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# Golf Digest

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## Environmental Awards

The Vineyard, Raven Golf Club at Three Peaks and Lost Marsh honored

**T**he Environmental Leaders in Golf Awards, co-sponsored annually by Golf Digest and the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America, recognized three national winners, 15 chapter winners and 15 merit winners at the GCSAA Conference and Show in San Diego in February.

National Private Course winner Jeff Carlson maintains The Vineyard Golf Club, on

Martha's Vineyard, as a completely organic layout with no chemical pesticides. By using 40 percent less water than other Massachusetts courses and limiting nitrogen applications, Carlson keeps the course playing lean and fast.

In the Resort category, winner Brian Tanner of the Raven Golf Club at Three Peaks in Silverthorne, Colo., was honored for his efforts at wildlife preservation and enhance-

ment, including the successful relocation of a sensitive osprey nest. He also uses harmless, organic methods to keep elk off playable areas of the course.

Public winner Christopher Gray, now technical advisor for the Environmental Protection Information Center of Wisconsin, had been superintendent of Lost Marsh of Hammond (Ind.) Golf Course, the centerpiece of the reclamation of George Lake, which

had been polluted by nearby factories. In part because of Gray's installation of wildlife preserves, the city advertises the course as an "environmental/recreation area."

While acknowledging that their own course situations were unique and somewhat extreme, the winners had suggestions for how your golf course can become more compatible with the environment.

Here are their tips:

## Little steps your course can take

### Leave areas natural

Dead trees, standing and fallen, in far roughs provide nesting habitats for animals that eat harmful insects.

### Help wildlife

Interconnected sections of unmowed native rough that wind through out-of-play areas help wildlife safely traverse the property.

### Add buffers and filters

A strip of native grasses just 15 feet wide can serve as a natural filter between chemicals applied on a course and open water. Aquatic plants in lakes are additional filters.

### Make your own mix

Combine recycled grass clippings instead of grass seed with sand for your divot mix. It provides its own fertilizer.

### Keep water moving

A fountain oxygenates water to fight algae, the harmful byproduct of geese droppings. Carp eat algae, too.

### Clean those shoes

Courses that take the time to clean and disinfect golf spikes before play eliminate deposits of *Poa annua* and other weed seeds on greens. Fewer weeds means fewer chemicals.

