

Wilderness Country Club

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Naples, Florida
Arthur Hills

There are Top 100 Courses. Then, there are Hidden Gems. The Wilderness is neither. The Wilderness is an Undiscovered Top 100 Course, as even most Hidden Gems are somewhat known. For years, the Wilderness has flown under the radar, but thanks to Head Golf Professional Sara Dickson and Superintendent John Duncan, the Wilderness is beginning to receive the attention it deserves.

Founded in 1974, Wilderness Country Club was the first gated community in Naples. Designed by Arthur Hills, Hills described the 220 acre property as, "a rare, tropical enclave; really a paradise." Notably, much to it's name, Wilderness is home to more than 80 species of birds and other wildlife that have been documented within the community, which has been certified since 1999 as an [Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary](#).

No. 6 - Par 3 - 164: One of five outstanding Par 3s, No. 6 provides a stern test to a peninsula green, often times into the wind. While No. 6 may not always be kind to the scorecard, No. 6 is arguably the most gorgeous hole on property.

No. 8 - Par 3 - 245: One would be hardpressed to find a more difficult Par 3 in Naples, if not Florida. At 245 yards, the Par 3 8th requires an extremely precise tee shot to a green guarded by two bunkers.

No. 9 - Par 4 - 365: The short Par 4 9th may be my favorite hole on property. While No. 9 presents a great opportunity for birdie, one's course management must be on display, laying up before the water to a number that will allow for one to go after the pin.

No. 15 - Par 4 - 360: No. 15 is the signature hole at the Wilderness. Like No. 6 at Riviera, No. 15 features a bunker in the green, creating for a number of interesting pin locations.

A distinct element of the architecture at the Wilderness is many of the tee boxes are built into the native area, making for the perception of tee shots out of a shute.