

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE- September 2016

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Orchid Island Golf and Beach Club Recognized for Environmental Excellence

ORCHID, FL – Orchid Island Golf and Beach Club has retained its designation as a "Certified Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary" through the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program for Golf Courses, an Audubon International program.

Participation is designed to help course personnel plan, organize, implement, and document a comprehensive environmental management program and receive recognition for their efforts. To reach certification, a course must demonstrate that they are maintaining a high degree of environmental quality in a number of areas including: Environmental Planning, Wildlife & Habitat Management, Outreach and Education, Chemical Use Reduction and Safety, Water Conservation, and Water Quality Management.

"Orchid Island Golf and Beach 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 Tara Donadio, Director of Cooperative Sanctuary Programs at Audubon International.

Orchid Island Golf and Beach Club is one of 113 courses in Florida and 914 courses in the world to hold the honor. Golf courses from the United States, Africa, Australia, Central America, Europe, South America, and Southeast Asia have also achieved certification in the program. The golf course was designated as a Certified Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary in 2005. After designation, courses go through a recertification process every three years.

This year the recertification process, coordinated by Matt Boyd, Superintendent, and Andy Stair, Assistant Superintendent, required a visit by a local community representative. Heather Stapleton, Education Director at the Environmental Learning Center, was given a tour of the course and sent her observations to Audubon International. "From nature walks, to conservation practices, to bird nesting boxes, the golf course at Orchid Island Golf & Beach Club has a far-reaching, comprehensive stewardship program. Superintendent Matt Boyd and Assistant Superintendent Andy Stair have made wonderful improvements to the course, making it much more environmentally friendly than one who didn't know better might assume," Stapleton reported.

"We see the site visit as an important component of a course's recertification," stated Donadio. "It provides an objective verification of some of the more visible aspects of the course's environmental management activities. In addition, it offers an opportunity for golf course representatives to share publicly some of the voluntary actions they have taken to protect and sustain the land, water, wildlife, and natural resources around them." Matt Boyd wrote of the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program: "We truly value what the ACSP provides to our golf facility. It is a wonderful opportunity to show our commitment of protecting and enhancing the environment of Orchid Island Golf and Beach Club."

About Audubon International

Audubon International is a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) environmental education organization dedicated to providing people with the education and assistance they need to practice responsible management of land, water, wildlife, and other natural resources. To meet this mission, the organization provides training, services, and a set of award-winning environmental education and certification programs for individuals, organizations, properties, new developments, and entire communities.

For more information, contact Audubon International at 120 Defreest Drive, Troy, NY 12180, 1-844-767-9051, e-mail at acsp@auduboninternational.org, or visit the website at www.auduboninternational.org.