



Oxley Nature Center

September/October, 2012

Volume 211

A Dose Of Nature - by Donna Horton

Mohawk Park Entry Fee:

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

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 outside of 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:

**** Monday, September 3**

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.

Earlier this year, at a professional workshop, a panel discussion included a registered nurse, who spoke on the benefits of the healing power of nature. Really, this seems to me to be a no-brainer: fresh air, exercise, green space, trees, birds, flowers... nature! Right?

Well, apparently there are more and more people who see nature as nasty dirt or messiness, icky bugs and worms, flies, disease-carrying mosquitoes and ticks, killer bees, rabid man-eating coyotes... Or it's just too dang hot or cold. It is so much easier to sit inside and sip iced tea and think about enrolling in an exercise class. We all know how successful that is. Okay, some of us are very good at actually going to the gym or getting on the exercise bike. But does that truly fill your soul with happiness?

Going back to the panel discussion, the nurse told the workshop participants that the medical community is now recognizing measurable health benefits from contact with nature. It may not be unusual in the near future for a doctor to write out a prescription that says to administer a daily "dose of nature." Baffled parents may ask their pediatrician, "What pharmacy do I go to for this?" The answer is "Pick up your child from school and go by a park on the way home, and walk on a trail together for half an hour. Pack a sandwich or two and some water. Go for a picnic where you share some crumbs with an ant before hiking back to your house or your car."

So, what about the times your job keeps you indoors with no windows for eight hours at a stretch? Put up a poster in the break room. Load your iPod with nature soundtracks. Bring a jar of fresh soil from the garden and stick your nose into it for the heady aroma of all those busy little good soil bacteria. Of course there are more benefits by actually being out in nature, but there is evidence that these substitutes can produce surprising results of their own.

It's more than just the physical exercise of walking. Nature provides deep healing for what ails us. Take charge of your life, and forget what the scary television shows scream. Learn the difference between dirt and soil.

Wear your mud shoes and look for tracks. Long loose sleeves will protect you from mosquitoes. Find out how to avoid ticks. Respect and appreciate rather than fear wildlife.

Start with walking around your block. If it's hot, don't go at noon. Try for sunrise or sunset. Watch clouds. Listen to the birds. Smell flowers and trees. It's okay to stop and admire a butterfly. Things noticed count more than miles covered. Take pictures and make sketches. Keep a journal.

Have you had your daily dose of nature?



Nature Center Happenings

Geology Walks at Redbud Valley

The defining geological feature of Redbud Valley Preserve is the limestone cliff which separates two distinct habitats. Join us for a tour of these rough and rugged trails. These trails are not appropriate for wheelchairs or strollers.

Date: Sunday, September 16 and October 21

Ages: 8 to Adult

Time: 1:30-3:00 p.m.

Free

Must register in advance, spaces are limited.



Fall Butterfly Count

Join us at Oxley on Saturday, September 29th to spot, count, tally, and identify butterflies. We will meet at 8:30 a.m. and count until dusk, weather permitting. You are welcome to participate in all or part of the count. Please bring a lunch, water, hat and binoculars if you have them.

Meet at the front desk at Oxley Nature Center. No experience is necessary. You'll work in teams with experienced naturalists counting in different areas.

Citizen scientists participate in local counts, increase their own knowledge, raise public awareness, and contribute valuable data about butterfly populations.

Information gathered is used to supplement the North American Butterfly Association (NABA) 4th of July Butterfly Count as well as our Spring Count.

Please call and register in advance so teams can be assembled! The Friends of Oxley will pay your \$3 count fee if you register by September 26.

2nd Saturday Family Adventures at Oxley

Saturday, Sept. 8, 10:00-11:30 a.m. and 1:00-2:30 p.m.

“Wetlands”

The weather has finally cooled and hopefully it has rained. Blackbird Marsh will be alive with critters getting ready for winter. We will use dip-nets to investigate creatures living in the marsh waters.

Saturday, October 13, 10:00-11:30 a.m. and 1:00-2:30 p.m.

“Spiders: Nature’s Builders”

Spiders are one of nature’s most elegant builders. During our walk we will explore the different types of webs that spiders build and discover some hidden places to find spiders. After our walk we will make our own webs to catch dreams.

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

Night Walks at Oxley Nature Center

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

Waning Crescent Moon Walk, Friday, Sept. 14, 7:00-8:30 p.m.

Full Harvest Moon, Friday, September 28, 7:00-8:30 p.m.

Full Hunter’s Moon, Sunday, October 28, 7:00-8:30 p.m.

New Moon Walk, Monday, October 15, 7:00-8:30 p.m.

Join us during these autumn months for walks under the full moons and walks under the waning crescent moon and new moon. These latter moons will leave us in the dark!

Come explore when the moon isn’t casting her light on our world. How different will it be from a full moon walk?

Programs and Special Events

September

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

Meet at Oxley and bring binoculars if you have them.

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

Join us at Oxley for our butterfly walk. All ages and skill levels are welcome. Bring binoculars if you have them.



22
“Wildflower Walk” **Ages: All**
Saturday **10:30-12:00 noon**
Free **registration not required**

What can we find blooming along the trail. Join us at Oxley to find out.

23 “Nature’s Weaving” **Ages: 12 to Adult**
Sunday **9:00-11:30 a.m.**
\$5 for general public **\$3 for members**

We will learn how to use natural dyes to color some yarn that we will use to create our own natural weaving. Let’s take a walk first and find just the right stick as the base for our piece. Meet at Oxley.

**** Please register 48 hours in advance of classes. A minimum of 6 registrants is required. Classes are handicapped accessible unless stated otherwise.**

October

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

Enter Mohawk Park through the back entrance on Winston. The front entrance will be closed for the Tulsa Zoo Run. Meet at the North Woods Trail Head, and bring binoculars if you have them.

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

Join us at Oxley for our butterfly walk. All ages and skill levels are welcome. Bring along binoculars if you have them.

20 “Nature Wind Chimes” **Ages: All**
Saturday **12:00– 1:30 p.m.**
\$5 for general public **\$2 for members**

Make a wind chime from beautiful natural items such as mussel shells. Meet at Oxley.

21 “Medicinal Wild Walk” **Ages: All**
Sunday **1:30-3:00 p.m.**
\$2 for general public **Free for members**

Let’s take a walk at Oxley and look for some plants that have medicinal properties. Can we find a plant that might ease the pain of poison ivy?

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

What is blooming today? Are the trees changing colors? Let’s see what we can find at Oxley.

27 “Edible Wild Workshop, Part 3”
Ages: 12 to Adult
Saturday **1:00-4:00 p.m.**
\$15 for general public **\$12 for members**

This workshop will focus on one preparation method, possibly making a sourdough bread starter using persimmons. Be ready to go outside to collect the edible material and learn how to prepare it properly. Meet at Oxley.

Natural Babies, Natural World

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

Animal Homes

Monday, September 10, 10:30-11:30 a.m.

What is your home like? Everything that is living needs a home. We will look at several different kinds of animal homes and see what they have in common with our homes.

TRACKS AND TRAILS

Monday, October 8, 10:30-11:30 a.m.

Whose track is this? Which way is it going and where has it been? Let's follow some tracks and see what we can find out about the animal that left them. They may be shy and we may not see them but we know they live here. Do you leave tracks?

- ** Ages: 1 through 5 years with caregiver
- ** \$2 for general public, free for members
- ** Please register in advance, spaces are limited.

Volunteer Naturalists Training Begins!

It is not too late! If you would be interested in training to become a Volunteer Naturalist don't hesitate -- pick up that phone and give us a call. We would love to have you join our team! Volunteer Naturalists enjoy being outdoors sharing the experience of nature with others.

We offer two Volunteer Naturalist training programs:

Weekday sessions: September 4th-28th, two days a week from 9:00 a.m.-12 noon.

Evening and weekend sessions: 2 nights from 6:30-8:30 p.m. and 4 weekend days from 1-3:30 p.m. Please call for more details about the training schedules.

During training become familiar with our trail system. Explore our prairie, wetland, and forested areas. We have a lot of fun together and emphasize leadership skills and interpretation methods.

Upon completion of training, you'll join other naturalists each guiding a small group of visitors on weekday, evening or weekend tours.

If you are 18 or older, please call 918-669-6644 for more information. No previous experience is necessary.

