



Oxley Nature Center

September/October, 2006

Volume 165

Program information 918-669-6644

-Oxley@ci.tulsa.ok.us
-Website at "<http://www.oxleynaturecenter.org>".

-Children under 12 must be accompanied by an adult unless otherwise stated.
-Wheelchair accessible programs designated by ♿ symbol.

Mohawk Park Entry Fee:

Non-members will be charged an entry fee of \$2 per car 9:00-5:00 p.m., on Saturdays and Sundays, April -October.

Oxley Nature Center:

*Closed: Monday, Sept. 4

-Open daily, except most City holidays (see above).
-Oxley gate open from 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.
-Interpretive building open from 10:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Monday through Saturday; 12 noon-4:30 p.m. Sunday.
-Hiking trails are accessible during Mohawk Park hours 7:00 a.m.-9:00 p.m.

Redbud Valley Nature Preserve:

-Open Wednesday through Sunday, except most City holidays.
-**NEW!** During daylight savings (April 6-October 26) Redbud Valley gate and trails will be open on **Thursdays from 8:00 a.m.-7:00 p.m.**
-On Wednesdays, Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays gate and trails will be open from 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. only. Hiking after these hours is not allowed.
-Interpretive building will be open 11:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.

Tulsa's First Bird and Wildflower Sanctuary

During the Depression years, a Bird and Wildflower Sanctuary, to protect those "rarer wildlings", was set aside in what is now Tulsa's Oxley Nature Center. It was an insightful precursor to our present 804-acre center, with our teaching shelter, Interpretive Center, and more than 11 miles of trails.

In a 1934 news article titled "Nature Sanctuary is Vital Part of Tulsa's Great Mohawk Park", Hugh Davis wrote: "About 2 years ago the Tulsa Park Board set aside 70 acres in the heart of its great Mohawk Park as a permanent sanctuary for wildflowers and birds."

"With the aid of Boy Scouts, over 2 miles of meandering nature trails have been cleared and grassed, rustic seats placed in the several rest and observation spots, bulletin boards and signs erected, and picnic facilities provided at the north end of the sanctuary."

The Mohawk sanctuary was considered a haven for wildlife, and a place of "unspoiled nature", to be maintained in a "wilderness" state. It was under the supervision of the zoo and was cared for by O.W. Letson, zoo employee, park botanist, and naturalist in charge of the "Bird and Wildflower Sanctuary".

During 1934, Letson documented 24 species of reptiles and amphibians in the sanctuary, and 60 species of native trees in Mohawk Park. Zoo Director Hugh Davis photographed over 300 kinds of flowers growing in the park, creating a visual documentation of species present. The protection of nesting sites for birds in the sanctuary naturally led to the protection of mammals and other wildlife.

In 1937, "The Zoo Voice", Davis said, "Springtime is trail time in Mohawk Park, especially in the Bird and Wildflower Sanctuary located north of the zoo grounds. At this time of year and during the next month or two, the trails through the sanctuary will have many feet pattering over them."

"Scout groups, Girl Reserves, Camp Fire Girls, and visitors to Mohawk will all enjoy the seclusion and interest the trails hold for the visitors. The purpose of the sanctuary is to offer a place where visitors may stroll along informal pathways and observe the bits of nature growing in the form of plant life, or the birds, animals, and **even** snakes. It offers a quiet retreat for those interested, and is not a place for loud games or noisy groups." In the same publication, Davis invited groups to make arrangements in advance for "naturalist guide service" by calling Letson at the zoo.

Over the years, the small zoo staff also participated in several conservation projects in Mohawk Park, with the support of the Audubon Society and interested citizens. They trapped, banded, and released thousands of migratory waterfowl, revealing details about the threats facing migratory waterfowl using the bird sanctuary.

The zoo and Audubon Society also worked to demonstrate the plight of birds of prey and their benefit to local ecosystems. This led to laws being passed by the State of Oklahoma protecting birds of prey.

♿ In our next issue, learn the history of Mohawk's innovative fish hatcheries.

Nature Center Happenings

Volunteer Naturalist Training

Each Fall hundreds of school children visit the Nature Center. Most take part in a guided nature hike and discover many wonderful things with the help of volunteer naturalists.



What does a volunteer naturalist do and how do I become one?

If you would like to be outdoors sharing nature with children, consider participating in our fall training program. This four week program begins September 5 or 6 and ends September 28 or 29. Training sessions are two days a week from 9:00 a.m. –12 noon. Following training we ask that you act as a guide for a small group of children one day a week from October through November.

No previous experience is necessary. Training will familiarize you with our varied trail system and its natural communities.

If you are 18 years or older, and enjoy nature and children, contact us!

\$2 for general public, free for members

Kid's Saturday Programs

Please register in advance, all &

Discovery Club (Ages 3-5 years)

Each child accompanied by an adult, please

Adventure Club (Grades K-2nd)

Kids only, please

September 16, 10:00-11:30 "Sock Walk"

We'll look at different plants and the seeds they produce, then use socks to collect some seeds and plant them.

September 16, 10:00-11:30 "Have Seed Will Travel"

Why do seeds need to travel? How do they leave their parent plants and travel to a new place, with everything they need to put down roots and start a new life?

October 21, 10:00-11:30 "Migration & Hibernation"

What is migration and hibernation, and who does it and who doesn't? Let's find out.

October 21, 10:00-11:30 "Makin' Tracks"

Many different animals live at Oxley and leave signs of their travel for us to find. We will make some tracks of our own.

\$2 for general public, free for members

Full Moon Walks

Registration required, all ages, &

"Full Harvest Moon"

Friday, September 8, 7:00-8:30 p.m.

Farmers can work late into the night by the light of this moon, as many crops are now ready for gathering. What will we find by the light of this moon?

"Full Hunter's Moon"

Friday, October 6, 7:00-8:30 p.m.

The wildlife will be gleaning foods such as seeds and acorns, fattening up for the coming winter. We will hunt for signs of their activities.



★★★★★★ Astronomy Programs ★★★★★★

\$2 for general public, free to members, registration required, open to all ages, & with advance notice.

Bring binoculars if you have them, and meet east side of Lake Yahola, above circle drive.

Saturday, September 2, "How Dark Is Our Sky" 7:30-9:00 p.m. What is the faintest object visible from our viewing location? How many stars in the Little Dipper can we see? We'll start on the easy things: the moon and the brighter constellations. Then as our eyes adjust, we'll start searching for the more difficult treasures in the night sky. The darker the sky, the more little stars we'll find! Bring something to sit on if you like.

Wednesday, October 18, "Autumn Stars" 7:30-9:00 p.m. We'll connect patterns of stars to find colossal dragons and bears, as well as heroic figures in the night sky. We may even see a few meteors, or "shooting stars" if we are lucky. Bring something to sit on if you like.

Programs and Special Events

September

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

The chickadees are gorging on poison ivy berries. Migrant hummingbirds are moving through. Join us at Oxley and bring binoculars if you have them.

9 "Butterfly Walk" **Ages: All, &**
Saturday **10:30-12 noon**
Free **registration not required**

We may see many kinds of butterflies nectaring: Painted Ladies, American Snout, Red-spotted Purple, Variegated Fritillary, Monarchs, and Gray Hairstreaks. Meet at Oxley to see what is fluttering around.

10 "Life in a Log" **Ages: All, &**
Sunday **1:30-2:30 p.m.**
\$2 for general public **free for members**

What good is an old dead log? We won't have to go far to find a whole community living on or under or inside what was once a living tree. Join us at Oxley and we'll travel to this foreign land and meet its inhabitants.

17 "Redbud Valley Ramble" **Ages: All**
Sunday **3:00-5:00 p.m.**
\$2 for general public **free for members**

Put on your hiking boots and meet at Redbud Valley. We'll go look for the end of summer and the first of autumn.



23 "Wildflower Walk" **Ages: All, &**
Saturday **10:00-11:00 a.m.**
Free **registration not required**

White crown-beard and boneset should be in full bloom and attracting a lot of nectaring insects now. Join us to see what else is in bloom at Oxley.

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

October

7 "Saturday Morning Birding" **Ages: All, &**
Saturday **8:00-9:45 a.m.**
Free **registration not required**

Are the Scissor-tailed Flycatchers still around? Have the first juncos arrived? Will there be a lot of Brown Thrashers? Let's find out. Meet at Oxley and bring binoculars if you have them.

14 "Butterfly Walk" **Ages: All, &**
Saturday **10:30-12 noon**
Free **registration not required**

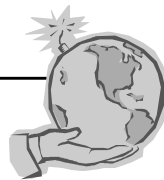
Meet at Oxley for a butterfly walk. Will there still be monarchs migrating south for the winter? What else is around? Bring binoculars if you have them.

22 "Autumn Amble" **Ages: All, &**
Sunday **2:00-3:00 p.m.**
\$2 for general public **free for members**

What signs will we detect of the coming winter as we stroll the trails at Oxley? Join us for this leisurely walk in the woods.

28 "Wildflower Walk" **Ages: All, &**
Saturday **10:00-11:00 a.m.**
Free **registration not required**

The tree leaves are turning their autumn colors and goldenrod and asters color the prairie. Join us at Oxley for this final wildflower walk of the year.



So You Want to be a Junior Naturalist.....

Just what does that mean? If you are curious, like to explore new things, enjoy having fun, and like making discoveries about Nature; well, you may want to become a Junior Naturalist.

You must be **9 to 11 years old** to join our group of intrepid investigators of natural phenomena. We will **usually meet the 3rd Saturday of every month from September through May, from 10:00-11:30.**

(This is a change from previous years when we met the 2nd Saturday.) Please call and register for our orientation meeting before Friday, September 15.

Construction Update by Eddie Reece

If you haven't visited the nature center lately you might not recognize the place. Many of you know that we have needed a new roof for years. Maybe you have been here during a rainstorm, and have seen the staff setting buckets all over the place.

Well, we are getting that roof we desperately need, and a new face-lift as well. The interpretive building has new squirrel-proof siding and fresh paint, and I have to say it looks great. It is way better than Burt Reynolds's last face-lift for sure.

The work is not completed. Not yet. There is still much to do. My best guess is the project will end. I don't know when, nobody can say for sure. A lot of things have to come together. If all goes well it could be finished in two weeks. But it might not be until the end of September.



One thing for certain is those of us who are here everyday are ready for the air conditioning to be turned back on. We will be glad when it does rain and the building doesn't flood. We won't miss the dust and noise and clutter once it is cleaned up. No one is complaining. Everyone knows we're just fortunate to have this project even started.

FALL BUTTERFLY COUNT

September is a wonderful time to observe butterflies!

Join us on **Saturday, September 30, from 9:30 to 1:30 p.m.** to help us spot, count, tally, and identify butterflies. We will gather this information to supplement data collected last April for our early spring count and for the annual North American Butterfly Association (NABA) July Butterfly count.



No previous experience is necessary, just come help us find these beautiful insects. You will be contributing to the collection of vital scientific data, as well as spending an autumn day learning more about butterflies. Please call in advance to register.

Interesting Facts from "Tulsa Zoo, the First Fifty Years"

—In a July, 1941 census of squirrels in 1,440 acres of Mohawk Park, the Biological Survey found 7,300 squirrels; reporting to the Game Department that open hunting on squirrels be restricted to winter months.

—In May, 1942, the first European Starlings ever known to hatch in Oklahoma left their nest in Mohawk Park. Yikes!

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