

Golf & Nature

A Study of UK Golf Courses: Year 1



UK Golf Course Biodiversity Project.

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Image top: Brown argus butterfly at Royal St George's Golf Club
 Image middle: Strawberry clover at Saunton Golf Club - Vulnerable in GB and England
 Image bottom: Marsh helleborine at Royal Birkdale Golf Club - Near Threatened in England

Biodiversity. Foreword

Biodiversity is declining at an unprecedented rate in human history and despite the efforts by many countries to reduce biodiversity loss, global targets are still not being met. In the UK, the State of Nature 2019 report showed that 15% of species are threatened with extinction and 41% of species identified as being of conservation concern have decreased in abundance since 1970.

Jeff Knot, Director of Policy and Advocacy, RSPB



The state of biodiversity in the UK is critical and nature is in crisis with more than 40% of species populations declining since 1970 and the UK in the bottom 10% of countries worldwide for the nature we have left. Addressing this urgent issue is one of the defining challenges of our time, and businesses such as golf courses have a crucial role to play in reversing this trend by adopting sustainable practices and supporting conservation efforts.

It is great to see this report be published and the commitment to the long-term research project by The R&A to determine the contribution that golf courses can make to nature conservation.

Using existing metrics to measure golfs contribution to nature conservation this R&A project is paving the way for how all golf courses can showcase their contribution and determine the ways in which they can continually adapt and improve to support nature conservation in the UK.

The results in the first-year report, highlighting over 150 species of conservation concern and 14 habitats of principal importance, is an exciting result to demonstrate the contribution golf courses can and already are making to nature conservation.

15%

The most recent State of Nature report showed that in the UK, 15% of species are threatened with extinction.

41%

The most recent State of Nature report showed that in the UK, 41% of species identified as being of conservation concern have declined since 1970.

The Opportunity for Golf. Foreword



It is considered likely that golf courses could contribute to nature's recovery if they are able to demonstrate that they are delivering effective conservation of biodiversity. This multi-year project hopes to demonstrate how existing golf courses may provide a unique opportunity to conserve, restore and safeguard biodiversity and contribute to the commitment of protecting 30% of land and sea by 2030.

Arlette Anderson, Director of Sustainable Golf at The R&A



Golf's awareness of its impacts and dependencies on nature is rising fast. There is now strong evidence that golf facilities have a critical role to play in preserving and enhancing biodiversity.

The capacity for courses to contribute to nature's recovery is considerable if they are able to demonstrate that they are delivering effective conservation of biodiversity. This multi-year project examines how existing golf courses may provide a unique opportunity to conserve, restore and safeguard biodiversity and contribute to a global commitment to protect 30 per cent of land and sea by 2030.

With biodiversity becoming increasingly supported by national and international government policy, it's an issue that can no longer be ignored. Through understanding its richness and quantifying its value, biodiversity can be integrated into the positive principles of club decision making so that it is appreciated, conserved, restored and managed sustainably to deliver benefits to the sector, to people and to the planet.

Many governments have already set out the basis of their plans for a green and more prosperous future. By using baseline studies and measuring value through the use of standard metrics, we can provide a clear understanding of the potential future role golf courses can play to protect and enhance biodiversity and contribute to preventing species decline and habitat loss.

As measuring and managing biodiversity becomes more commonplace, the development of new understanding and language describing its value to society is critical. By working with golf clubs, establishing baselines, monitoring, and highlighting unique species and habitats, we can articulate good practice and a shared understanding of biodiversity value. This biodiversity study aims to help UK golf clubs to identify opportunities, implement practical solutions, and join The R&A in promoting the importance of nature and biodiversity within golf.

The Project.

The R&A Golf Course Biodiversity Project was established in 2022 with the aim of assessing and quantifying the biodiversity value of existing golf courses over a five-year period.

The project seeks to identify whether existing golf courses can contribute to global goals to halt and reverse biodiversity loss. Using a series of habitat assessments and wildlife surveys, the project aims to measure biodiversity and identify opportunities for nature conservation.

The project will quantify the biodiversity value of thirty golf courses in total using the Biodiversity Metric 4.0, a recognised tool for measuring biodiversity using habitats as a proxy.



Image left: Species-rich dune turf at Saunton Golf Club
Image above: Mosaic puffball at Nairn Golf Club



Year 1 Report

The first year of the project aimed to provide a baseline biodiversity review of 23 golf courses around the UK. The results of the initial surveys were also used to prepare general recommendations for enhancing and maximising the biodiversity value of golf courses as a way to boost nature.



Future Annual Reports

As a multi-year study into the biodiversity value of golf courses, this report will be complimented by additional insights and updated results. Trends and patterns will be followed with the aim of demonstrating the positive impact of improved management strategies.



Supporting Practical Resources

Additional practical resources to support The R&A Biodiversity Project will be produced for use by golf courses. These will provide additional insights into the scientific study, guidance and recommendations around managing courses for biodiversity and case study examples.



Researcher

Sophie Olejnik has over seven years' experience in ecology and has worked on projects across England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and Ireland, in both upland and lowland environments. Sophie regularly works with golf clubs to provide ecological surveys and reports for both planning and general habitat management. Sophie has experience in Phase



1 Habitat Survey, UKHab and biodiversity gain assessment including habitat condition assessments.

"I count myself fortunate to have worked with many different golf courses to study and enhance their nature and biodiversity. I'm excited about this study and the opportunities we have to better understand the nature supported by courses



and how we can provide practical management recommendations to help continue to conserve important flora and fauna on them."



Golf Course Selection.

In year one of the study, 23 golf courses across three main course types - heathland, links and parkland - were selected to be surveyed.

“R&A Championship venues have a long-standing history of producing great playing surfaces using sustainable agronomy practices and, at the same time, retaining havens for nature. To confirm their nature value, we identified a range of R&A Championship venues for inclusion in the first year of the study. From parkland to links to heathland, the first year of the study has provided some amazing stories of golf courses providing biodiversity value, supporting notable species, working with conservation groups all to benefit the landscapes they are custodians of and their surrounding communities.”

Richard Windows
Head of Sustainable Agronomy:
Championships, The R&A



The scope of the study will widen over coming years to incorporate additional sites in the UK. In addition, learnings and case studies will be incorporated from The R&A's Golf Course 2030 programme, and partnership with The RSPB

Golf Course	Country
1 Carnoustie Golf Links – Championship Course	Scotland
2 Fulford Golf Club	England
3 Ganton Golf Club	England
4 Hollinwell	England
5 Hunstanton Golf Club	England
6 Loch Lomond Golf Club	Scotland
7 Minchinhampton Golf Club – Championship Course (layout combining Cherington and Avening)	England
8 Moor Park Golf Club – High Course	England
9 Muirfield	Scotland
10 Nairn Golf Club – Championship Course	Scotland
11 Northamptonshire County Golf Club	England
12 Royal Birkdale Golf Club	England
13 Royal Dornoch Golf Club – Championship Course	Scotland
14 Royal Liverpool Golf Club	England
15 Royal Lytham Golf Club	England
16 Royal Porthcawl Golf Club	Wales
17 Royal Portrush Golf Club – Dunluce Links	Northern Ireland
18 Royal St George's Golf Club	England
19 Royal Troon Golf Club – Old Course	Scotland
20 Saunton Golf Club – East Course	England
21 St Andrews Golf Links – Old Course	Scotland
22 Turnberry – Ailsa Course	Scotland
23 Walton Heath Golf Club – Championship Course (layout combining Old Course and New Course)	England

Designated Sites and Golf.

Throughout the UK, land can be protected under international and national legislation, or selected by local authorities, in recognition of its biodiversity value. These are often termed ‘designated sites’ and a brief description of the different types are detailed below.

Designated site type	International Protection	National Protection	Protection Type	Description
Ramsar site	Ramsar Convention	Regulations derived from the Habitats Directive	Statutory	Wetlands of international importance supporting wildfowl and other important species.
Special Protection Areas (SPAs)	Birds Directive	Habitats Directive regulations as above	Statutory	Sites that support rare, vulnerable, or large numbers of regularly occurring migratory bird species. SPAs are part of a network of European sites.



Pyramidal orchid amongst species-rich dune grassland at Royal Portrush Golf Club

To quantify the biodiversity value of golf courses within designated sites, the habitat distinctiveness bands, as defined by DEFRA and Natural England have been adapted and applied as follows:

- Golf courses within **national designated sites** are considered to be of **very significant biodiversity value with habitats / species which require conservation action.**
 - Golf courses within **international designated sites** are considered to be of **very significant biodiversity value with highly threatened habitats / species which require conservation action.**
 - Golf courses within **regional designated sites** are of **significant biodiversity value.**
- Golf courses afforded more than one designation should be valued based on the designation with the highest level of importance.

Designated site type	International Protection	National Protection	Protection Type	Description
Special Areas of Conservation (SACs)	Habitats Directive	Habitats Directive regulations as above	Statutory	High-quality conservation sites which make a significant contribution to conserving habitats and species threatened in Europe as a whole. Part of the Natura 2000 Network.
Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs)	None unless also designated as a Ramsar, SPA, or SAC	Wildlife & Countryside Act and CRoW Act	Statutory	Representative samples of British habitats forming a national series aimed at maintaining the present diversity of wild plants and animals in Great Britain.
National Nature Reserves (NNRs)		National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949; Wildlife & Countryside Act and CRoW Act	Statutory	Areas managed for study or research into flora, fauna, geological or physiographical interest, or for preserving features of special interest. Owned or leased by Natural England, bodies approved by them, or managed under agreement with landowners/occupiers.
Local Nature Reserves (LNRs)		National Parks & Access to the Countryside Act 1949; local planning documents and policies	Statutory	Concentrated in or around urban areas where a policy of using LNRs to promote conservation education has been pioneered. LNRs have local as opposed to national importance for nature conservation and the local authority must consult with the relevant SNCO before designation.
Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) and other local designations		Local planning documents and policies	Non-statutory	Sites designated by Local Planning Authorities. They can be of significant value for nature conservation, especially in urban areas, although they do not have the legal protection afforded by statutory designations described previously.

Study Findings

15

of the golf courses were wholly or partly within designated sites for nature conservation.

9

of the golf courses were Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) or equivalent because they support 'substantiative nature conservation value' based on the presence of habitats and species considered to be regionally important, distinctive and/or threatened.

12

of the courses were afforded statutory designations which included:

- Five statutory designated sites of international importance for nature conservation (European designated sites including three Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and two Ramsar sites).
- Seven sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) which are of national importance for nature conservation.

7

of the golf courses were also found to lie within other protected landscapes:

- Two UNESCO Biosphere reserves
- Five Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB3)
- One National Park

19

The 19 golf courses identified within statutory and non-statutory designated sites and other protected landscapes are considered to be of regional to international importance for biodiversity. Golf courses within statutory designated sites could, if well-managed for nature, contribute to the 30x30 biodiversity protection goal agreed internationally at COP15. Presently six out of the seven SSSIs which fully or partly incorporate golf courses are assessed to be in 'Unfavourable-Recovering' or 'Favourable' condition.

Royal St George's Golf Club, England Case Study

Royal St George's Golf Club lies to the east of Sandwich, Kent. The golf course supports a mosaic of coastal sand dune habitats with extensive fixed dune grasslands interspersed with dune slacks, pockets of scrub, and several ditches.

Royal St George's lies within Sandwich Bay Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and Sandwich Bay to Hacklinge Marshes Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). The sites are designated for their internationally important coastal sand dune habitats and rare flora and fauna.

The unit of Sandwich Bay to Hacklinge Marshes SSSI containing the golf course

at Royal St George's Golf Club was last assessed by Natural England in 2021 to be in Favourable condition.

The club works very closely with Natural England due to these overlapping designations. In 2021, the golf course was assessed to be in a 'Favourable' condition following several years of managing the dune grasslands and other dune habitats as directed by a tailored plan. The ongoing sensitive management of the course allows for the continued conservation of important populations of lizard orchid and bedstraw broomrape, both of which are 'nationally scarce' and Rare plants, respectively.

426

species were identified as being present or likely present at Royal St George's Golf Club.

224

of those are protected or notable.



Image above: Brown argus butterfly at Royal St George's Golf Club

Image left: Species-rich dune grassland at Royal St George's Golf Club

Royal Troon Golf Club, Scotland Case Study



Image: Isle of Man cabbage, an unassuming plant which is 'nationally scarce' and found in a number of scrapes at Royal Troon Golf Club.

Royal Troon Golf Club lies to the south of Troon, South Ayrshire. The Old Course supports a mosaic of dune grassland, dune heath, gorse-dominated scrub, scattered coniferous and broadleaved trees, and a few dune slacks.

The Old Course at Royal Troon Golf Club partly lies within Troon Links and Foreshore Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). The site is designated for its important coastal sand dune

habitats and the presence of the nationally scarce Isle of Man cabbage.

NatureScot last assessed Troon Golf Links and Foreshore SSSI in 2013 to be in 'Unfavourable-Recovering' condition. Ongoing scrub removal and sand scrape creation on the golf course has resulted in an increase in Isle of Man cabbage, an endemic plant which is one of the reasons for the SSSI designation.

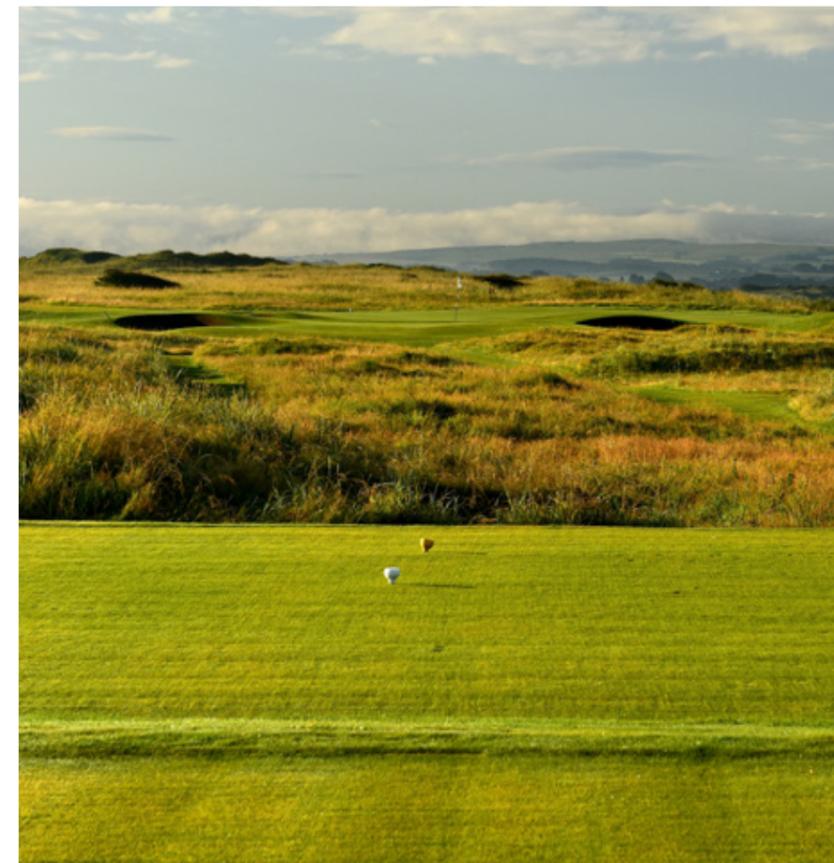


Image above: Nature board at Royal Troon Golf Club

Image left: The 210 yards par 3, 5th hole 'Greenan' on the Old Course at Royal Troon Golf Club

Golf Course Habitats.

The presence of nationally and internationally important habitats on golf courses demonstrates how important they can be for biodiversity, particularly if habitats are managed in ways that support both nature and golf.

The golf courses under study are set within a wide array of habitats, from coastal sand dunes to lowland heathland and scrub, each supporting a range of flora and fauna.



Study Findings

c.35

The golf courses in the year 1 study collectively supported c. 35 broad habitats

14

including 14 Habitats of Principal Importance (HPI)

The golf courses in the year 1 study collectively supported c. 35 broad habitats which included 14 Habitats of Principal Importance (HPI). All golf courses studied supported at least one HPI which require conservation action.

The most valuable habitats supported by golf courses and assessed to be of very significant biodiversity value were lowland dry acid grassland, lowland calcareous

grassland, and wood-pasture and parkland – these are highly threatened habitats which require conservation action.

Other habitats identified on golf courses and assessed to be of very significant biodiversity value requiring conservation action included coastal sand dunes, lowland heathland, and lowland mixed deciduous woodland.

Some of the more valuable habits found on golf course are outlined in the table below along with indications of their Habitat Productivity Index (HPI), distinctiveness and biodiversity value.

Broad habitat type	HPI	Distinctiveness	Biodiversity value
Lines of trees		Low to medium	Limited to significant
Native hedgerows (single-species, species-rich, with trees, associated with banks or ditches)	✓	Low to very high	Limited to very significant – highly threatened, requiring conservation action
Other neutral grassland			
Reservoirs			
Other woodlands (broadleaved and Scot's pine)			
Scattered trees (rural trees)		Medium	Significant
Scrub (mixed or dominated by native shrubs including gorse, broom, blackthorn and bramble)			
Ponds (non-priority habitat)			
Ditches			
Wet woodland	✓		
Lowland mixed deciduous woodland	✓		
Lowland heathland	✓		
Reedbeds	✓		
Lowland raised bog	✓	High	Very significant – requiring conservation action
Ponds (priority habitat)	✓		
Coastal sand dunes	✓		
Maritime cliff and slopes	✓		
Coastal saltmarsh	✓		
Other rivers and streams (flowing streams, brooks and burns)	✓		
Lowland dry acid grassland	✓	Very high	Very significant – highly threatened, requiring conservation action
Lowland calcareous grassland	✓		
Wood-pasture and parkland	✓		

Minchinhampton Golf Club, England

Case Study



Image above: Native hedgerows provide important green corridors which support an abundance of flower-rich shrubs including hawthorn, blackthorn, elder, spindle, wayfaring tree, and guelder rose.

Image top left: Lowland calcareous grassland supports a diverse range of plants including clustered bellflower, Kidney vetch (pictured top left), salad burnet, wild carrot, and field scabious. Kidney vetch is the larval foodplant of the small blue butterfly which is a Species of Principal Importance in England and has been recorded nearby to the golf course.

Image bottom left: Common lizard on log pile at Minchinhampton Golf Club.

Minchinhampton Golf Club is located to the southeast of Stroud, Gloucestershire. There are three golf courses at Minchinhampton: The Cherington, The Avening and The Old Course. The Old Course lies within Minchinhampton Common Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). The Championship course, which consists of holes from both the Cherington and the Avening, were surveyed in 2022.

The Championship course supports a mosaic of habitats with extensive swathes of calcareous grassland and pockets of broadleaved woodland. Fairways are lined with a range of broadleaved trees, and there are also several native hedgerows and ponds.

238

species were identified as being present or likely present at Minchinhampton Golf Club.

50

of those are protected or notable.

Moor Park Golf Club, England

Case Study

Moor Park Golf Club is located to the northeast of Rickmansworth, Hertfordshire. There are two golf courses at Moor Park: The High Course and The West Course. The High Course was surveyed in 2022 and supports a mosaic of habitats including broadleaved

woodland, gorse scrub, ponds and patches of acid and neutral grassland. There are also small areas of remnant heath. The golf courses lie within old parkland, and there are a number of scattered mature, veteran and ancient trees.

Moor Park Golf Club is a Local Wildlife Site in recognition of the habitats and species supported by the golf courses.

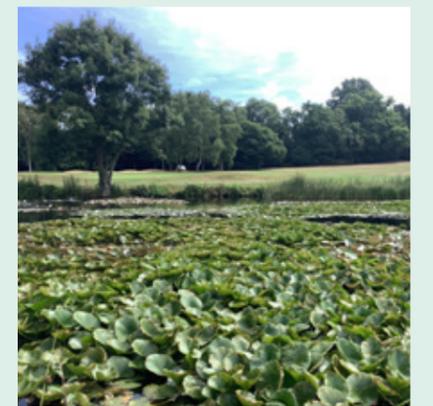


Image top: An ancient pedunculate oak with a girth of 6.75 m in woodland between the 9th and 15th holes. The tree, along with several other ancient and/or veteran trees within the golf course, are registered on the Ancient Tree Inventory.

Image above: Pond at Moor Park Golf Club.

Image left: Veteran oak with bird nest box at Moor Park Golf Club.

Protected or Notable Species on Golf Courses.

The most recent State of Nature report highlighted alarming decreases in species abundance in the UK since 1970. Underlining these measured declines, 15% of species are now considered to be threatened with extinction and 41% are identified as being of conservation concern.

The project undertook to look specifically at courses with existing or potential support for an abundance of wildlife, including numerous protected and/or notable species of conservation. This included legally protected species. Species identified during the field surveys and data searches as being present or likely to be present were checked against conservation designations using the JNCC's Conservation Designations for UK Taxa.

Species were considered to be notable if they had at least one of the following designations:

- Species of Principal Importance (SPIs);
- Red Lists (Global and UK lists), including species listed as Extinct, Extinct in the wild, Critically Endangered, Vulnerable, Rare, Near threatened and Data Deficient, but not those listed as Least Concern;
- Nationally Rare and Nationally Scarce, Notable A and B invertebrates and plants;
- Red and amber-listed Birds of Conservation Concern.

Note that many species have more than one designation.



Yellowhammer at Ganton Golf Club, a scrub-nesting bird which was recorded at almost half of the golf courses surveyed in 2022. Yellowhammer is red-listed with long-term declines in breeding numbers.

Study Findings

In year one of the study over 150 Species of Principal Importance, amber and red-listed birds of conservation concern and other rare or threatened species were identified on golf courses.

These include:

22  legally protected or notable mammals

1  fungi classified as a Species of Principle Importance

5  protected or notable reptiles

6  protected or notable amphibians

128  notable invertebrates

120  protected or notable birds were identified to be supported or likely supported by the golf courses, including:

- Two European-protected amphibians

- 67 Species of Principal Importance,
- 19 Nationally Rare or Scarce species,
- 34 Nationally Notable species

- 29 Schedule 1 bird species
- 103 amber or red-listed birds of conservation concern



Numerous plants both protected and notable:

- Four plant species protected under Schedule 8 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981
- Eight Species of Principal Importance (SPI)
- 15 Nationally Rare or Scarce plant species
- 21 threatened or Near Threatened plant species in Great Britain including One Endangered, and One Critically Endangered
- 49 threatened or Near Threatened plant species in England
- 2 threatened or Near Threatened plant species in Wales

Royal Porthcawl Golf Club, Wales

Case Study



Great crested newt at Royal Porthcawl. Caught and photographed under licence by Pete Hill (Amphibian and Reptile Conservation Trust).

Royal Porthcawl Golf Club lies to the northwest of Porthcawl, Bridgend. The golf course supports a mosaic of fixed-dune grassland, dune heath, gorse-dominated scrub and bracken. Several ponds are also present. The golf course is bound to the west by Pink Bay and Rest Bay along the Bristol Channel.

Two ponds at Royal Porthcawl support breeding great crested newt, a European Protected

Species and SPI. One of the ponds also supports smooth and palmate newt, leading to its designation as a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation. The golf club works with Amphibian and Reptile Conservation who undertake surveys and provide important management advice, ensuring the long-term conservation of these amphibians.

Royal Portrush Golf Club, N. Ireland

Case Study



Sophie Olejnik and Simon Walton (GK) at Royal Portrush Golf Club

Royal Portrush Golf Club lies to the east of Portrush, County Antrim. There are two golf courses: Dunluce Links and Valley Links. Dunluce Links supports a mosaic of dune grassland, bracken and sea buckthorn scrub.



Extensive fixed dune grasslands are present across the golf course, supporting a variable abundance of marram, couch grass, sand sedge, and red fescue. Common herbs include bird's-foot trefoil, cat's-ear, hare's-foot clover, lesser hawkbit, and lady's bedstraw with the more species-rich areas of dune

turf supporting wild thyme, kidney vetch, pyramidal orchid, mouse-ear hawkweed, and field gentian, a Species of Principal Importance in Northern Ireland.

Field gentian shows one of the fastest declines of any native wildflower (Species Recovery Trust, 2023) but was recorded in abundance (>120 plants) across both the Dunluce Links and Valley Links at Royal Portrush Golf Club by David McNeill, BSBI County Recorder for County Antrim in August 2022. The sensitive management of the dune grasslands is considered to contribute to its healthy population at Royal Portrush.

Image: Kestrel at Royal Porthcawl. Photographer: David Lewis



Biodiversity Benefits for Golf Courses.

As the world becomes more aware of the value of nature and biodiversity, telling the story of golf's role in nurturing and protecting it is a major opportunity for the sport. What's more, there are a number of practical reasons golf courses should act to improve their biodiversity.



Cost and Resource Savings

Reduced mowing of out of play areas, ditch banks and tee banks can significantly reduce fuel costs and labour time. The labour saved could be focused into more priority aspects of greenkeeping to maintain superior playing performance at the same time as saving valuable natural resources.



Nature-Based Solutions

Methods of pesticidal control for pests and diseases is becoming increasingly difficult with tighter regulation on pesticides across the world, but specifically in Europe. This means we have to research, investigate and implement alternative forms of pest and disease control focusing on integrated management practices including cultural, mechanical and biological control. Nature-based solutions also provide an important method of control. Several bird species, including Starling and Oystercatcher, are excellent natural predators for insect grubs, and encouraging them on golf courses provide excellent nature-based solutions for improved turf and playing quality.

Image above: Cowslip in the rough at Carnoustie Golf Links

Image below: Barn owl nest box at Hunstanton Golf Club

Improved Golfer Experience

Playing golf in a natural environment is one of the many great aspects of the game. A diverse and species rich golf course provides the subliminal a feeling of well-being and enhances the golfing experience.

Community/Stakeholder Engagement

Welcoming non-golfers to participate in nature conservation activities is a powerful way of connecting with the wider community and cultivating a positive relationship between the facility and local stakeholders. It can also help generate a sense of pride in the golf course as both an amenity for sport and a valuable asset for habitat conservation.

Positive PR

By adopting sustainable agronomy practices and demonstrating that golf is good for nature, golf courses and their management can be seen as part of the solution to global climate change and key players in nature conservation.

Opportunities to Maximise Biodiversity on Golf Courses.



Establish your course biodiversity value

Auditing the biodiversity of your course needn't be costly or time-consuming. Working with local conservation groups and involving enthusiastic members can help you better understand the habitats and species on your course.



Increase the diversity of woodlands

The structural and species diversity of woodlands and lines of even-aged trees can be improved by underplanting with native flowering, nut or berry-bearing shrubs and trees.



Provide deadwood

Increase the volume of deadwood in woodlands by piling in out-of-play areas and retaining standing deadwood where safe to do so.



Appoint an in-house Biodiversity Champion

Appointing a person to raise awareness of biodiversity internally and externally can have a significant benefit by engaging with golfers and staff, local nature conservation groups and other key stakeholders.



Improve diversity of dense scrub

Increase the structural diversity of stands of dense scrub by undertaking rotational coppicing.



Reduced mowing of out-of-play areas

Rarely played roughs can be easily identified by a lack of divots. Mowing can be reduced in these areas, along with tee banks, ditches and margins around water bodies, to improve structural and species diversity.



Provide roosting and nesting boxes

Bat roost boxes and bird nest boxes are low cost and can be manufactured in-house and installed on buildings and trees.



Create a plan

All golf courses should develop their own nature management action plan. This can be done with support from nature conservation groups and independent experts. Plans should compliment existing course policies and strategic plans.



The R&A group of companies was formed in 2004 to take on The Royal and Ancient Golf Club of St Andrews' responsibilities for governing the Rules of Golf, staging The Open, golf's original championship, and developing the sport. The World Golf Museum in St Andrews is part of The R&A group.

Together The R&A and the USGA govern the sport of golf worldwide, operating in separate jurisdictions with a commitment to a single code for the Rules of Golf, Rules of Amateur Status and Equipment Standards. The R&A, through R&A Rules Ltd, governs the sport worldwide, outside of the United States and Mexico, on behalf of over 41 million golfers in 145 countries and with the consent of 161 organisations from amateur and professional golf.

The R&A has responsibility for running a series of world class amateur events and international matches in women's and girls' as well as men's and boys' golf. The R&A stages the AIG Women's Open and works with the DP World Tour to stage the Senior Open presented by Rolex.

The R&A is committed to investing £200 million over ten years in developing golf and supports the growth of the sport internationally, including the development and management of sustainable golf facilities. For more information, visit www.randa.org



randa.org
