



Oxley Nature Center

January/February, 2010

Volume 185

Oxley Nature Center:

- The Interpretive Building will be open Monday through Saturday, 10:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m. and Sunday 12 noon- 4:30 p.m.
- Gate and parking lot is 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.

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 is open Wednesday through Sunday 11:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.
- Closed most City holidays,

****Closings for Oxley

Nature Center and Redbud Valley Nature Preserve:
New Years Day: Friday Jan. 1.

Furlough Day Closings:

Wednesday and Thursday,
December 30 and 31,
Monday, February 15.

Program information 918-669-6644

- Oxley@cityoftulsa.org
- Website at "http://www.oxleynaturecenter.org".
- ** Please register for classes 48 hours in advance unless otherwise stated.
- Some classes require supplies and allow limited enrollment.
- Children under 12 must be accompanied by an adult unless otherwise stated.
- Most programs are stroller/wheelchair accessible.

So Happy to See You!

By Amy Marcoux

We are always eager to welcome new faces at our door. Two days before Thanksgiving, it was a different face indeed. In fact, it was a refugee from the upcoming holiday feast, arrived by happenstance with no time to spare. Director Eddie Reese found her waiting at the top of our boardwalk, seeking asylum, a Wild Turkey hen. Eddie immediately offered her a proper meal, cracked corn and other seeds, and she has stayed around ever since.

Since that day, the hen has delighted us with her presence. She is shy, and glimpses of her are infrequent, yet it is knowing she is there that pleases us. Her appearance sent me 'back' in our Red Book, where we document casual observations and phenological records.

From our Red Book: 26 Nov. 2000 -- Two turkey hens at back feeder outside library at 8 am. 27 Nov. 2000 -- Two turkey hens back at feeder and on deck. 31 Dec. -- The two turkeys are back!

Jan. 2001, 1st week -- 3 small opossums & 1 larger one are regular visitors to feeders along with 14 + gray squirrels and the pair of turkeys. One turkey now definitely sports a beard, his beak wattle is beginning to droop over his beak (although it stands straight up when he chases squirrels!) ***{*Hmm, this makes me wonder if our new hen is actually a tom, she has an odd little 'wattle' over her beak?*}***

26 Jan. 2001 -- Large rotund woodchuck in tree just off front deck, climbing in forked area. When I went out he scrambled down and dropped to ground after climbing at least 5 feet up trunk!

27 Jan. 2001 -- Eddie spotted 7 does and 3 bucks in prairie all together this morning. One 8 point buck and other 2 at least 6 points. One had large spread on rack. (rut over?) Also turtles seen swimming

under ice on pond just off of the deck (17 degrees this morning!). Snow from Dec. 12 still piled in parking lot.

5 Feb. 01 -- There was a Barred Owl in the willow outside the library at 5:30 pm. 6 Feb. -- Just before 8 am a Red-shouldered Hawk screamed from the prairie & was answered by the male turkey gobbling which was answered by a Pileated Woodpecker sunning itself high in the cottonwood south of the driveway. A flock of Canada Geese called in flight over the pond. I ate a wild onion today at BB Marsh (they are up everywhere!)

10 Feb. -- Woodchuck and opossum eating sunflower seeds outside library window, almost standing side by side. 12 Feb. -- Male turkey displaying for hen. Very full of himself. Will gobble with the slightest provocation. Woodchuck came to the feeder again—really jowly w/ big shoulders! 14 Feb. -- Dandelion, veronica blooming, henbit showing pink on tips of buds. Brome has greened up all over. 22 Feb. -- Pair of American Wigeon on pond with female Gadwall. 26 Feb. -- Eastern Phoebe and Turkey Vulture at RBV. 27 Feb. -- Wood Ducks flying in pairs at front gate at 8 am (1 pair landed in a cottonwood, up high). 8 Ring-necked Ducks on pond, Bald Eagle over pond too!

28 Feb. -- Sleet & freezing mist all day
1 male, 2 female Pintails
4 male Green-winged Teal
4 Gadwalls
8 Canada Geese
All on pond

One might think January and February would be 'slow' months. But as you can see, it just isn't so. We are eager to welcome new faces at our door, or old friends. Come on out and peruse our new exhibits, visit with us by the fire, and watch the birds. Take a refreshing walk, or just come talk turkey, face to face!

Nature Center Happenings

Family Adventure and Discovery Programs

\$2 fee for non members, free for members, ** Please register in advance

Family Adventures: "Terrific Terrariums"

Saturday, January 9, 2:00-3:30 p.m.

Have you got the winter blahs? If you are tired of all the gray and brown outside, join us to fill a terrarium with moss and other small green growing things to take home to brighten your home!

Family Discoveries: "Making Tracks"

Sunday, January 10, 2:00-3:30 p.m.

Let's bundle up and take a walk to see who is using the trails and animal highways. Then we'll create a 'wall flag' using Oxley's animal tracks.



Family Adventures: "I Love You This Much"

Saturday, February 13, 2:00-3:30 p.m.

... as tall as a cottonwood in the prairie, or as deep as a crawfish hole, that's how much I love you! We will look for extremes in nature and make a journal together.

Family Discoveries: "The Birds are Returning!"

Sunday, February 14, 2:00-3:30 p.m.

We will do some bird watching to see if the blue birds have come back. What about the scissortails and hummingbirds? To prepare we will make a bird house using recycled coffee cans.

Feed the Birds

Attracting winter birds to backyard feeders can be a source of great enjoyment. To attract a wide range of birds, we recommend placing multiple pole feeders around your yard. Feeders should be about 10 feet from cover, such as an evergreen or a brush pile, to dilute the concentration or density of birds in one area. This kind of spacing helps provide protection from predators such as cats.

Black oil sunflower and thistle seed are two good seed choices for tube feeders. A variety of mixed seed is also available. For ground feeding birds such as juncos, doves and some sparrows, black oil sunflower and proso millet are good choices. It is important to clean feeders to prevent bacteria and mold from becoming a problem. Rake up old seed hulls and droppings under feeders to prevent the spread of disease.

Add fresh water to this formula, and you have everything you need to attract a variety of beautiful birds to your yard, guaranteed to brighten your winter days! Now sit back and watch the drama unfold, as cardinals, doves, chickadees, goldfinches, blue jays, woodpeckers and untold other characters delight with their unique social behaviors. Nature's theater at its best!

Astronomy Programs

\$2 for general public, free for members, all ages. * Please register in advance.**

Bring lawn chairs and binoculars if you have them and join us at the circle drive by Lake Yahola.



Thursday, January 7, "The Moons of Jupiter" 6:30-8:00 p.m. Sunset: 5:27 p.m. Moonset: 11:41 a.m. Exactly 400 years ago on this date, Galileo first observed three objects invisible to the naked eye, using his new telescope. What were they? Here's a chance to see them for yourself. Dress warmly!

Monday, February 15, "Mars Returns" 6:30-8:00 p.m. Sunset: 5:46 p.m. Moonset: 7:35 p.m. About every 14 months, the Earth and Mars line up on the same side of the sun, and we get another good look at our neighbor. Be sure to dress warmly!

Evening Full Moon Walks at Oxley Nature Center

\$2 for general public, free for members, all ages. * Please register in advance. Dress Warm!**

Full Blue Moon, Saturday, January 2, 7:00-8:30 p.m.

What does the expression mean, 'Once in a Blue Moon'? Come find out!

Full Wolf Moon, Friday, January 29, 7:00-8:30p.m.

This was the moon when the wolves howled in hunger outside the villages of the people. Will we hear wolf's cousin, coyote?



Full Snow Moon

Sunday, February 28, 7:00-8:30 p.m.

Will there be snow on the ground to reflect the light of the full moon? If so it will be extra bright and we may see lots of tracks.

Programs and Special Events

January

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

Join us at Oxley for **Fireside Birding!** Bring binoculars if you have them. We will study the birds that gather at our feeders while we enjoy the warmth of a crackling fire in our fireplace.

3 "Hidden Water" Ages: All
Sunday 3:00-4:30 p.m.
\$2 for general public Free for members

Bring a wire coat hanger -- a pair of dowsing rods will be one of the ways we try to find the path of water at **Redbud Valley** this afternoon. We'll also hunt for other clues. This hike is **not** stroller or wheelchair accessible.

16 "Winter Birds" Ages: All
Saturday 10:00-11:00 a.m.
\$2 for general public Free for members

What is that 'Little Brown Bird' (aka LBB) outside the window? Sparrows, towhees and juncos come down from the North to stay the winter with us, gather at our feeders and delight us with their antics. Join us by the fireside at Oxley to observe them.

17 "Alien Weavings" Ages: 15 to Adult
Sunday 1:00-4:00 p.m.
\$3 for general public \$1 for members

What do Japanese Honeysuckle, Sweet Autumn Clematis, and Chinese Wisteria have in common? Join us at Oxley to find out as we 'harvest' these invasive vines to weave a natural object of your own design. You will need gloves and small loppers.

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

What we find on this walk will depend on the kind of weather we have experienced in previous few weeks. How do snow, rain, ice or balmy days affect plant growth? Join us at Oxley to find out.

30 "Brain Tanning Demonstration" Ages: All
Saturday 1:30-3:30 p.m.
\$12 for general public \$10 for members

Brain tanning a deer hide results in a buttery soft leather ideal for use in clothing, moccasins, bags and other useful items. Come prepared to participate in some stage of processing a hide in this ancient manner. Meet at Oxley.

31 "Make a Wood Frame Bow Saw" Ages: Adult
Sunday 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.
\$45 for general public \$40 for members

We will use traditional hand tools to make a wood frame bow saw. Some experience necessary. Please call for details. Meet at Oxley.

February

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

February can be a time of great activity. Early in the morning we may hear Barred Owls courting, or Pileated Woodpeckers drumming. Join us at Oxley and bring binoculars if you have them.



7 "Nature Valentines" Ages: All
Sunday 2:00-3:30 p.m.
\$3 for general public \$1 for members

We will use materials from nature to create original and unique valentines for the ones we love. Meet at Oxley.

20 "Guide to Field Guides" Ages: All
Saturday 2:00-3:30 p.m.
\$2 for general public Free for members

We will take a tour of the bookstore and look at our selection of field guides. What are the benefits and drawbacks of each series of field guide and which might be the best for your needs and subject? Meet at Oxley.

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

It is not too early to find buds swelling and some things in early bloom. We may see wild plums and ragwort in the forest. Meet at Oxley to see what is happening high and low!



28 "Spring is Right Around the Corner" Ages: All
Sunday 2:00-3:30 p.m.
\$2 for general public Free for members

What things are starting to green up. What is blooming and what animals are moving about? Join us at Oxley to find out.

****Please register two days in advance of classes unless stated otherwise.**

From *'A Walk Through The Year'* -by Edwin Way Teale

January 4. When we put out bird food these winter days we are as impartial as nature. The varied species compete, as they compete in the wild, for seeds scattered on the stone wall under the hickories and along the lane, for suet hanging in mesh bags from the apple tree, for food filling our different feeders. Bluejays share the sunflower seeds with chickadees and evening grosbecks. Cowbirds feed among the tree sparrows. In these bitter winds of January, there is no "good" or "bad." "beneficial" or "harmful" birds for us. There are only hungry birds.

Volunteer Naturalist Training Offered in March

Become a Volunteer Naturalist and share your love of nature with others! **Spring will soon be in the air! We Need YOU!** What better time to try something new? The trees will be bursting with buds. Forest violets will be peeking up above the leaf litter. Birds and frogs will be singing their courtship songs. If you enjoy being outdoors sharing nature with others, join us for one of our training programs.

Our weekday **4-week session begins March 2 and ends March 26.** Training sessions are **two days a week from 9:00 a.m.-12 noon.** If evening training is more convenient for you, you may attend training three nights; Friday, Sunday and Monday, March 26, 28, and 29th from 6:00-8:00 p.m. and Saturday, March 27 from 1-3 p.m.

Training is fun, and will familiarize you with our trail system and its varied natural communities: forests, wetlands, and prairies. We emphasize interpretation methods and leadership skills. You will explore forests where wild onions demand to be tasted and walk through tall prairie grasses where sculpted mud crayfish chimneys bespeak a mysterious world of enchantment for child and adult alike.

Following training, you will join other naturalists, each guiding a small group of visitors on weekday, evening or weekend tours. If you are 18 or older, please call us for more information. No previous experience is necessary. **Join our team now!**



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