

Environmental protection on the golf course at the Downshire Golf Complex

Over the past few years here at the Downshire we have been looking at ways of reducing the amount of chemicals that we use on the golf course, especially hazardous fungicides and worm killers that are dangerous to aquatic life. These have been reduced considerably, but sometimes it is necessary to use such chemicals, at a safe distance from water courses to control casting worms which make it almost impossible to cut grass with cylinder mowers, but there are other simple, perhaps not quite so effective ways of controlling casting worms, that would nevertheless help us to reduce the amount of worm killer that we use on a yearly basis. Recently we have been building small hides in forested areas near to our greens and fairways in the hope that they will be seen by hedgehogs as potentially attractive real estate. By providing the correct habitat for this species to become established at the Downshire we are hoping that they will reduce our casting worm issues as they can consume vast quantities of worms in just one evening. It is said that one hedgehog will control worms in an area the size of 20 average size residential gardens, so for us to offer them a protected habitat to live in is a simple, inexpensive operation which in my opinion must be worth a try.

John Batt – Course Manager

