



Oxley Nature Center Newsletter

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Reflections by Eddie Foxon

I never saw a woodchuck, or groundhog as they are also called, until I moved to Texas. In the plains of the Texas Panhandle and western Oklahoma where I grew up, woodchucks are scarce or far out a thing. Apparently they weren't particularly plentiful around Tulsa until recently. The first woodchuck I ever saw was climbing a tree near Bird-Creek in the Wildlife Study Area. I know exactly what the critter was. I just had no idea woodchucks could climb trees. It was also surprising to me that he was making war. It was a hot summer day. Apparently he had just come out of the creek. He was too hot up in the tree when he spotted me and scurried down the trunk and dashed into his burrow. And what a burrow it was! Surveilling the area I found four burrow openings on the bank surrounding a large environmental tree. I was impressed. The animal could excavate extensive tunnel systems, climb trees, and swim. I was kind of surprised he didn't just jump out of the tree and fly away. I learned a great deal about an animal I had never seen before in just a few minutes. I could have read about woodchucks in a book or maybe watched something about them on TV, but it wouldn't have been the same. I'm glad I took the time to go for a walk and see it for myself.

Another animal that surprised me was the wild turkey. Many years ago when I was much younger and on the school track team, I used to train by running off road on game trails around the granite hills near home. I surprised several animals on these runs. Once I rounded a bend in the trail and came upon a tremendous travelling war-bird on top of or over-off to the side I froze over the startled creek and froze again. It was just a few moments later that I saw a turkey in the trail ahead. Being a wary observer he started running down the trail ahead of me. It was as if he wanted to race, and I was happy to oblige. At that time I was the fastest runner in the state of Oklahoma, surely I could outrun a pretty looking turkey. Even with the extra adrenaline from the adrenaline excitement I was so much faster. I had no idea turkeys were so fast!

On another training run I started an armadillo. Of course working up an armadillo is no fun. Despite reaching with anticipation you think there enough to touch you. I didn't get close before the armadillo was spotted. The armadillo, using its defense mechanism to earth a projectile, jumped straight up in the air, maybe three feet. When he came down he took off running down the trail. Well of course I tried to outrun him. It didn't take long to tell I could easily outrun an armadillo, so I just passed along behind him. Personally the trail seemed down by a stream. The armadillo quit the trail and plunged into the water! I was amazed as it naturally assumed. The stream was as clear as tap water. I could see the armadillo actually running across the bottom of the stream, which was ten or so feet across and maybe three feet deep. There were bubbles spraying from his nose as he crossed, and when he came out on the opposite bank he never broke stride. I just stood there in disbelief, watching him disappear from sight.



I have been fortunate to witness many other wonderful things. Most of them outside, whether in the woods or out on the plains. I would have never seen them if I hadn't gotten off my butt, left the "things to do" list on the table, and got out there. Life's too short, those chances will be there when I get back. See you in the woods.

Nature Center Happenings

**Ozley and Redbud Valley
will be closed:
Friday, July 4,
Happy Holiday!**



OSLEY AND REDBUD VALLEY

The gates at Ozley Nature Center are open daily, with the exception of most City holidays, from 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. At Osley, you may park outside the gates from 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. To walk the trails across where the gates are closed.

At Redbud Valley Nature Preserve, the gates are open Wednesdays through Sundays, from 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. You may not buy the trails when the Nature Preserve is closed - on Mondays or Tuesdays, on City holidays, before 9:00 a.m., or after 5:00 p.m.

PROGRAM INFORMATION:

Call 689-0264 to register or for more information about programs. Children under 13 must be accompanied by an adult, unless otherwise stated. Programs that are wheelchair accessible are designated with the ♣ symbol.

Visit our Website at <http://www.naturecenter.org/>

Ozley Nature Center's 3rd Annual Butterfly Count—Tuesday, July 1st, 2008



The 20th annual North American Butterfly Association (NABA) 4th of July butterfly counts track butterfly populations in Canada, the United States and Mexico. For the 3rd year, we will census populations at Redbud Valley, Ozley Nature Center, and Stuart Park. If you would like to help us spot and count butterflies anytime between 9:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. on **July 1st**, please call for more information. If you RSVP by June 28, participation is free. After June 30 the fee is \$6 per person.



Star Program

♣ for general public
free to members

All ages welcome

♣ with advance notice

"Mars Watch"

Wednesday, August 27,
8:45-10:00 p.m.

We will enjoy the spectacle of the brilliant planet Mars in a dark sky. Bring something to sit on and binoculars if you have them. Flashlights should have a red filter. Meet at Tallgrass Prairie Preserve north of Pawnee. Sign-up begins August 17.

Volunteers and Staff Celebrate Spring Season With Awards Dinner

On May 29 staff and volunteers gathered to eat a barbecue (sponsored by OZNA) and pot-luck dinner. All our volunteers have made this spring season a success with their enthusiasm and time. Several volunteers have reached significant milestones. Volunteers receiving awards:

Roger and Patrice Van Derkade -----Three years service
Jacquie LaFrance and Bob Pugh -----Ten years working
Marilee Chambers and Lisa and Iler Wiseman -----Fifteen years service

Marie Ellen Johnston received an award as outstanding volunteer who has contributed her efforts above and beyond usual expectations. **Thank you all volunteers!**

Programs and special events

July

- 1 "Saturday Morning Boring" August 14 @ 10:00-11:00 am
 Family Free registration not required



Meet in the Day room at 9:50am-10:00 am.
 Registration if you have them.

- 2 "Early Morning Deer Gazer" August 14 @ 10:00-11:00 am
 Family \$1 to general public free to members



We will present of the above while held deer and/or
 from Wild of Caley. Sign-up begins June 22.

- 3 "Dormitory look" August 14 @ 10:00 - 11:00 am
 Family Free registration not required



Meet in Caley vestibule at 9:50 am.
 Bring containers. Free to members.

- 4 "Caring a Rubber Stamp" August 14 @ 10:00-11:00 am
 Family \$1 to general public free to members

You will need your own rubber stamp if you decide to buy the
 rubber stamp's new stamps. Registration a members on
 Wild of Caley. Sign-up begins June 22.

- 5 "Recovering for Beginners" August 15 @ 9:00-10:00 pm
 Family \$1 to general public \$2 for members



Learn how to use the word-processor program for home and
 office use. Includes a CD-ROM version. You will be bringing
 your own equipment. Bring a word-processor, printer,
 word processor, CD-ROM, and disk. Sign-up begins June 22.

- 6 "Senior Antiquarians at Rabbit Valley" August 15 @ 10:00-11:00 am
 Family \$1 to general public free to members



We'll see, and smell, what's blooming about the rabbit
 hole. Antiquarian rabbit. Bring a hat and brush. Free.

Sign-up begins July 13.

Welcome Summer Seasonals

We are happy to have Julie Marnett, Dick McFarland
 and Bob Patterson to help us with maintenance, but
 work and summer groups. Welcome to our team!

August

- 1 "Saturday Morning Boring" August 14 @ 10:00-11:00 am
 Family Free registration not required



Meet in the Day room at 9:50am-10:00 am.
 Registration if you have them.

- 2 "Dormitory look" August 14 @ 10:00-11:00 am
 Family Free registration not required



Meet in Caley vestibule at 9:50 am.
 Registration if you have them.

- 3 "Duck & Plop-Drop" August 15 @ 9:00-10:00 am
 Family \$1 to general public free to members

Bring containers. Contact us about home containers and
 bring water, toilet brush, mop. The "Dormitory" event
 will be held at 10:00 am. Sign-up begins June 22.

- 4 "Solar Graphics" August 16 @ 10:00-11:00 am
 Family \$1 to general public \$2 for members



We welcome "sunbathers" using solar-powered and
 solar-powered lights in the night garden. The "Solar
 Graphics" event will be held at 10:00 am. Sign-up begins
 June 22.



Perseid Meteor Shower

Every August since 1984 an annual
 meteor shower leaves people gazing into the
 night sky for a glimpse of the "shooting
 stars" that streak across the heavens. These
 "shooting stars" are the remnants of a comet
 that left a trail of sand-grain size debris in
 the path of Earth's orbit in 1862. These
 particles burn up as they enter our
 atmosphere, creating a brief streak of light
 we call a shooting star. Take a friend or
 child with you where the stars are dark to
 enjoy this spectacular show.

Summer Workshops for Teachers at Oxley

July 8: WTE in the City

This urban environmental education program for teachers (K-12) is to facilitate and promote awareness, knowledge and stewardship of regional water resources. This is a new program developed by the Council for Environmental Education (CEE), and is a joint project of the Muskogee Water Treatment Plant and the City of Tulsa. To register, call WTEC at 581-9031 or email WTEC@cityoftulsa.org.

Time: 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. **Bring a lunch.**

Fee: \$10.00

July 22: Oklahoma Spirit Project

Join us to learn about Oklahoma's ecosystems, endangered species and conservation projects. A 150 page curriculum supplement, "Spirit of the Last Great Places", will include videos and hands-on activities. For information call Mary Coley at 445-6285 or email her at MMcInte24@Osbod.com.

Time: 9:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. **Bring a lunch.**

Fee: \$10.00

July 28: "Sense of Place" Workshop

Regain your "Sense of Place" at this workshop designed to help you learn and care about the place that you live. An overview of "The Discovery Journal" and an on-site Oxley sensory hike will lead to discussions of geography, history, and biology. For information call Mary Coley at 445-6285 or email her at MMcInte24@Osbod.com.

Time: 9:30 a.m.-2:00 p.m. **Bring a lunch.**

Fee: \$15.00

August 4 & 5: Project Learning Tree & Project WILD

These two educational programs will be combined in an overnight workshop. Project WILD is a natural resources education program that emphasizes wildlife. Project Learning Tree uses the forest as a "window" into the natural world, helping young people gain an awareness and knowledge of the world around them, as well as their place within it. For information call Oxley Nature Center at 665-6544.

Time: 7:00 p.m.-9:00 a.m. **Bring a snack to share.**

Fee: \$20.00