



Oxley Nature Center

November/December, 2008

Volume 178

Oxley Nature Center:

The Oxley Nature Center Interpretive building has been closed for renovations. We hope to reopen in December. Please check our website for current updates.

-Gate and parking lot open daily, 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. except most City holidays.
-Hiking trails are accessible during Mohawk Park hours 7:00 a.m.-9:00 p.m.

Holiday Closings for Oxley Nature Center and Redbud Valley Nature Preserve:

Tuesday, November 11, Thursday and Friday, November 27 and 28, Wednesday and Thursday, December 24 and 25, and Thursday, January 1.

Redbud Valley Nature Preserve is closed:

all Mondays and Tuesdays.
-Open Wednesday through Sunday, from 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. only. Hiking after these hours is not allowed.
-Interpretive building open Wednesday through Sunday 11:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.
-Closed most City holidays,

Program information

918-669-6644

-Oxley@cityoftulsa.org

-Website at "http://www.oxleynaturecenter.org".

Please register 48 hours in advance unless otherwise stated. Some classes require special supplies and allow limited enrollment.

-Children under 12 must be accompanied by an adult unless otherwise stated.
-Most programs are wheelchair accessible.

Dreams Do Come True!

One year ago this month Oxley-Yetter Interpretive Building closed so that long awaited renovations could take place. After serving well for thirty years, the weakened building has been gutted and given a complete makeover.

Classroom space has been enlarged, bathrooms and boardwalks are improved and updated, and a new landscape design has been planned.

Our exhibits hall is all brand new! While our Oxley Nature Center Association continues with its fund raising campaign, our new interactive exhibits and displays are being put in place.

As this newsletter "goes to press", Oxley staff and volunteer crews are caught up in a flurry of activity.

Check Us Out!

We are making preparations for our annual Members Hayride and Cookout (very fun!), leading school groups, and watching with great excitement as our Interpretive Building comes together as if by magic! This is a very exciting time, and we'd like to share it with you.



A tiny seed nourished, flourishes and grows into a mighty tree.

To watch our progress and for updates on when the building will officially open to the public, check out our website at:

<http://www.oxleynaturecenter.org>

From the Stump by Bob Jennings, November-December, 1993

Yesterday there were hundreds of Monarch butterflies in the air above the prairie. Last night there was rain and wind, and today I can hear geese in the skies above. The seasons don't always change this rapidly, but they do change. Like the man said, "if there's one thing that's consistent, it's change."



I love to walk in the woods this time of year, to see the world around me shift and peel away, revealing new layers beneath. The field out front, where we are trying to establish a grassland, is bright yellow with Tickseed Sunflower and Goldenrod. Where we started fires this spring, there are new shoots of Bluestem and Purple-top. Here the colors change even as we look at them, phasing with the angle of the sun and the shifting of the scudding clouds overhead.

In the woods, the late rains have brought mushrooms in abundance. They rise up overnight, some brown, some yellow, some scarlet red. The standing dead trees are peppered with soft white and hard brown streaky gold. Look quickly, many will be gone tomorrow.

Rest for a minute here beneath the trees. Today the sky is still hidden by the leaves above, but there are a few spots where the Virginia Creeper is glowing crimson, and the Poison Ivy has a reddish wash beneath the green. A month from now there will be more leaves below us than above us, and the trails will rustle as we walk slowly through.

See the three deer easing into the shadows ahead? That's the doe and this year's set of twins, but the youngsters have grown and fattened on summer's grass and autumn mast, so that we have to look carefully to separate mom from kids. Last week I saw a buck each rack with four strong points. How proud he looked. But before long the antlers will be lying shed on the forest floor, nothing more than minerals for mice and squirrels.

Change is all around us, always. Sometimes it rushes us along, pulling and shoving as we go, but today the changes are slow, mellow, and full of the calm of another fall in the forest. Before too long the winter winds will come, harsher and more demanding than today's breezes, but not yet, not today. We have time to enjoy this world before the next change comes.

Nature Center Happenings

\$2 for general public, free for members

Kid's Saturday Programs

Please call about meeting place!

November 8, 10:00-11:00 a.m.

Please register in advance

December 13, 10:00-11:00

Discovery Club (Ages 3-5)

Each child must be accompanied by an adult.

“Oh Nuts” Learn how food recovery patterns prove that animals retain information about their territories.

Adventure Club (Ages 6-8)

“Are You Nuts?” Let's learn secrets the squirrels use and try one of them to find nuts their way.

Discovery Club (Ages 3-5)

Each child must be accompanied by an adult.

“Snag Hotel” Discover the value of dead trees as a habitat for wildlife. Who has the room with a view?

Adventure Club (Ages 6-8)

“Snow for Christmas” What do the animals do when it snows here at the Nature Center? We'll make our own snow globes to ensure there is snow for December!

Junior Naturalists

We are looking for **kids ages 9-11** that can meet together one Saturday a month, September—May, from 10:00-11:00 a.m.



Cultivate your curiosity, explore special interests, discover what you can do for “nature” and what it can do for you!

November 8, 10:00-11:00 a.m. “Winter Birding” Who are some of the common birds that visit Oklahoma for the winter? We'll learn some birding basics and talk about feeders. We'll continue our water monitoring and habitat garden observations.

December 13, 10:00-11:00 a.m. “Recycling Magic” Let's create a beautiful Christmas ornament using recycled materials as we discuss recycling basics. We'll continue our water monitoring and native habitat garden observations.

Astronomy Programs

\$2 for general public, free to members, registration required, open to all ages. Dress warmly and bring binoculars if you have them.

Sunday, November 30, **“A Beautiful Trio”** 6:00-7:30 p.m. Sunset: 5:12 p.m. Moonset: 7:26 p.m. Giant Jupiter, brilliant Venus, and a lovely crescent moon will gather in the autumn twilight after sunset. Meet at the circle drive on the East side of Lake Yahola.

Tuesday, December 23, **“Early Riser's Rewards”** 5:30-7:00 a.m. Sunrise: 7:34 a.m. Moonrise: 4:15 a.m. A very old moon and the rings of Saturn reward those who get up early to look skyward. Meet at Terrace Park, one block west of Memorial Drive on 27th Street.

\$2 for general public, free for members

Full Moon Walks

Registration required, all ages

“Full Frost Moon”

Friday, November 14, 6:30-8:00 p.m.



A coolness is in the air and living things are actively preparing for the approaching winter. Is there frost yet on the bare plants? Meet at Oxley to feel the change.

“Full Long Night's Moon”

Friday, December 12, 6:30-8:00 p.m.

The nights will be long and dark with the moon above the horizon for a long time. Midwinter cold can grip the land in its cold spell. Join us at Oxley to see who is out and about.

Programs and Special Events

November

1 "Saturday Morning Birding" Ages: All
Saturday 8:00-9:45 a.m.
Free registration not required

Coming in ahead of the cold front are the Harris', Lincoln's, and White-throated Sparrows. They will stay the winter with us. Join us at Oxley and bring binoculars if you have them.

15 "Magical Recycled Ornaments" Ages: All
Saturday 1:00-2:30 p.m.
\$2 for general public Free for members

We will take material people normally throw away and recycle it into a beautiful holiday ornament to give something old and used a second life. Join us at Oxley.

22 "Botany Walk" Ages: All
Saturday 10:30-12:00 noon
Free registration not required

Join us to discover the secrets of the highly successful "weed" and wildflower stalks and stems that remain standing everywhere. Meet at Oxley.



23 "Family Walkabout and Story Time" Ages: All
Sunday 1:00-2:30 p.m.
\$2 for general public Free for members

Join us to discover November's special gifts. Bring a light snack. We'll explore a trail and share a story. Meet at Oxley.

29 "Miss Hickory, or Wild Bill Hickory" Ages: All
Saturday 9:00-10:30 a.m.
\$2 for general public Free for members

Make yourself an old-time-y action figure to take home. Use your imagination to send your action figure on all kinds of adventures. Meet at Redbud Valley. This program is not Wheelchair or stroller accessible.

Classes are handicapped accessible unless stated otherwise. Please register two days in advance of classes unless stated otherwise to allow time to prepare supplies and programs.

December

6 "Saturday Morning Birding" Ages: All
Saturday 8:00-9:45 a.m.
Free registration not required

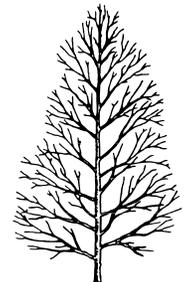
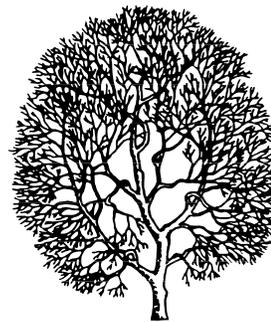
Cold mornings find our resident birds; chickadees, titmice, and brilliant red cardinals, feeding along the frosty margins of the woods. Meet at Oxley and bring binoculars if you have them.

21 "Winter Solstice" Ages: All
Sunday 1:30-3:00 p.m.
Free registration not required

Winter Solstice is an astronomical event that in Latin means *sun stands still in winter*: this is the longest night. It is followed by shortening nights and lengthening days, considered by many cultures as a recognition of rebirth. Interpretation of the event varies from culture to culture, but often involves holidays and festivals. Join us at Oxley to celebrate solstice. What will you do with longer days?

27 "Botany Walk" Ages: All
Saturday 10:30-12:00 noon
Free registration not required

Learn to identify trees without their leaves. We will look at their branch patterns, overall shape, habitat, and bark patterns. Meet at Oxley.



28 "Family Walkabout and Story Time"
Ages: All
Sunday 1:00-2:30 p.m.
\$2 for general public Free for members

What special gift is in store for us today as we prepare to bid the year goodbye. Bring a light snack. Where will our adventure take us this time? Meet at Oxley.

Volunteer Naturalists Graduate

Curiosity is the stuff of questions arising from persistent glimpses into the mysteries encountered in the natural world. All questions potentially lead down a road of discovery and adventure.

Volunteer Naturalists take time to share their enthusiasm with others to pursue this endless journey about natural history. Each season new folks join our amazing team.

Our new Volunteer Naturalists finished their training program and “hit the trails” immediately, leading school tours for area school children. They have been exploring the forests, wetlands, and grasslands at Oxley, sharing new discoveries at every turn.

We would like to welcome Volunteer Naturalists:

Tom Kreissler, Orman Landers, Sharon Reed, Michelle Mckinney, Trent Pyle, and Beth Slovic.

Welcome also to Volunteer Trail Work Crew members:

Don Brosh and Tyler Rigney.

Thank you for joining our team!

National Audubon’s Christmas Bird Count

How do you become a Citizen Scientist with tens of thousands of other volunteers throughout the Americas? By participating in the longest running program of its kind, 109 years of counting birds!

Oxley Nature Center teams participate in this Audubon sponsored event **Saturday, December 20** in Mohawk Park. You can join a team with an experienced guide to spot, identify, and tally birds in a specific count area. No experience is necessary.

Counting can become a family tradition or favorite pastime. It is the first step in determining how environmental threats may be affecting not only our bird populations but the health of habitats we share with them.



If you are an early riser, set the alarm and meet at 6:30 a.m. to look for owls in the North Woods, or meet us as late as 4:30 p.m. to watch for ducks settling at Lake Yahola. We have other meeting times and places available also. You are welcome to participate in all or part of the count. Dress warm, bring a lunch, a drink, and binoculars if you have them.

**Please call and register by Monday, December 15,
so teams can be assembled and assigned to areas.
There is an administrative fee of \$5.**

The U.S. Department of the Interior strictly prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, sex or handicap in its federally-assisted programs and activities. If anyone believes he or she has been discriminated against in any program, activity or facility, he or she may file a complaint alleging discrimination with our department or the Office for Equal Opportunity, U.S. Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C. 20240.
