



The Estero Country Club golf course has achieved designation as a “Certified Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary” through the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program for Golf Courses, an Audubon International program. Bruch Bach, Course Superintendent, has led the effort to obtain sanctuary status on this course and is being recognized for Environmental Stewardship by Audubon International. Estero Country Club is the 100th course in Florida and the 696th in the world to receive the honor.

“Estero Country Club has shown a strong commitment to its environmental program. They are to be commended for their efforts to provide a sanctuary for wildlife on the golf course property,” said Jim Sluiter, Staff Ecologist for the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Programs.

“To reach certification, a course must demonstrate that they are maintaining a high degree of environmental quality in a number of areas,” explained Sluiter. These categories include: Environmental Planning, Wildlife & Habitat Management, Outreach and Education, Chemical Use Reduction and Safety, Water Conservation, and Water Quality Management.

The Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program for Golf Courses, endorsed by the United States Golf Association, provides information and guidance to help golf courses preserve and enhance wildlife habitat, and protect natural resources. Golf courses from the United States, Africa, Australia, Canada, Central America, Europe, and Southeast Asia have also achieved certification in the program.

Estero Country Club offers birding and wildlife tours on the golf course and a photography contest during seasonal months. Be sure to check the monthly newsletter for dates.



Wildlife



BIRDS, MAMMALS AND REPTILES THE AUDUBON RESOURCE ADVISORY GROUP HAS IDENTIFIED AT ESTERO COUNTRY CLUB.

Alligator Snapping Turtle



One of the world's largest freshwater turtles (22"); occurs in panhandle; has bumpier carapace keels and heavier beak; lacks tail keels.

Bald Eagle



L 32"; WS 7'6". Flies with slow deliberate wingbeats, wings held flat, straight out with primaries spread. Sits on tall trees. Coast, inland waterways. Resident in FL; in summer many disperse northward out of state.

Boat Tailed Grackle (male)



Male 16"; female 13". Cheeky; visits dumpsters, feeders, shores. Fresh and salt marshes, farms, towns. Resident in mainland FL.

Bobcat



H 20"; L 33"; T 4". Orange-brown in summer, paler grayish in winter; black spots and bars on legs and rear. Stalks and ambushes small mammals and birds at night. Habitat: woods, scrub, swamps. Activity: mainly nocturnal, year round.

Common Gray Fox



H 15"; L 3'2"; T 13". Habitat: Wooded and brushy areas. Activity: day or night, but secretive; year-round.

Corn Snake



3'6". Slender; head larger than neck; scales large. Caution: coils like rattler when cornered; will bite. Habitat: woods, open areas, farms, old buildings, trash piles.

Coyote



H 25" L 4'; T 13". Runs up to 40 mph. 20th-century invader from west U.S. Only large carnivore to persist in heavily settled areas. Habitat: woods, brush, fields. Activity: mainly nocturnal, year-round.

Double Crested Cormorant



33". Swims with bill angled upward; flocks often fly in V; spreads wings to dry while resting. Nests in colonies in cypress trees or mangroves. Habitat: coasts, large bodies of inland water.

Eastern Fox Squirrel



L 24"; T 11". Young remain in leaf nest for 2 months. Habitat: mixed woods, especially oak, pine, hickory, cypress; mangroves. Activity: by day, year-round. Range: all FL, ex. Keys

Eastern Spotted Skunk



L 18"; T 7". If threatened stands on forepaws; can spray foul-smelling liquid up to 13'. Faster, more agile than Striped Skunk; climbs trees. Habitat: woods, scrub, farms. Activity: nocturnal, year-round. Range: all FL, ex. Keys.

Great Horned Owl



L 23"; WS 4'7". Owls fly silently; their feathers are delicately fringed and very soft. Habitat: woods, parks. Range: resident in FL.

Louisiana (tri-colored) Heron



26". Fishes by slow stalking and wild running pursuit in shallow water. Nests in colonies, with other species. Habitat: salt and freshwater mudflats and marshes; swamps; meadows. Range: resident in FL.

Marsh Rabbit



L 16". T 1 1/2". Sometimes walks on hind legs; runs more slowly than a cottontail. Swims well, often with just eyes and nose exposed. Habitat: fresh and saltwater marshes and swamps. Activity: day and night, year-round.

Northern River Otter



L 3'7"; T 16". Swims rapidly, stops with head raised out of water. Eats fish, frogs, turtles, muskrats. Runs well on land; loves to exercise and play. Habitat: clean rivers, wood-edged ponds and lakes. Activity: day and night, year-round.

Red Shoulder Hawk



L 20"; WS 3'4". Smaller, very pale, washed-out race inhabits South FL. Habitat: wooded wetlands, swamps. Range: resident in FL.

Red-Winged Blackbird (male)



9". Calls from trees, shrubs, tall reeds. Habitat: marshes, swamps, fields. Range: resident in FL.

Red-Bellied Woodpecker



9". Flight reveals large white spot in black primaries, white rump. Habitat: open woods, towns. Range: resident in FL.

Ruddy Duck



16". Dives for aquatic plants. Habitats: bays, lakes, ponds. Range: November - April all FL.

THE SPECIES ABOVE ARE JUST A FEW OF THE MANY SPOTTED ON OUR PROPERTY.