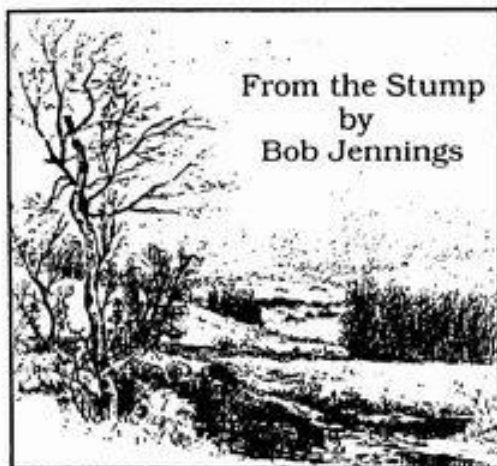




Oxley Nature Center Newsletter

Volume 135

September/October, 2001



From the Stump
by
Bob Jennings

Each year, when it comes time to write the column for this month, I have problems. It's usually late July or early August when Amy says "I need your article," and like today, it's over 100 degrees outside. It's hard for me to do much of anything when it's that hot, much less write something relevant to October. All I want is for October to get here, and fast.

I thought I could go outside and find something to inspire me, get an idea from a bug or something like that. Well, I made it about twenty yards before I came to my senses, and remembered just how hot it was. So I went back inside.

You know how nice the library area is at the Nature Center, with the big windows that look out over the pond. It's dark and cool in there, too, so I thought I'd just sit and look out and let inspiration come to me.

There was one lonesome hummingbird coming to the feeder, but he looked as if his heart wasn't in it. He'd sorta cruise up and take a sip, then buzz off to a

shady branch to take a break. Probably wished he was back in Central America where it was cooler!

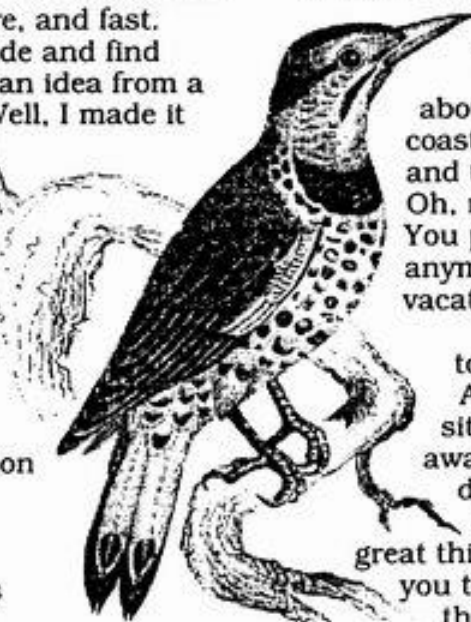
Even the bird pool with it's nice cold drip wasn't getting any action today. We'd been seeing juvenile titmice and chickadees coming by to grab a drink and a quick dip, but today, nobody is coming in at all. They probably wish they were back in that nice cool egg.

As I struggle to come up with something, anything, to write about, my mind wanders back to some of the cooler places I've visited over the years. Just this spring, my buddy Wally and I were up in southwest Manitoba, looking for birds. It was cool enough each morning that we'd wear a heavy shirt or a jacket. We did see lots of birds, and some moose, and seven bears in one day, and clear blue lakes and spruce and fir and.... Oh, well - that was then and this is now and it's still over 100 degrees outside and

I still haven't come up with anything to write about.

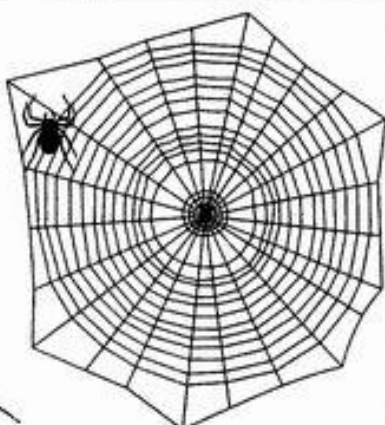
Maybe you'd like to hear about time I spent on the Oregon coast, with that lovely morning fog, and the breeze off the ocean and... Oh, rats, there I go again. You probably don't want to hear anymore about my summer vacations, either.

Finally, I just give up. It's too hot and I can't think and Autumn is so far away. I'll just sit and listen to the cicadas rasp away in the trees, and watch that dragonfly patrol this end of the pond, and think about all the great things that we'll have ready for you to do when you come visit us this Fall. When it's cool.



Nature Center Happenings

Oxley Nature Center will be closed Monday, September 3 for the Labor Day Holiday.



OXLEY AND REDBUD HOURS:

The gates at Oxley Nature Center are open daily, with the exception of most City holidays, from 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. At Oxley, you may park outside the gates from 6:00 a.m. - 9:00 p.m. to walk the trails even when the gates are closed.

At Redbud Valley Nature Preserve, the gates are open Wednesdays through Sundays, from 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. You may **not** hop the fence when the Nature Preserve is closed: on Mondays or Tuesdays, on City holidays, before 8:00 a.m., or after 5:00 p.m.

PROGRAM INFORMATION:

Call: 669-6644 to register or for more information about programs. Children under 12 must be accompanied by an adult, unless otherwise stated. Programs that are wheelchair accessible are designated with the ♿ symbol.



Kid's Saturday Programs

\$2 general public, free to members, all ♿



Discovery Club (Ages 3-5 years)

Each child accompanied by an adult, please

September 15, 10:00-11:30 "Turtles of Oxley"
Sign-up begins September 2.



October 20, 10:00-11:30 "Winter's Coming"
Why do animals migrate or hibernate?
Sign-up begins October 7.



Adventure Club (Grades K-2nd)

Kid's only, please

September 15, 10:00-11:30 "Migrating Monarchs"
Sign-up begins September 2.



October 20, 10:00-11:30 "Understanding Bats"
How do bats fly and what do they eat?
Sign-up begins October 7.



"How Far Is Far?"

Tuesday, September 18,
7:30-8:45 p.m.

We'll study the sky's closest objects through binoculars and a telescope. Then we'll search for the farthest objects we can find in tonight's sky. Bring something to sit on. Meet at the circle drive east of Lake Yahola. Sunset is 7:27 p.m. and Moonset is 8:40 p.m. Bring something to sit on. Sign-up begins September 9.

Star Programs

\$2 general public,
free to members



All ages

All ♿

"The Local Stars"

Monday, October 8, 7:30-8:45 p.m.

Our sun and the stars we see in the night sky form a spiral galaxy called "The Milky Way." The Milky Way Galaxy and its nearest neighbors form "The Local Group" of galaxies. How many galaxies can we find tonight? Meet at the Tallgrass Prairie Preserve. Sunset is 6:36 p.m. and Moonrise is 11:12 p.m. Bring something to sit on. Sign-up begins September 30. Cloud date is October 18.

MEMBERS PICNIC
AND
HAYRIDE!



JOIN US FRIDAY, OCTOBER 26 AT
PICNIC SHELTER #2 IN MOHAWK
PARK. FESTIVITIES BEGIN AT 6:30
P.M. WATCH YOUR MAILBOX FOR
MORE INFORMATION. THIS EVENT
IS FOR MEMBERS & VOLUNTEERS
ONLY!

Programs and special events

September

October

1 "Saturday Morning Birding"

Saturday
Free



Ages: All

8:00-9:45 a.m.
registration not required

Meet in the Oxley parking lot promptly at 8:00 a.m.
Bring binoculars if you have them.

9 "Color from Natural Dyes"

Sunday
\$2 for non-members

Ages: 12 & up
1:00-2:30 p.m.
free to members

We'll see how our ancestors made dyes from plants and other materials. Preparations of dyes will be demonstrated and you'll dye a sample of wool to take home. Meet at Oxley.
Sign-up begins August 26.

15 "Butterflies Through Binoculars" Ages: All

Saturday
Free



9:30-11:30 a.m.
registration not required

Butterfly migration should be underway. Bring binoculars if you have them and join us at Oxley to view these beautiful insects.

23 "Make A Butterfly Feeder"

Sunday
\$2 fee plus \$1 for materials



Ages: All
1:30-2:30 p.m.
members pay only \$1

Summer's heat has taken its toll. Supplement fall's flowers for migrating Monarchs and resident butterflies with a feeder you make and take. Meet at Oxley. Sign-up begins September 9.

29 "Family Nature Journals"

Saturday
\$2 for non-members



Ages: All
10:00-12:00 noon
free to members

Nature journals are a way to capture the moment and make it special. We'll try different journaling techniques as we explore the nature trails. Please call for materials list. Meet at Oxley.
Sign-up begins September 16.

6 "Saturday Morning Birding"

Saturday
Free



Ages: All

8:00-9:45 a.m.
registration not required

Meet in the Oxley parking lot promptly at 8:00 a.m.
Bring binoculars if you have them.

6 "Corn Husk Flowers"

Ages: All

Saturday
\$2 fee plus \$2 for materials
Using dyed and dried cornhusks we will make flowers to add to your Autumn arrangements. Meet at Oxley.
Sign-up begins September 23.

1:00-3:00 p.m.
members pay only \$2

13 "Tree as Teacher, Seed as Treasure"

Saturday
\$2 fee plus \$1 for materials



Ages: All

10:00-12:00 noon
members pay only \$1

Let's take a walk in the forest and find out what trees have to teach us. Then we'll plant our own seeds, tend them and see what grows! Each participant will take home the "beginning of a 60 foot tree" in a 3-inch pot, along with instructions on how to care for it. Meet at Oxley.
Sign-up begins September 30.

28 "Cruisin' On the Katy Trail"

Sunday
\$2 for non-members

1:00-4:00 p.m.
free to members

Bicycling doesn't have to be a race from point A to point B. Let's notice and enjoy the sights and sounds along this scenic ride. Bring your own bike and helmet. Participants must be able to bicycle 12 miles. Meet at Newblock Park.
Sign-up begins October 14.



"Autumn Voices"



The fields and woods can be a noisy place, as summer draws to a close and autumn begins. We may not see who is making all the racket, but we'll enjoy their twilight calls and songs.

Families & Individuals
Tuesday, September 11, 7:30-8:45 p.m.
Sign-up begins September 2.

Groups (6 or more)
Tuesday, September 25, 7:30-8:45 p.m.
Sign-up begins September 1.

Night Walks

\$2 general public, members free

"Night Fliers"

What mysterious creatures fly under the cover of darkness? We will explore the area in search of bats and the moths they feed on.



Families & Individuals
Friday, October 5, 7:00-8:30 p.m.
Sign-up begins September 23.

Groups (6 or more)
Tuesday, October 23, 7:00-8:30 p.m.
Sign-up begins September 1.



Volunteer Naturalist Training Begins

Join our team of dedicated volunteers who lead nature study walks, welcome and assist visitors, or help us keep up with the never-ending task of maintaining our trail system. No previous experience is necessary, just an eager mind and a love for nature.



Participants must be 18 years or older. Volunteer naturalist trail guides are required to attend a series of training sessions during September. For more information please call Oxley at 669-6644.

Junior Naturalists

The Junior Naturalist program for 3rd-5th graders begins in September. Meetings are held the 2nd Saturday of every month through May. If your child enjoys making discoveries about nature, and being with other like-minded children, consider calling Oxley at 669-6644 for more information.



The program involves nature hikes, an off-site trip, a family cook-out and creative activities. Join us for the fun!

Bat Facts

We often fear things we don't understand. Numerous myths and superstitions persist about our only true flying mammals--the bats. Oklahoma is home to 22 species of bats. They are the only major predator of night-flying insects such as mosquitoes, moths, beetles and leafhoppers, helping to balance the populations of these insect pests. Because bats have a high metabolism and expend a lot of energy in flight, they may eat up to 2,000 mosquitoes in one night! Bats have good eyesight, but often use a special sonar system called echolocation to avoid obstacles and predators and to locate and capture insects. Bats rank as North America's most rapidly declining and endangered land mammals. Learn more about these misunderstood creatures, watch for their erratic flight in the night sky near street lights and bodies of water, and welcome them to your neighborhoods.

