

Osprey Point Golf Course Designated First Certified Audubon International Classic Sanctuary in Florida



The golf course is grassed with a new variety of turfgrass called Platinum Paspalum that creates an excellent playing surface and features reduced irrigation and maintenance requirements. **Click on the photo for more pictures.**

The county's [Osprey Point Golf Course](#), located in the [South County Regional Park](#), has been designated as a certified Audubon International Classic Sanctuary. This is the first designation of this kind in the state of Florida, the second in the United States and the fifth in the world.

Osprey Point Golf Course had a unique opportunity to partner with [Audubon International](#) at the level of development, and as a result, is the first golf course in Florida to attain design standards and sustainable practices worthy of such certification.

Audubon International, Inc. honored the county on July 19 at a Board of County Commissioners meeting. Audubon Signature Programs Director Nancy E. Richardson presented the board with a print of an osprey painted by John James Audubon in recognition of Osprey Point's official new designation. "I want to thank the Palm Beach County commissioners for their insight to develop a facility that not only meets the recreational needs of citizens but also addresses the needs of the environment as well," stated Richardson.

To achieve the designation, the county developed Osprey Point Golf Course according to a set of guidelines and criteria designed to protect biodiversity of plant and animal life, maintain water quality and provide for the long-term management of the environment. Water treatment trains that include infiltration sumps, bioswales and wetlands were installed throughout the golf course. Irrigated acreage was minimized allowing native habitat to be expanded, and a diverse palette of native landscaping was installed. A new, more drought-tolerant turfgrass was planted along with soil moisture sensors and a state-of-the-art irrigation system. Coquina cart paths were used wherever practical to reduce impervious surfaces and minimize turfgrass acreage.

Equipment wash-down and containment systems were installed at the maintenance facility, and a recycling program was adopted. In addition, a comprehensive written management plan for the facility and its maintenance practices was developed in conjunction with Audubon International staff and experts from the Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge.

The golf course opened to the public in November 2010, and golfers have since been enjoying the modern rolling layout and remarkably varied landscape design. The facility's quiet park setting features a medley of enticing lakeside vistas and abundant wildlife. With five sets of tees on each hole to accommodate players of all abilities, recreational golfers can have a fun and enjoyable round of golf while advanced golfers can enjoy a more challenging game.

The Audubon International programs have been developed to encourage golf course owners to serve as environmental stewards and to certify golf courses that meet or exceed environmental requirements. All of the county's other [golf courses](#) (Okeehetee, Southwinds and Park Ridge) have taken on this challenge and are certified as [Audubon International Cooperative Sanctuaries](#).