



Oxley Nature Center

September/October, 2013

Volume 217

Transitions - by Amy Morris

Oxley Nature Center:

- There will be a \$2 fee per car entering Mohawk Park on weekends April through October **unless** you are a member of Oxley Nature Center or the Zoo.

- 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:

** Monday, September 2.

Program information:

- 918-669-6644

- Oxley@cityoftulsa.org

- Website at "<http://www.oxleynaturecenter.org>".

Mailing address:

Box 150209, Tulsa, OK 74115

*Register for classes 48 hours in advance, some classes require supplies and have limited enrollment.

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

- Most programs are stroller/wheelchair accessible.

A brilliant yellow and black male goldfinch pulls a bill full of white blowsy fluff from a thistle head. Some of it rises up into the air and drifts away like my thoughts. It is mid-August as I write this. The temperature is 98 degrees with high humidity. Yet, as I watch the panting bird, I feel a restlessness. There is a sense of change in the air.

The goldfinch is on a mission. The soft thistle down will line a small cup-shaped nest of tightly woven forbs. Spider silk will bind the rim of this tiny work of art. The female is the builder of the nest, but she accepts materials from her mate. Goldfinches are late nesters. They wait until thistle has gone to seed to build their nests and lay their pale blue eggs.

Even as goldfinches are tending their nurseries, there are signs that the season is beginning to change. Though it is still mid-August, the shift toward autumn has begun. The play of light on the land is changing, and the days are shorter. What are some of the signs you are seeing?

Purple Martins are staging to begin their migration south. In the following months, up into October, flocks of songbirds and kettles of hawks will fly southward along migratory pathways. This is a great time to listen to and watch the sky.

All along our trails, round green fruits of walnut trees lay strewn along the paths. Some bear the teeth marks of squirrels and other rodents. The harvesting and laying aside of summer's bounty has begun. After such a wet and prolific summer, it is important to prepare for the winter. Who knows what unusual trends the weather will bring. It is best to be ready.

In early October we will begin looking forward to the arrival of our northern visitors: juncos, White-crowned Sparrows, White-throated Sparrows, and Lincoln's and Song Sparrows. These delightful visitors will keep us company throughout the fall and winter months, delighting us with their antics at our birdfeeders.

Mid-October often brings our first frost. It will leave a rim of shimmering ice lining the edges of green leaves. Will we light a fire in our fireplace? It is hard to imagine now as I watch the goldfinch panting on his perch.

There is a sense of change in the air. It is subtle now, but there nonetheless. How do you measure your transitions: the last tomato in the garden, the last leaf left on the cottonwood tree, or perhaps the first football game of the season? Come share your autumn story with us, and harvest a basketful of memories!

Nature Center Happenings

Natural Babies, Natural World

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

Monday, September 9, 10:30-11:30 a.m.

“The Promise of Seeds” We will discover different kinds of plant seeds and help to spread some seeds around!

Monday, October 14, 10:30-11:30 a.m.

“Autumn Leaves” Let’s see how many different colors, shapes and sizes of leaves we can find. What can we do with them?

Ages: 1 through 5 years only, with caregiver
\$2 for general public, free for members
Please register in advance

Marsh Mysteries

Have you ever been out at a wetland area at night when the waterfowl come in for the night? It is a wonderful experience of sound and sight!

Sunday, October 27, 4:45-7:00 p.m.

We will meet at the Interpretive building and walk to Blackbird Marsh where we will gather **quietly** on the boardwalk to listen for animals to come in and feed for the evening. We will leave promptly at 4:45 so we can be settled and quiet before the birds begin to arrive. Meet at Oxley.

Ages: All
\$2 for general public, free for members
Please register in advance

2nd Saturday Family Adventures at Oxley

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

“What Happens to Seeds”

Come for a hike and count how many different kinds of seeds you can find. Do they travel by wind, water, or animals? Some plants even shoot their own seeds off into the air. Do you ever help a plant transport its seeds to another place?

Saturday, October 12, 10:00-11:30 a.m. and 1:00-2:30 p.m.

“Pressed Autumn Leaves”

Fall is a glorious time at Oxley. We will learn to identify several common trees and collect a few colorful leaves. You will learn how to preserve leaves by pressing so that you can use them for future craft projects. You will make a book mark to take home.

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

Fall Seasonal Butterfly Count

Join us Monday, September 30, to spot, count, tally, and identify butterflies. Information gathered will supplement the North American Butterfly Association (NABA) ‘4th of July Butterfly Count’ held annually in June and July.

We will meet at 9:30 a.m. and count until dusk, weather permitting. You are welcome to participate in all or part of the count. We will try to include larger groups if possible. Please bring lunch, water, hat and binoculars if you have them.

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

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

Full Moon Walks at Oxley Nature Center

Full Harvest Moon: Thursday, September 19,
7:00-8:30 p.m.

Full Hunter’s Moon: Friday, October 18,
7:00-8:30 p.m.

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

Attention Oxley Nature Center Hikers:

Oxley Nature Center’s Interpretive Building will open officially at noon on Saturday, October 5, 2013. There will be traffic congestion due to the Zoo Run in the morning, so you may want to enter the west gate to use the trails. **Saturday Morning Birding** will take place from 8-9:45 a.m. at **Redbud Valley Nature Preserve.**

Programs and Special Events

September

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

Join us for some birding at Oxley. Bring binoculars if you have them.

21 "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.

21 "Search for Autumn" **Ages: All**
Saturday **1:30-4:30 p.m.**
\$2 for general public **free for members**
registration is required

Meet at the NW corner of the Mohawk Golf Course, at the start of the Oxbow Lake Trail. Be ready for a hike of a little over 2 miles. How many signs of fall will we find? This hike is not wheelchair or stroller accessible.



22 "Geology Walk at RBV" **Ages: 8 to Adult**
Sunday **1:30-3:00 p.m.**
Free **registration is required**

Join us at Redbud Valley for a geology walk. This walk is not stroller or wheelchair accessible.

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

What will we find blooming or growing along the trail? Meet at Oxley.

October

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

Meet at **Redbud Valley Nature Preserve** and bring binoculars if you have them. This walk is not stroller or wheelchair accessible.

13 "Weave a Gizzard Basket" **Ages: 14 to Adult**
Sunday **1:00-4:00 p.m.**
\$9 for general public **\$7 for members**
registration is required

Weave an 'Old Timey Gizzard Basket'. These beautiful and functional baskets were used historically to gather eggs. What will you use yours for? Meet at Oxley.

19 "Talk Turkey" **Ages: All**
Saturday **10:30-12:00 noon**
\$5 for general public **\$2 for members**
registration is required

We will make a turkey call from native plants and learn how to call turkeys. Meet at Oxley.

19 "Butterfly Walk" **Ages: All**
Saturday **10:30-12:00 noon**
Free **registration not required**

Join us at Oxley for our butterfly walk. Bring a pair of binoculars if you have them.

20 "Geology Walk at RBV" **Ages: 8 to Adult**
Sunday **1:30-3:00 p.m.**
Free **registration is required**

Join us at Redbud Valley for a geology walk. This walk is not stroller or wheelchair accessible.

26 "Botany Walk" **Ages: All**
Saturday **10:30-12:00 noon**
Free **registration not required**

What will we find today? Have the trees all lost their leaves? Join us at Oxley to find out.

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

Volunteer Naturalists Training Begins!

It may not be 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 3-27th, two days a week from 9:00 a.m.-12 noon.

Evening and weekend sessions: September 3-28th, 2 nights from 6:30-8:30 p.m. and 4 weekend days from 1-3:30 p.m.

Application and training schedules may be found online at www.oxleynaturecenter.org. Click on the link to "Volunteers".

During training become familiar with our trail system. Explore our prairie, wetland, and forested areas. We have a lot of fun together. Training emphasizes leadership skills and interpretation methods, rather than memorized facts.

Upon completion of training, you'll join a team of 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.



When one tugs at a single thing in nature, he finds it attached to the rest of the world.

-John Muir