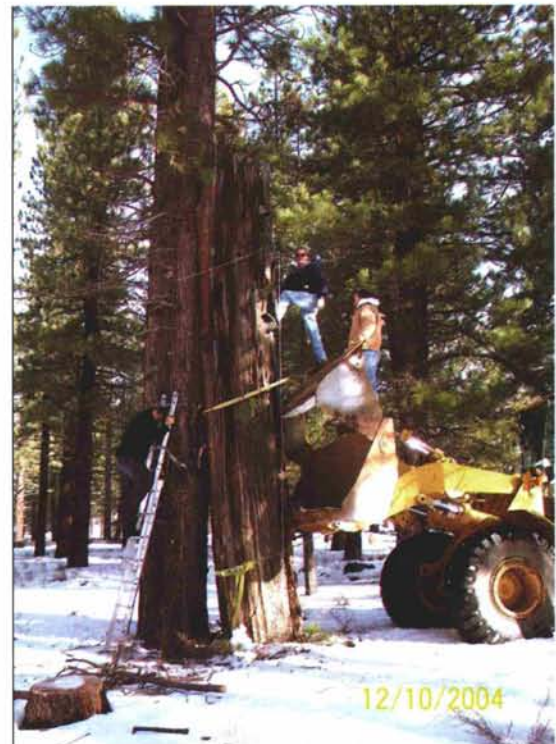
Resources Manager Kim Walton, and the crew at Mesquite Grove have converted more than 15 acres of formerly managed turfgrass into natural habitat areas. The taller grasses, along with pre-existing woods, meadows, and lakes provide food and shelter for more than 100 species of birds, 14 mammals, and 18 species of reptiles and amphibians. Among the menagerie is the largest member of the tree squirrel group — the fox squirrel. Fox squirrels prefer woodland borders, where they feed on nuts, seeds, and fruit. The one in the photograph laid claim to one of the course's 30 nest boxes. Fox squirrels generally have two litters of three to five young each year.

### OLD GREENWOOD

Truckee, California; Certified Gold Audubon Signature Sanctuary since 2005  
Extraordinary measures were all in a day's work for Old Greenwood's Golf Course Superintendent Michael Cornette (on ladder), Director of Agronomy Joel Blaker, CGCS (top),

and Randy Mezger of AMX Excavation (lower right) attempting to save a nesting cavity for resident Lewis's woodpeckers. The Jeffrey pine snag used by the woodpeckers was formerly located in a lot slated for residential development on the property. Staff relocated the dead tree to a conservation area onsite in hopes of drawing the woodpeckers away from development activity. Lewis's woodpecker (named for Merriweather Lewis, who first described it in 1805) is considered to be of high conservation importance because of its small and patchy distribution due to habitat degradation and loss of dead trees suitable for nesting and storing acorns and nuts.

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Old Greenwood.