



Oxley Nature Center

November/December, 2016

Volume 236

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, 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. 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.

** Holiday Closings:

Oxley Nature Center and Redbud Valley Nature Preserve:

**** Friday, November 11, Thursday, November 24, Friday, November 25 Thursday, December 24, Friday, December 25, and January 1.**

Program information:

- 918-596-9054
- Oxley@cityoftulsa.org
- Website at <http://www.oxleynaturecenter.org>.

***Register for classes 48 hours in advance.**

-Children under 12 must be accompanied by an adult unless otherwise stated.

-Most programs are stroller/wheelchair accessible.

-Our new mailing address is:
Box 150209, Tulsa, OK 74115

**-Our new phone number is:
918-596-9054**

Changes by Michelle Allen

Underneath the bird feeders, diligently foraging for spilled seed in the weakening beams of autumn sunlight, a groundhog eyes me without much concern. I know he can feel change coming in the cooling of the wind, in the drying of the grasses, and the shortening of the days. Clearly he intends to be ready, as he isn't leaving a seed behind. Once the blaze of fall color finally gives way to the bite of winter, he will be safe and warm, insulated by the layer of fat he's spent the summer building, and sheltered by the earth itself.

This is a season of preparation, you can see it everywhere.

The trees cease their endless labors, instead drawing their nutrient-rich sap deep within themselves. Each leaf, no longer needed, slowly changes in that riot of color we celebrate as autumn. In the end, the leaves will drift to the forest floor, but even this is a preparation. Here they protect the roots of the trees that made them, as well as other plants, and even in their decay release vital nutrients back to the soil.

Others benefit from the labor of the trees, of course. Deep in the leaf mold, insects and snails are also preparing for the coming winter, finding quiet shelters where they can rest undisturbed. Squirrels hide their stashes of nuts, some of them so safe beneath their concealing layer of leaves that even the squirrel that buried them will forget they exist.

The final flowers of the season each seem to harbor a tiny black and yellow guest. The bees may work more slowly now that the air bears a distinct chill, but as long as there is nectar to gather, they will fill the hexagonal chambers of their hive with liquid gold to nourish their sisters through the long winter months.

People, too, share this deep urge to prepare.

The last of the garden produce is gathered and preserved in jars, so that we can taste the warmth of summer, even on the grayest of winter days. Squirrels and blue jays aren't the only ones feasting on ripe pecans, as November brings the nut harvest in and delicious pecan pie becomes a menu favorite. In the woods, wild-food fanciers hunt for edible mushrooms, or forage much like deer and bears for the last of the fall berries. Shorts and tank tops give way to hoodies and jeans, lawn sprinklers are replaced with pipe insulation as we prepare.

Winter is a season of challenge, certainly, and in this preparation is wisdom.

More than challenge, though, the approaching winter is a season of reflection, of stillness, of growth hidden within, and of transformation. Prepare for this. Come walk our trails, take the time to smell the fallen leaves, to listen to the bustlings of the birds, to watch the antics of the squirrels, enjoy the beautiful culmination of fall, and reflect on the season to come.

Nature Center Happenings

Volunteer Naturalists Graduate

The volunteer staff at Oxley Nature Center make this 800 acre park the special and vibrant place that it is. This park belongs to YOU! They are performing all kinds of duties, from interpretive naturalist guides, trail work, visitor hosts, marketing, photography, and so much more!

Congratulations to our new **Volunteer Naturalists** who graduated from the fall training program and are now leading school groups, night walks, pathfinder tours, and other tours:

Larry Paden, Hannah Pottage, Joshua Ticknor, and Jillian Wilson.

Welcome also to Rikki Brown, Ron Coleman, Sandy Schuster, and O'Mara and Pat White.

Our volunteer staff are our greatest resource. Thank you and welcome to our team!

Natural Babies, Natural World

Young children learn by contact with real objects, events and people. We will spend time on the trail to explore nature first hand. This will be a sensory experience!

Monday, November 14 or 28, 10:30-11:30 a.m.

"Autumn Mobiles"

Look out for any exciting, interesting or special natural objects in the woods. They might have an unusual shape, color, texture or pattern. Complete your woodland wander by making an autumn mobile with your tiny nature detective.

Monday, December 12 or 26, 10:30-11:30 a.m.

"Pine Cone Baubles"

Pine cones are really neat to pick up and look at but did you know that they are the reproductive parts of a pine tree? Get festive with these fantastic nature ornaments to celebrate the Holidays.

\$3 suggested donation registration is required

Fifth Annual New Year's Celebration

How will you begin your New Year? Why not start a new tradition with family and friends?

We'll take an evening walk in a winter wonderland to welcome in the New Year! Following our hike, we will warm up in front of a bonfire or fireplace to share stories. Hot chocolate, hot apple cider, and the fixings for s'mores will be available.

Saturday, December 31, 5:30-8:00 p.m.

Free for Members, \$5 for general public

All ages are welcome

Please register by December 27

Spaces are limited

Full Moon Walks at Oxley Nature Center

\$3 requested donation per person, all ages welcome

**** Please register 48 hours in advance ****

Full Beaver Moon

Monday, November 14, 7:00-8:30 p.m.

Beavers are preparing for winter. Will they make themselves known tonight? Join us for nocturnal explorations of the trails.



Full Cold Moon

Tuesday, December 13, 7:00-8:30 p.m.

Change is in the air. Nights are long and dark. What will we discover under cover of darkness as we explore the trails this evening?

Programs and Special Events

November

5 “Saturday Morning Birding” **Ages: All**
Saturday **8:00-9:45 a.m.**
Free **registration not required**

Join us for birding at Oxley. No previous experience is required. Bring binoculars if you have them.

5 “Rag Rug Making” **Ages: Adult**
Saturday **10:00 a.m.– 2:00 p.m.**
\$10 suggested donation **registration is required**

Do you need a little warmth at your hearth this winter? Join us at Oxley to learn a new skill. When you call to sign up please leave your email address and we will send you a supply list.

12 “Writing Well” **Ages: Adult**
Saturday **9:15 a.m.- 3:15 p.m.**
\$50 **registration is required**
www.writingwellworkshop.com

Go to the above website for more information and to register for this

“Creative Writing Workshop” featuring PREVIEW sponsored session with nationally acclaimed nature writer Gordon Grice.



26 “Botany Walk” **Ages: All**
Saturday **10:30-12:00 noon**
Free **registration not required**

Trees are letting go of their leaves and flowers are becoming seed heads. What else will we discover?

December

3 “Saturday Morning Birding” **Ages: All**
Saturday **8:00-9:45 a.m.**
Free **registration not required**

Join us for birding at Oxley. No previous experience is required. Bring binoculars if you have them.



10 “Lecture Series, Part 1” **Ages: Adult**
Saturday **10:00-11:00 a.m.**
Free for members
\$20 for non-members (includes individual Oxley Membership) **registration is required**

“Ecological and phenotypic effects on the survival and movement of the white-footed mouse, *Peromyscus leucopus*”, by Stacey Hannebaum. Most animals confine their movements to familiar areas and preferred habitats rather than moving through a landscape randomly. However, the link between preferential habitat use and fitness is rarely tested. Using capture-mark-recapture data collected at Oxley from March-December 2015, the influence of habitat type, sex, and body size on the daily survival and movement probability of the white-footed mouse was assessed.

Stacy Hannebaum is a Ph.D candidate with the Department of Biological Science at The University of Tulsa.

17 “Botany Walk” **Ages: All**
Saturday **10:30-12:00 noon**
Free **registration not required**

The trees are bare, the forbs are without flowers. What interesting things are revealed to us? Meet at Oxley.

OXLEY LECTURE SERIES

Oxley Nature Center is pleased to offer a new program that will provide an educational opportunity for our Friends of Oxley members. The intent of the program is to bring in speakers, on a monthly basis, or as otherwise appropriate, to share their knowledge on topics of interest to our members. With Oxley being a research center for nature related studies, we will kick off the lecture series with 3 speakers who will share their findings from some of these studies. The presentation details are as follows:

Saturday, December 10, from 10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.: Ecological and phenotypic effects on the survival and movement of the white-footed mouse, *Peromyscus leucopus*, by Stacey Hannebaum.

Most animals confine their movements to familiar areas and preferred habitats rather than moving through a landscape randomly. However, the link between preferential habitat use and fitness is rarely tested. Using capture-mark-recapture data collected at Oxley from March-December 2015, the influence of habitat type, sex, and body size on the daily survival and movement probability of the white-footed mouse was assessed.

Stacey Hannebaum is a Ph.D. candidate with the Department of Biological Science at The University of Tulsa

Saturday, January 21, from 10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.: “Research in site fidelity and habitat use: from dark-eyed juncos to mosquitoes,” by Valerie A. O’Brien.

Oxley Nature Center was an ideal setting for undergraduate research on movement and site faithfulness in wintering dark-eyed juncos. Juncos captured in one area of Oxley preferred to stay nearby, demonstrating a more restricted range of movement by these birds than expected. The area of scientific thought developed while conducting junco research at Oxley contributed to a post-doctoral research project on habitat associations of mosquito species in Payne County, Oklahoma.

Valerie A. O’Brien Ph.D. is an Assistant Professor of Biology at Tulsa Community College – Metro Campus.

Saturday, February 18, from 10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.: “Course-based ecological research at Oxley” by Charles R. Brown.

For over 20 years, Field Ecology and Ornithology courses from the University of Tulsa have used Oxley Nature Center to illustrate fundamental ecological or ornithological concepts in a field setting. These class projects have included studies on pollination biology, optimal foraging, species diversity, reproductive trade-offs, flocking behavior, and habitat use by similar species. Students have also used Oxley for individual research projects. This talk will give an overview of the kinds of research done by students in these contexts.

Charles R. Brown is a Professor in the Department of Biological Sciences at the University of Tulsa.

If you are a Friends of Oxley member, admission is free. If you are a non-member, the fee is \$20 for a one year individual membership, which gets you into all 3 sessions along with other membership related benefits throughout the year.

To register, call: 918-596-9054

Lectures will be held at the Oxley Nature Center located at 6700 Mohawk Blvd.
approximately one mile north of the Tulsa Zoo.