



National Bird Day Monday 29 October 2007

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Media Release

26th September 2007

PGA Links and Sanctuary Lakes Back Gould National Bird Day



Blue Wren

National Bird Day in Australia has never been more important as many of our birds are facing extinction with climate change and the drought..... Gould Group.

PGA Links and Sanctuary Lakes are backing National Bird Day which is being held on 29th October 2007 by the Gould Group, formerly the Gould League.



Red Necked Stint

PGA Links has sponsored ten native birds to be included in an online education program which will be promoted to nine thousand schools throughout Australia. One of the birds is the migratory *Red Necked Stint* which flies thousands of kilometres to Sanctuary Lakes Resort each year from Siberia.

Australia's first National Bird Day was created for children in 1909 and was introduced into schools with the support of The Gould League, an environmental education group, with the Prime Minister Alfred Deakin as its first President.

With the strong support of the national group, the Australasian Ornithologists' Union, The Gould League sponsored its first Bird Day in Victoria on 29 October 1909. Within a year the movement had spread to New South Wales, South Australia and Tasmania as well.

In joint statement Ann-Maree Colborne, CEO of Gould Group and Mr Mark Brayshaw, CEO of PGA Links who manage the Sanctuary Lakes Resort said, "National Bird Day in Australia has never been more important as many of Australia's birds are facing extinction and, unfortunately, in the past one hundred years many have already been lost.

"Australia is home to between 600,000 and 700,000 species, many of which are found nowhere else in the world. About 84% of plants, 83% of mammals and **45% of birds are endemic** - that is, they are found only in Australia. The Department of Environment and Water lists 23 birds as extinct, six including the orange bellied parrot as critically endangered, and another 40 as endangered.

Ms Colborne said that with climate change, and the removal of habitat in the cities through denser development and the drought, birds and other unique Australian fauna are under increasing threat.

“Golf course residential developments, such as Sanctuary Lakes Resort, with open spaces, wetlands, a large lake and extensive landscaping have become vital habitats for birds.

“We are using the internet to highlight National Bird Day and the plight of Australian birds by providing an opportunity for people to sign up and automatically receive information on endangered birds and techniques on bird watching.”

Mr Brayshaw said, “Bird life is an important part of all golf course environments ensuring the balance of nature whilst also providing golfers with a direct interaction with nature. On all of the golf courses managed by PGA Links we actively encourage bird life by providing enhanced habits.

“At Sanctuary Lakes Resort our bird counts have revealed a major increase in bird life since the development has been undertaken with over one hundred and thirty varieties of birds counted.”

Mr Brayshaw said that PGA Links, Sanctuary Lakes Resort and the Sanctuary Lakes Foundation will be actively promoting National Bird Day at Sanctuary Lakes and to the wider community. The Sanctuary Lakes Foundation is also sponsoring children at Sanctuary Lakes to join the Gould Group’s Kids Club as part of its program to encourage leadership and achievement in the environment area.

“The National Bird Day program will also link people back to the original historic bird pledge of 1909 which is online and can be printed out free and framed as a special certificate to display support for National Bird Day,” Ms Colborne added.



The Bird Lovers Original Pledge 1909

The Bird Lovers Pledge 1909

1. I hereby promise that I will protect native birds and will not collect their eggs.
2. I also promise that I will endeavour to prevent others from injuring native birds and destroying their eggs.

Print out your own [1909 Gould Pledge Certificate](http://www.gould.edu.au/html/get_involved_form.asp) at http://www.gould.edu.au/html/get_involved_form.asp

Media Enquiries:

Ann-Maree Colborne CEO Gould Group
Mobile: 0412 123 894

Ron Smith Media Communications PGA Links
Mobile: 0417 329 201

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