



THE VILLAGES OF MARION

THE NANCY LOPEZ LEGACY COUNTRY CLUB (ASHLEY MEADOW & ERRIN GLEN) / WALNUT GROVE & BRIARWOOD EXECUTIVE NINE

Natural Region: Southern Mixed Forest

Watershed: Upper St. Johns

The Villages of Marion, designated as a Florida Quality Development and located near Lady Lake in Marion County, Florida, have partnered with Audubon International to provide a proactive and innovative, environmentally sensitive approach to golf course development. The Villages focus on a traditional downtown, diverse services and facilities, community gathering places, pedestrian and alternative transportation paths, internal community recreation, and a wide array of housing types and include a comprehensive transportation system. Golf carts are the primary non-auto means of transportation of the Villages. The major form of recreation available free of charge to residents are the golf courses spread throughout the community. The 1,723 acre site formerly comprised 60% pasture land devoted to cattle grazing, 30% peanut and alternate crop farming, and 10% oak canopy. The site contained three isolated wetlands. There are three state protected animal species, including the threatened southeastern American kestrel and Sherman's fox squirrel and gopher tortoise, the latter two species of special concern. Approximately 18 acres are placed in perpetual conservation easement with another 105.5 acres of golf course roughs, power easements, and rights-of-way covered in a foraging management plan. The gopher tortoises were relocated to an 18 acres conservation area. The Signature Program standards were applied to 63 holes of golf. Of the total, 36 holes were certified as an Audubon Silver Signature Cooperative Sanctuary on May 7, 2002: the

Ezell-Clifton-Ezell-designed Ashley Meadow and Errin Glen courses of The Nancy Lopez Legacy Club; and the Walnut Grove and Briarwood Executive Nines.



Cord grass was planted to provide a buffer near water bodies throughout The Villages project. The grasses provide cover for wildlife coming to drink from the lakes and act as a filter for storm water runoff.