



Oxley Nature Center

July/August, 2014

Volume 222

We are revisiting a front page by Bob Jennings, former director of Oxley Nature Center, written for "From the Stump", September/October, 1992 issue. Enjoy!

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:

** Friday, July 4 and Monday, September 1.

Program information:

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

*Register for classes 48 hours in advance.

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

-Most programs are stroller/wheelchair accessible.

-Our new mailing address is: Box 150209, Tulsa, OK 74115



Oxley Nature Center Newsletter

Volume 134

July/August, 2001



Just about the time you get to the point where you think you have things under control, Mother Nature will come up behind you and remind you, perhaps forcefully, that she was here first, and that you don't know everything yet.

Case in point: I was sitting out behind the house in the cool June twilight, listening to the nighthawks cruise over the hill and enjoying the quiet. It had been cooler than we expect in June, and it had finally gone a whole day without raining, and the air was sweet and dark.

The side of my eye caught a flash in the cool dark, and as I turned my head I saw one, then two, then three fireflies, drifting along the dark green wall where the yard yields to a thicket of dogwood and elm trees.

My old biologist's brain automatically classifies and names things, and in this case routinely furnished the label "firefly". But instead of the process continuing, with thoughts branching off in whatever normal progression thoughts choose to pursue, things suddenly slammed to a stop. Instead, my brain acted as if it had never seen a firefly before. It stopped, awestruck, made a couple of futile attempts to resume normal activity, then came up with the mental equivalent of "WOW".

It wasn't as if I'd never known about fireflies

before. I've seen them, chased them, put them in jars, counted the flashes and correlated that to air temperature. I've seen them as adults and as larvae, and dead on the sole of a shoe.

But I'd never really seen fireflies before, not with that deep inner sight where your eyes are connected directly to your soul. Suddenly, it was as if I was an explorer on some other planet, discovering a new form of life. Here was an amazing thing, an insect that not only lit up, but did it whenever it wanted! This thing could make light! No batteries, no wires, no heat, no pollution, no smoke, no toxic radiation...just light! How does it do that, and what strange evolutionary path wound through the ages and ended up with this amazing bug, a bug that glows?

Like most special moments, and like the fireflies, this one began to fade, and nothing I could do would prolong it, but it lasted five minutes or so, and I savored each of them.

To awaken the sleeper within us is not an easy thing, and it happens so seldom in our adult lives. It's one of those major frustrations



of our jobs as interpreters that this is a skill we can't teach. We don't even know how to call it up within ourselves,

it just happens

when it happens, and we have to be glad for those moments.

But, one of the nicer things about this job is that we can frequently take our visitors to places where this magic is more likely to happen. It can happen anyplace out in the woods, or gazing across a prairie, or kneeling by some ocean, or even, as with me, in your own backyard.

---This version of "From the Stump" was originally printed in the September/October, 1992 issue----

Nature Center Happenings

Welcome Summer Seasonal Employees

This summer we are happy to welcome Ian Hammond and Paige McIlroy to our work team. Ian is joining us for his second summer.

With their help we will be able to serve more people and keep our natural resources in better shape. They will be busy with trail work, general maintenance and visitor services.

Stop by and say hello!



4th of July North American Butterfly Count

Join us at Oxley Tuesday, July 1st 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 8:30 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 918-669-6644 and register so teams can be assembled. The Friends of Oxley will pay your \$3 count fee if you register by June 25.

Scanning the Night Skies, the Perseids Meteor Shower

Meteors are pieces of space debris, particles from comets and broken asteroids. When comets circle the sun, they leave behind a trail that the Earth passes through each year. When the comet particles enter our atmosphere they disintegrate, creating long streaks of light and color.

Perseids is one of the most plentiful showers, with 50-75 meteors per hour, plus fireballs! Its particles are released from comet 109P/Swift-Tuttle. The Perseids meteor shower is active from July 15-August 25, but it peaks after midnight August 12 -13. The full moon near this time will make these fast and bright meteor showers more difficult to view. But don't give up!

You have a range of days to choose from. Plan a trip to the country, somewhere away from city lights. Take along a blanket or lawn chairs. Allow your eyes at least 30 minutes to adjust to the dark, flashlights and cell phones disrupt this process. Settle into the darkness. Listen to the night sounds.

Lie on your back, with your feet facing northeast. Take in the great expanse of sky overhead, and relax. Be patient, and scan the sky. Is that a bat, a satellite, a constellation, or one of Perseids famous fireballs? Enjoy!

Full Moon Walks at Oxley Nature Center

\$3 requested donation per person, all ages welcome

**** Please register in advance ****

Full Buck Moon

Friday, July 11, 7:00-8:30 p.m.

Let's listen for the snort of deer and watch for the flash of a white tail on the trail tonight. What will we discover as we explore?



Full Sturgeon Moon

Saturday, August 9, 7:00-8:30 p.m.

As the heat of the day gives way to evening will we catch a breath of cooler air? Are the fish rising for insects at water's edge? Join us to find out.

Programs and Special Events

July

5 "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.

19 "Butterfly Walk" **Ages: All**
Saturday **9:00-10:30 a.m.**
Free **registration not required**

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

19 "What Will You Name Your Butterfly?"
Ages: All
Saturday **10:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.**
Free **registration not required**

Every butterfly is of a unique design, and they all have beautiful names. Go on the butterfly walk and then join us to create your very own "flying flower"!

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. Registration is required.

26 "Botany Walk" **Ages: All**
Saturday **8:00-9:30 a.m.**
Free **registration not required**

Note our new summer hours for this walk! What will we find blooming along the trail? Meet at Oxley.

26 "Moth Mysteries and Nocturnal Wanderings"
Ages: All
Saturday **7:00-10:00 p.m.**
Free **registration not required**

What animals can we expect to find as evening arrives. We will be night lighting for moths and other creatures of the night at Oxley. Explore the trail around the pond in search of bats and owls. Join us!

August

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

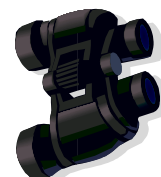
Meet at Oxley and bring binoculars if you have them.

9 "Fish that Fly ... Now That's Fishy" **Ages: All**
Saturday **10:00-12:00 noon**
Free **registration not required**

Oklahoma has over 150 species of fish. Do any of them fly? Come design your own beautiful fish to take home and learn about the importance of these animals in the ecosystem! Meet at Oxley.

16 "Butterfly Walk" **Ages: All**
Saturday **9:00-10:30 p.m.**
Free **registration not required**

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



17 "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. Registration is required.

23 "Botany Walk" **Ages: All**
Saturday **8:00-9:30 a.m.**
Free **registration not required**

Note our new summer hours for this walk! What will we find blooming today at Oxley?

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

Volunteer Naturalist Training Begins in September!

Who is a Volunteer Naturalist? It is someone who enjoys being outdoors sharing the experience of nature with others. We offer two Volunteer Naturalist training programs. Our **weekday session** runs through September, two days a week from 9:00 a.m.-12 noon. If **evening and weekend** training is more convenient for you, and we have enough interest, we will provide training nights and weekend days. Please call for more details about the training schedules.

During training you will become familiar with our trail system, exploring prairie, wetland, and forested areas. We have fun and emphasize leadership skills and interpretation methods. Upon completion of 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 is necessary.

If leading tours is not your interest, ask us about our other volunteer staff opportunities: Visitor Center Host, nature store, trail work, Adopt a Trail, Naturalist Rover, and more!

Join us August 14 for our Volunteer Roundup, at 10:00 a.m.-12 noon or 7:00-9:00 p.m. to learn more! We will have current volunteer staff available to answer questions. Please RSVP 918-669-6644.

Honeybee Observation Hive

Oxley is fortunate to have an observation hive where visitors can watch these amazing honey makers at work! Local beekeepers Helen, Mack and Keith Hickey offered to help set up our hive. They did a split with their own bees and got an outdoor hive started at Oxley. On June 19 we did an overnight split of that hive and put nurse bees, brood, pollen and honey in our observation hive.

The nurse bees have created a queen cell by feeding royal jelly to a very young larva. This will be her diet until her development is complete in about 16 days. The queen is the largest in the colony, and she can live for 3 to 5 years. She will lay eggs for the rest of her life, and is capable of laying 2000 a day!

The male drones live in the hive also, and mate with the queen. This is their only job. Their brood chambers are smaller than the queen cell, but larger than the worker bee cells. The rest of the bees are female worker bees, of which there can be thousands. They live for 6 weeks, three as house bees and three as field bees.

The highly structured colony lives and works together and performs specific jobs at specific times. When a worker bee emerges from a brood cell after 21 days of development, she becomes a house bee, cleaning and polishing cells, feeding the larva, making wax and storing nectar and pollen brought in by field bees. The last job of the house bee is as a guard bee, protecting the hive. The queen also has a court of house bees that feed and groom her.

When the worker bee is 3 weeks old she becomes a field bee, foraging for nectar and pollen for the hive. She can visit up to 10,000 flowers a day. In her lifetime, she will make about one teaspoon of honey. It takes the nectar from over one million flowers to make one pound of honey.

When a field bee returns to the hive after visiting flowers, she gives the nectar to a house bee. Then she begins to dance on the honeycomb. A round dance indicates the flowers are within one hundred yards of the hive. A tail-wagging dance tells the other foraging bees both the location and distance (over one hundred yards) of the flowers from the hive.

What an amazing thing to be able to look in on the secret life of bees! Visit us at Oxley and spend some time observing an active hive. Thank the honeybees for the pollination services, wax and honey they provide us with.

