



Oxley Nature Center

July/August, 2015

Volume 228

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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:

** Saturday, July 4

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.

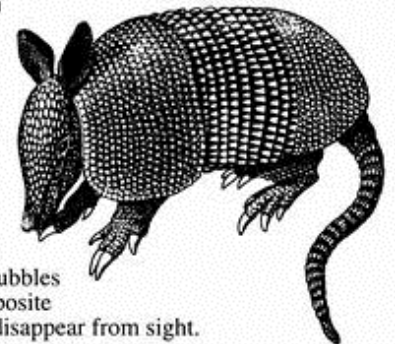
-Our new mailing address is: Box 150209, Tulsa, OK 74115

Reflections by Eddie Reese

I never saw a woodchuck, or groundhog as they are also called, until I moved to Tulsa. In the plains of the Texas Panhandle and western Oklahoma where I grew up, woodchucks are scarce as fur on a frog. Apparently they weren't particularly plentiful around Tulsa until recently. The first woodchuck I ever saw was climbing a tree near Bird Creek in the Wildlife Study Area. I knew instantly what the critter was. I just had no idea woodchucks could climb trees. I was also surprised to see that he was soaking wet. It was a hot summer day. Apparently he had just come out of the creek. He was ten feet up in the tree when he spotted me and scurried down the trunk and dashed into his burrow. And what a burrow it was! Surveying the area I found four burrow openings on the bank surrounding a large cottonwood tree. I was impressed. This animal could excavate extensive tunnel systems, climb trees, and swim. I was kind of surprised he didn't just jump out of the tree and fly away. I learned a great deal about an animal I had never seen before in just a few minutes. I could have read about woodchucks in a book or maybe watched something about them on TV, but it wouldn't have been the same. I'm glad I took the time to go for a walk and see it for myself.

Another animal that surprised me was the wild turkey. Many years ago when I was much younger and on the school track team, I used to train by running off road on game trails around the granite hills near home. I surprised several animals on these runs. Once I rounded a bend in the trail and came upon a rattlesnake. Travelling too fast to stop or veer off to the side I leapt over the startled snake and kept going. It was just a few moments later that I saw a turkey in the trail ahead. Being a very alert bird she started running down the trail ahead of me. It was as if she wanted to race, and I was happy to oblige. At that time I was the fastest miler in the state of Oklahoma; surely I could outrun a goofy looking turkey. Even with the extra adrenalin from the rattlesnake encounter I was no match for her. I had no idea turkeys were so fast!

On another training run I startled an armadillo. Of course sneaking up on an armadillo is no feat. Anyone treading softly and patiently can walk close enough to touch one. I didn't get close before the armadillo was spooked. The armadillo, using its defense mechanism to startle a predator, jumped straight up in the air, maybe three feet. When he came down he took off running down the trail. Well of course I tried to outrun him. It didn't take long to tell I could easily outpace an armadillo, so I just paced along behind him. Presently the trail wound down by a stream. The armadillo quit the trail and plunged into the water! I was stunned as if mortally wounded. The stream was as clear as tap water. I could see the armadillo actually running across the bottom of the stream, which was ten or so feet across and maybe three feet deep. There were bubbles streaming from his nose as he crossed, and when he came out on the opposite bank he never broke stride. I just stood there in disbelief, watching him disappear from sight.



I have been fortunate to witness many other wonderful things. Most of them outside, whether in the woods or out on the prairie. I would have never seen them if I hadn't gotten off my duff, left the "things to do" list on the table, and got out there. Life's too short, those chores will be there when I get back. See you in the woods.



Nature Center Happenings

Volunteer Staff Awards Dinner and Celebration

Volunteer staff, families, friends and Oxley staff celebrated the spring season with an awards dinner June 10. We gathered together to honor all our volunteer staff and share a meal of barbecue (compliments of ONCA) and potluck dishes. We all enjoy this time to get together and visit with one another.

Several volunteers reached significant milestones:

15 Year Award:

Loretta Bailey, Kim Bebee, Rusty Grimpe, Helen Madden, Mary Lou McGilbra, Jacquie Young

20 Year Award: **Helen Madden, Jim Thayer**

25 Year Award: **Kathy Huber**

Our volunteer staff serves Oxley Nature in many capacities. With their dedication and enthusiasm, we are able to maintain our trails and acreage, reach a large public with programs, and so much more.

Volunteers are the backbone of our organization. We thank them for their dedication and enthusiasm!

Volunteer Roundup

Oxley Nature Center is sponsoring a volunteer roundup on **Thursday, August 13, from 10:00-12:00 noon or 7:00-9:00 p.m.** Join us to learn about the many different volunteer opportunities we have to offer.

We will have question and answer sessions, staff and volunteers to visit with, and refreshments. Afterward we'll go on a short trail hike.

Have you got some time to share? Please call 918-669-6644 to register. We look forward to hearing from you!

A joy shared is a joy doubled -Goethe

Volunteer Naturalist Training Begins in September

Do you enjoy being outdoors sharing the experience of nature with others? We are offering Volunteer Naturalist training beginning September 1. We are looking for weekend, evening and weekday volunteer staff. Training sessions will take place throughout September.

You will become familiar with our trail system as you explore the varied prairie, wetland and forested areas. We 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, please call for more details about the training schedules. No previous experience is necessary .

Weekday sessions: September 1st through October 1st, two days a week (Tuesdays and Thursdays) from 9:00 a.m.-12 noon.

Evening and weekend sessions: evenings from 6:30-8:30 p.m. and/or weekend days from 9:00-11:00 a.m. These dates/times are subject to change.

All new volunteer naturalists and visitor center hosts are encouraged to participate in the Certified Interpretive Host Workshop (see page 4 for details). Oxley will provide the cost of basic CIH training. Certification or NAI membership is the responsibility of the participant.

Programs and Special Events

July

****Please note: we will not have our Saturday Morning Birding this month as we are closed on July 4th. Happy Holiday!**

1 "Basket Guild" **Ages: 13 to Adult**
Wednesday **6:00-7:00 p.m.**
Free **registration is required**

Join us for a basket-making class that meets once a month at Oxley. We are experimenting with different techniques and materials. This is for all skill levels.



11 "Beavers" **Ages: All**
Saturday **9:00-11:00 a.m.**
Free **registration is required**

The beavers appear to be invading Oxley! Join us to search for their homes and other signs of their presence. Do you have the skill necessary to build your own dam? This is a come and go adventure at Oxley.

18 "Flying Flowers" **Ages: All**
Saturday **10:00-12:30 p.m.**
Free **registration not required**

Butterflies have been called flying flowers. We will make a unique craft. This project is 'come and go'.

18 "Butterfly Walk" **Ages: All**
Saturday **9:30-11:00 noon**
Free **registration not required**

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

25 "Botany Walk" **Ages: All**
Saturday **9:30-11:00 a.m.**
Free **registration not required**

Meet at Oxley to explore. Please note time change!
In July and August we'll go out an hour earlier than usual.

August

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

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

8 "Nature Mobiles" **Ages: All**
Saturday **10:00-11:30 a.m.**
Free **registration not required**

The world around you is full of beautiful things. Choose various items from nature to create your very own mobile. This class is 'come and go' at Oxley.

15 "Butterfly Walk" **Ages: All**
Saturday **9:30-11:00 noon**
Free **registration not required**

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



22 "Botany Walk" **Ages: All**
Saturday **9:30-11:00 a.m.**
Free **registration not required**

Join us at Oxley to find out what plants are in bloom. How do plants adjust to dry conditions and high temperatures? Please note time change!

Full Moon Walks at Oxley

\$3 requested donation per person, all ages welcome
Please register in advance

Full Moon Walks in July

Thursday, July 2, 7:00-8:30 p.m.

Friday, July 31, 7:00-8:30 p.m.

Join us for an evening walk along the trails. What will we see or hear?



Full Thunder Moon

Saturday, August 29, 7:00-8:30 p.m.

We will engage all our senses as we explore the trails this evening. Bring your sense of adventure!

Certified Interpretive Host Training Workshop

When: August 21&22 or August 28&29th, 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.

Where: Oxley Nature Center Instructor: Donna Horton

The National Association of Interpretation's CIH program offers a professional certification designed for new hires, seasonals, volunteers, or anyone who has public contact but does not present formal interpretive programs to the public. It covers the basics of interpretation, how to provide great customer service and hospitality, and how you can use informal interpretation to support your agency's mission as you interact with visitors. Must be 16 or older.

For more information or to download a registration form:

http://www.interpnet.com/nai/nai/_certification/CIG_Workshops/CIH-2015

For information contact: Donna Horton, Trainer
DonnaHortonCIT@att.net, 918-587-0522.

Did you have a special place,
a place to explore and invent, discover and retreat,
a place of myth and mystery, where you were one with the earth,
in tune with the animals and seasons and music of the birds and wind in the trees and the splashing of water?
Did you have a secret space that filled you with strength and joy and peace and wonder, where you could go to lick your wounds
when you were a child?
Remember?

