



# Oxley Nature Center

January/February, 2012

Volume 207

## Welcoming Winter by Donna Horton

### 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:

Sunday, January 1  
Monday, January 16.

### Program information:

- 918-669-6644  
- Oxley@cityoftulsa.org  
- Website at "http://www.oxleynaturecenter.org".

\*\* Register for classes 48 hours in advance unless otherwise stated. A class minimum of 6 is required.

-Some classes require supplies and allow for limited enrollment.

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

-Most programs are stroller/wheelchair accessible.

The days are already noticeably longer. Sunset falls a few minutes later each evening. By the calendar, though, we have nearly three months of winter ahead of us. Most years bring a blizzard or two, and at least one could fall in March.

We modern humans may pretend we are in control. It is rare to find ourselves truly at the mercy of the weather. But the truth is, where the wind comes sweeping down the plains, it is supposed to be cold in January and February.

We have several options. We can hibernate and dream of spring. We can endure like rocks, pretending we live in Florida or south Texas, and refuse to change the way we live no matter what the thermometer says. We can migrate, and go to Miami or South Padre until the weather turns balmy here again. Or we can adapt.

We could relish winter. We could celebrate winter. We could do our best to enjoy the cold season until it is time to put away the winter toys and clothes to get ready for spring. A large part of it is having the right attitude.

Is your winter storm survival kit ready? It's hard to have a good attitude if you are not comfortable and prepared. You don't like slippery walks? Get some grippers for your shoes. Include in your kit a notebook of all the things you want to do when it snows. Write down in it the recipe for snow ice cream (because the power might be off, and you won't be able to look it up on the internet.) Keep the ingredients on hand, as well as the makings for soup and hot cocoa or cider. Being able to heat liquids should be part of your survival kit. Get the sleds down and run some wax paper over the runners. Make snowshoes out of a pair of old tennis racquets and cord. They really do work.

Assemble each family member's warm layers of clothes. High-tech outfits are not required to enjoy cold weather. Body heat warms the air between the clothing layers. A light windbreaker outside layer can make a big difference. Tie a string or a sash around your waist. Wear shoes big enough to accommodate several layers of socks. If you can't wiggle your toes, how can the blood circulate and keep them warm? Keep your feet dry. Before buying a high-tech parka system, think about investing in some really good socks instead. And cover your head.

How many times did you get all your layers on and then realize you forgot to go pee first? Empty your bladder, and your fingers and toes will be warmer. It takes a ridiculous amount of energy to keep all that liquid in your torso at 98.6 degrees.

So, all dressed up with no snow? Go for a winter walk. Search for the subtle colors. If temperatures are below sixty degrees F, chiggers are not active. Sit down in the tall weeds and enjoy a rabbit's eye view of the world. Find a winter wildflower. Enjoy the winter birds: eagles, ducks, loons, sparrows, winter wrens. Make the most of the cold weather. It'll be gone before you know it.

# Nature Center Happenings

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## Volunteer Staff Appreciation Luncheon and Awards Celebration

We celebrated our past season with a luncheon at Oxley on December 3rd to honor our volunteer staff. With barbecue provided by our Friends Association (ONCA) and delicious potluck dishes, we were able to eat, socialize and most importantly recognize volunteer staff that had reached milestones in their service to Oxley Nature Center.

**The following volunteer staff received awards:**

**Jeannie Graham, Mike Lessard, Kim Shannon and Kristi Shreve: 6 seasons**

**Debbie-Smith Berlin and Julie Monnot: 10 seasons**

**Clarence Ruby and Jim Thayer: 30 seasons**

**Outstanding Service Award: Jim Thayer** This award is presented for service above and beyond the expected. Jim has been instrumental in our participation in the seasonal butterfly counts that contribute to vital nationwide data. He leads our monthly 'Butterfly Walks' from April-October, sharing his passion for butterflies with all ages. With Jim's guidance our butterfly programs continue to grow in popularity! Jim also serves on the Board of Directors for ONCA.

**Thank you to ALL our wonderful volunteer staff for all you make possible!**

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### Traditional Green Woodworking

#### Spoon Carving

Would you like to transform a freshly cut green log into a useful everyday item with the use of hand tools? We will use wood from the Green Waste Dump (recycled, repurposed) to carve a spoon using a traditional shaving horse, spoke shaves, crook knives, chisel and mallet.

Feel a connection with your past as you create a useful and beautiful item.

\* **Saturday, February 18 at Oxley**

\* **Ages: 16 to Adult**

\* **9:00 a.m.-3:30 p.m.**

\* **\$20 for general public, \$15 for members**

\* **Please register in advance.**

### 2nd Saturday Family Adventures at Oxley

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

#### "Winter Fun"

Let's explore outside to see what winter is bringing to the pond and forest. Following our hike we'll learn the correct way to light a fire in a fireplace or hearth, and warm up by roasting marshmallows.

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

#### "The Beauty of Snow Crystals"

Will there be snow? We will take a walk to see what we can discover. After our hike we'll learn how water vapor changes to snow by watching snow crystals grow in a mini laboratory!

**\*\*\* 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 Wolf Moon

**Sunday, January 8, 7:00-8:30 p.m.**

Bundle up in layers and join us for an evening hike. Perhaps tonight we will hear the sing-song voice of the coyote or the courtship call of owls. What other surprises might we find?



### Full Snow Moon

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

Will we have snow on the ground tonight as we explore the trails under this full moon? We may be able to follow some resident animal's tracks off into the prairie or woods. Are you ready for adventure?

# Programs and Special Events

## January

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

Join us for fireside birding! We will fill the feeders, build a roaring fire and provide hot drinks. Meet at Oxley and bring binoculars if you have them.

**15 “Winter in the North Woods”**      **Ages: All**  
**Sunday**      **3:30-6:00 p.m.**  
**\$2 for general public**      **Free for members**

An early evening hike in the North Woods should reveal an abundance of animal activity! We will arrive back as it is turning dark. Dress warm and plan on at least a 2 hour hike. This trail is not recommended for strollers or wheelchairs. Meet at Oxley and register in advance.

**21 “Earth Science Hike”**      **Ages: All**  
**Saturday**      **10:30-12:00 noon**  
**Free**      **registration not required**

Join us for an earth science walk at **Redbud Valley** Nature Preserve. This is a rugged hike and is not stroller or wheelchair accessible.

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

Are there winter wildflowers in bloom, and if so, who are their pollinators? This is a perfect time of year to look for early signs of flowers at **Redbud Valley**. This hike is not stroller or wheelchair accessible.

**29 “Hand Made Pillow Art”**      **Ages: 16 to adult**  
**Sunday**      **1:00-4:00 p.m.**  
**\$15 for general public**      **\$12 for members**

Design and create your own pair of pillow cases using nature printing methods. These will make unique Valentine gifts for your loved ones. Pillow cases are provided. Meet at Oxley.

## February

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

Birds are out and about on cold winter mornings, making a living. Dress warmly and join us at Oxley. Bring binoculars if you have them.

**18 “Earth Science Hike”**      **Ages: All**  
**Saturday**      **10:30-12:00 noon**  
**Free**      **registration not required**

How does the flow of Bird Creek affect our trail system? Water is a powerful source. Join us at Oxley for a hike to the Wildlife Study area

**18 “Traditional Spoon Carving”**  
**Ages: 16 to Adult**  
**Saturday**      **9:00 a.m.-3:30 p.m.**  
**\$20 for general public**      **\$15 for members**

Using shaving horses, chisels, spoke shaves and other hand tools, we will turn locally reclaimed wood into a useful and beautiful item. Today we will be making hand carved spoons.

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

Here and there the buds are beginning to swell. In the forest, Spice Bush sends forth sprays of yellow bloom. Look low, where mints and violets peek up from beneath the leaf litter. Let's see what we can find at Oxley.

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

## 2012 Winter Bird Feeder Survey

Become a citizen scientist; participate in the ODWC (Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation) Winter Bird Survey. Join us at Redbud Valley Nature Preserve or Oxley Nature Center any of 4 days from Thursday, January 5 through Sunday, January 8 to count birds at our feeders.

We will be counting birds 4 times each day, for about 30 minutes each time, recording the greatest number of species feeding together at one time. We will count at 10:00 a.m., 12 noon, 2:00 p.m. and 4:00 p.m. Survey results will be submitted online to the "Wildlife Diversity Program" at ODWC.

If you prefer to participate in this survey at home, visit [www.okwinterbirds.com](http://www.okwinterbirds.com) for information. You can learn to identify up to 52 species that appear at bird feeders in Oklahoma in the winter.

State biologists have 22 years of data showing trends of birds visiting winter feeders. Populations vary from year to year due to a variety of factors. Will we see an impact from the drought? Help ODWC track population fluctuations and learn more about our winter birds.

## Volunteer Naturalist Training Offered

Become a Volunteer Naturalist and share your love of nature with others! If you enjoy being outdoors experiencing nature with others, join us for one of our two Volunteer Naturalist training programs.

Our **weekday session** runs March 6 - March 30, two days a week from 9:00 a.m.-12 noon. If **evenings and weekends** are more convenient, you may attend training three nights from 6:30-8:30 p.m. and three weekend days from 1-3:30 p.m. starting Saturday, March 1. Please call for more details about the training schedules.

Training is fun. You will become familiar with our trail system as you explore prairie, forest and wetland areas. Emphasis during training is learning leadership skills and interpretation methods.

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, call us for more information. Enthusiasm is a plus, and no previous experience necessary.



What is more simple, more perfect,  
than children and leaves;  
this moment, now,  
the joy it weaves?

## Outdoor Eagle Watching

**When:** Saturday-Sunday, January 14-15  
**Where:** Helmerich Park on Riverside Dr.  
(between 71<sup>st</sup> – 81<sup>st</sup>)  
**Time:** 8:30-10:00 a.m.

Bring binoculars if you have them. Viewing scopes available.

## Eagle Seminars

**When:** Saturday-Sunday, January 14-15  
**Where:** Jenks HS Freshmen Academy, in Jenks  
**Time:** 11:00 a.m. – 2 p.m.

You will have a variety of seminars to choose from including "History of Bald Eagle reintroduction to OK", "The American Eagle" (PBS documentary), "Stories from an Eagle Rehabilitator", "Watching Eagles Live on your Computer" and more. A local raptor rehabilitator will have a LIVE Mississippi Kite and Peregrine Falcon.

For more information, contact Todd Humphrey at

[todd.humphrey@jenksps.org](mailto:todd.humphrey@jenksps.org)

*Biology, Ornithology*

*Freshman Student Council*

*Jenks Public Schools*