



# Oxley Nature Center

May/June, 2011

Volume 203

**A \$2 fee per car (for non-members) is charged on weekends April - October to enter Mohawk Park.**

## **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. 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.

## **\*\*Holiday Closing for Oxley Nature Center and Redbud Valley Nature Preserve:**

Monday, May 30.

## **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. A class minimum of 6 is required.

- 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.

## **New Trails and New Things to See** by Vinnie Robinson

I like to hike at Redbud Valley and see the Dutchman's Breeches blooming on the hill below the Bluff Trail. This favorite trail of mine will be open again soon. The trail eroded last year when heavy spring rains found their way down through the limestone and saturated the soil at the bottom of the hill causing the land and trail to slough off into Bird Creek. The trail was partially re-routed but work ground to a halt as summer came on, and we addressed other jobs.

A boy scout has agreed to take on the job of completing the trail as his eagle project. Preliminary work started on March 26. Logs and stumps need to be removed and steps put in. The new trail will turn uphill around the washout and give hikers a great view of the wildflowers. Remember to stay on the trail.

Visitors to the Oxley Nature Center may have already discovered a new trail. Coyote Trail was completed in March by a volunteer group. Winding its way from the front gate to the picnic area the trail is not on the map yet, but signage should be up soon. Longer days give people more time to hike after work or school and this trail can be accessed after 5:00 pm when our gates are closed. You may park outside and walk until the park closes at 9:00 pm.

The Lake Sherry dam reconstruction project is complete bringing the water level up and keeping the marsh full. On a night walk along the marsh trail I was surprised to hear frogs only a week after the snow storm. There are also signs that beaver are moving back into the area, cutting trees and stripping small branches from the ash and willows. The cattails are receding back to the edges of the marsh and American Lotus, (water lily) will soon cover the deeper water. The handrail on the boardwalk which goes through the marsh has also been replaced. Take the boardwalk to the observation tower for a closer look at the waterfowl habitat in the park.

The bridge on the Sierra Club Trail was repaired recently giving visitors access to one of our more remote areas. This trail connects with the North Woods loop and is a wonderful place to observe birds, wildlife and interesting plant species that border Bird Creek.

# Nature Center Happenings

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## Volunteer Naturalists Graduate

We are excited to have 7 new volunteer naturalists who completed our training program at the end of March. They are ready to share the experience of nature with others by leading various tours. Congratulations to:

**Kyle Crotty, Russell Doden, Chris Evans, Zohra Hassam,  
Jay Lake, Bob Lieser, and Sapna Raje.**

We extend a big welcome to visitor center volunteer **Emily Fortner** and trail work volunteer **Wanda Kendall**. Our team of exceptional volunteer staff allow us to serve visitors from near and far with unique experiences!

**Thank you!**

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## Become an Oxley Member

Members of Mary K. Oxley Nature Association help to support Tulsa's natural treasure, the hidden jewel of the Tulsa park system.

Members receive discounts on all programs and at the Nature Store, invitations to special members-only events (our annual Fall cookout and hayride) and programs, and free admission to Mohawk Park when an entrance fee is charged (April through October).

Most importantly, members aid in protecting the habitat and wildlife at Oxley Nature Center and Redbud Valley Nature Preserve.

To join, visit our website, pick up a membership form at the Interpretive Center, or call 918-669-6644. We look forward to hearing from you!

## 2nd Saturday Family Adventures at Oxley

**Saturday, May 14, 10:00-11:30 a.m. and 1:00-2:30 p.m.**

### “Water, Water Everywhere”

Although not a living resource, water is often the defining resource of an ecosystem. Come explore our pond, marsh and lake as we hike through the Nature Center. We will use dip nets to explore life forms living in these watery environments. Join us at Oxley.

**Saturday, June 11, 10:00-11:30 a.m. and 1:00-2:30 p.m.**

### “What’s a Flower For?”

Not all flowers are pretty, but they all have important jobs. We'll explore the area looking for hidden flowers and learn what they do. Meet at Oxley.

**\*\*\* Free, all ages, registration not required. The same program will be offered morning and afternoon. \*\*\***

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## Full Moon Walks at Oxley Nature Center

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

### Full Mother's Moon

**Saturday, May 14, 7:00-8:30 p.m.**

Nature is bursting at the seams, with the urgency of courting and mating and rearing of young. What's a mother to do? Join us at Oxley for a stroll on the trails as day turns into night.



### Full Honey Moon

**Tuesday, June 14, 7:00-8:30 p.m.**

The plants have been blooming and the bees have been busy. Bring your honey or a friend and come along on an evening walk to enjoy the night sounds at Oxley.

# Programs and Special Events

## May

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

From the ‘Red Book’, May 3, 2008: 7 Black-crowned Night Herons, 1 Mourning Warbler, 2 Palm Warblers, 3 Northern Waterthrushes, 3 Rose-breasted Grosbeaks and 2 Yellow-headed Blackbirds. Wow! What will we find this morning? Meet at Oxley and bring binoculars if you have them.

**7 “Rocks, Acid Rain and Bath Fizzies”**  
**Ages: 5-12 (accompanied by parents)**  
**Saturday**      **1:30-2:30 p.m.**  
**\$3 for general public**      **\$1 for members**

Come learn some common rocks and how they are affected by acid rain. To simulate the affect we will make old fashioned bath fizzies: hard packed mixture of chemicals which effervesces and makes bubbles when added to bath water. Meet at Oxley.

**15 “Celebrate Migratory Birds”**      **Ages: All**  
**Sunday**      **1:00-3:00 p.m.**  
**Free**      **registration not required**

Join us at Oxley to celebrate our birds. We will have masks to color, samples of ‘Junior Birding Journals’, and puzzles for the kids. We will also learn some hummingbird trivia as we watch them at the feeders.

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

Will we see Mourning Cloaks, American Snouts and Great Spangled Fritillaries? Join us at Oxley to find out! Bring binoculars if you have them.

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

‘April showers bring May flowers’. Let’s find out what is in bloom today. Meet us at Oxley to explore.

## June

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

Summer Tanagers and Indigo Buntings; what else is possible? Join us at Oxley and bring binoculars if you have them.

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

Butterflies are pollinators. As we look for these flying beauties perhaps we will see them nectaring on flowers and transferring pollen. Meet at Oxley and bring binoculars if you have them.

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

Have you ever seen the beautiful American Lotus in bud or bloom? Let’s visit Blackbird Marsh and see if they are blooming yet. This is one of our most spectacular wildflowers. Meet at Oxley.

**26 “ Pollinators, a Celebration”**      **Ages: All**  
**Sunday**      **1:00-4:00 p.m.**  
**Free**      **registration not required**

We will have displays, coloring and mask-making. A special visitor who raises butterflies will demonstrate how to make your own butterfly habitat and will have some caterpillars and eggs to show the various stages of a butterfly life cycle! Taste the difference between local spring, fall and store bought honey. See which plants attract our native pollinators. Join us at Oxley for this unique event.

**\*\*Please register 48 hours in advance of classes unless stated otherwise. A minimum of 6 registrants is required.**

## Go Wild, Go Birding!

May 14 is International Migratory Bird Day (IMBD).

This day celebrates the migration of 350 species of birds that migrate between non-breeding grounds in Latin America, Mexico and the Caribbean to nesting habitats in North America (Canada and the United States of America).

The Scissor-tailed Flycatcher is the State bird of Oklahoma. This lovely, graceful bird is only one of many migrants that nest here. Another favorite is the Ruby-throated Hummingbird, a tiny migrant that flies nonstop 500 miles across the Gulf of Mexico.

You don't have to wait until May 14 to 'Go Wild, Go Birding'. Watch winter migrants as they leave to fly north to their nesting grounds, and welcome your incoming migrants. Every day during this period is a good time to 'bird'. Grab your binoculars and come see us at Oxley .

## National Pollinator Week

June 20-26, 2011 is National Pollinator Week.

Can you imagine for a moment a world without pollinators - those bees, beetles, butterflies, bats, birds and other animals that provide valuable ecosystem services by pollinating plants? Envision a world with no flowers.

It is from our flowers we get our fruits; our almonds and raspberries, our coffee and chocolate! Who knew it was the little things that run the world - a tiny fly that pollinates the cocoa bean.

Every third bite of food we take we owe to declining pollinator populations. These animals effect all of our lives, and we can take positive actions to protect and celebrate them.

Plant native plants. Don't use pesticides. Help them continue to do their wonderful work! Celebrate your local pollinators! Visit Oxley to learn more.

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## Cercropia Moth, *Hyalophora cercropia*

It is in Spring when you may get an opportunity to see the spectacular beauty of a giant silk moth. It is a narrow window of time in the magic hours of the evening that one might come in contact with an adult, a rare and treasured event.

When most of the forest trees have leafed out and new twig growth invites these nocturnal members of the Saturniidae family to lay their clusters of eggs on the undersides of the leaves, one might imagine they see a small bat flying amongst the hardwoods. Males find females by scent, from up to a mile away. A male will 'guard his female' for over 12 hours, until she begins laying, which may take her a week. Cercropia moths do not feed as adults; after mating and laying eggs, they die.

Caterpillars hatch in about 2 weeks and go through a growth cycle of 5 very different instars. These are large and beautiful caterpillars. They then spin double-walled cocoons from silk complete with an exit hole, which they over-winter in as pupae. Who knew we had something as breathtaking as this mysterious moth. Metamorphosis is a marvelous thing!

