



Oxley Nature Center Newsletter

Volume 138

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From the Stump by

Bob
Jennings

It's snowing today. It's not sticking, because it's warm and the snow is light, but it's snowing. I like it when it snows like this, the woods are quiet and peaceful, but the roads won't be slick on the drive home.

Out in the woods, there is a calmness. The only sounds are bird calls and the sound of the snow falling. It's not often that we can hear the snow fall, but these are heavy, wet flakes and we can hear them falling on the stiff, dead leaves.

It's nice just to stand here, to listen to it snow and to try to let the peace of these woods overtake us. It's also nice that we have places like this to go when it snows. Parks like ours are special places, places where there is solace and solitude, sanctuaries from that other world of work and worry and sometimes war.

This has not been a good year for many of us. We have seen hatred come to seek us out, bringing destruction and fear and pain. It's hard to cope with these things, as we're not used to them. They are strange new elements thrust into our world and into our lives.

We should be glad that there are wild places, and silent places, and snowy places. Nature can bring our world back into focus, and offer us a retreat when we must seek to reaffirm the truths in our lives.

As I stand in the forest today, I can feel the reality of this place begin to replace the

problems and anxieties that I carried here. It seems as if there are forces here that reject the negative things that I brought with me, forces that tell me to look up, to see that gull against gray clouds, to hear the lone crow call from the cottonwood.

Soon I realize that I'm not worrying about the budget right at this moment. Instead, I'm trying to figure out if that brown illusion in the brushpile is a Marsh Wren or a Winter Wren. I know that I have things to do back in the office, but first I need to do some snowflake inspecting, hoping to be the first person ever to discover two identical snowflakes.

Along the trail ahead, I see a crimson stroke of cardinal wings. The male is following the female closely, maintaining contact in case another male should present a scarlet alternative. They will be courting soon, despite today's snow and chill.

The cardinals, like the other wild things, have their own cares and concerns. Food, shelter, a mate - all these things are important here in these woods.

And perhaps there is a lesson there for us.

Take all the things that concern us, all the fears and the troubles and the uncertainties, and place them in a pile in front of us. Pick them up one by one - look at them closely. Now toss everything that isn't related to food, shelter and a mate. Your pile will get much smaller.

-cardinal

You can bring your cares to our forest. You can even throw them away here. Normally we don't like it when our visitors leave discards on our trails, but I promise you that we won't say a thing if you leave your worries behind when you head for home.



Nature Center Happenings

Oxley & Redbud Valley will be **CLOSED:** Monday through Wednesday, March 25, 26 & 27, 2002 while staff naturalists attend NAI regional conference.



A \$1 parking fee per car (for the general public) will be charged on weekends when entering Mohawk Park beginning April 6. Members of Oxley get in free. The west gate will be closed weekends.

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

March 16, 10:00-11:30 "Feathers, Feet and Beaks"
Let's explore the wonderful world of birds! We will make some binoculars and go bird watching. Sign-up begins March 3.

April 20, 10:00-11:30 "Wings, Stings and Wiggly Things"

Let's take a closer look at insects!

Sign-up begins April 7.



Adventure Club (Grades K-2nd)

Kid's only, please

March 16, 10:00-11:30 "Flower Power"

Flowers are important nectar sources. We will make some "flower" feeders to take home.

Sign-up begins March 3.

April 20, 10:00-11:30 "Pioneer Games"

Join us as we play games that were popular when our great-grandparents were kids. It's great fun!

Sign-up begins April 7.



"Star Maps"



Star Programs



"Planet Dance"



Going someplace dark over spring break? Take a star map with you. Bring scissors if you have them. Each child aged 7 and under should bring an adult to help assemble the map. Meet at Oxley. Sunset is 6:35 p.m. and Moonset is 4:56 p.m. Sign-up begins March 3.

**Tuesday, March 12,
7:00-8:30 p.m.**

\$2 general public,
free to members

All Ages All ♿



Bring something to sit on and binoculars or a telescope if you wish. Between now and the end of April the five planets visible to the naked-eye will arrange themselves in a dramatic line across the evening sky. Meet at the circle drive at Lake Yahola. Sunset is 6:56 p.m. and Moonset is 1:04 p.m. Sign-up begins March 24.

**Saturday, April 6,
7:00-8:30 p.m.**

Spring Sensations

The American Robin is often heralded as a harbinger of Spring, yet it resides here all winter in the forest and thickets. Welcome back the first of the migrating hummingbirds, warblers and flycatchers. Their songs fill the air. Taste the first wild onion, redbud blossom or morel of the season. Listen for the songs of the ardent chorus frogs. Smell the sweet scent of phlox and violets. Feel the warming of the fragrant earth. Revel in Spring sensations!



Programs and special events

March

2 "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.

2 "North Woods Ramble"

Saturday

\$2 for non-members

Ages: All

1:30-4:00 p.m.

free to members

We'll roam several miles exploring this wildest part of the Nature Center. Wear your hiking shoes! Sign-up begins February 17.

9 "Family Nature Journals: 'Winter's End'"

Saturday

\$2 plus \$1 materials fee



Ages: All

1:00-3:00 p.m.

\$1 for members

Journaling in winter allows us to find what nature has been hiding. Join us to learn ways to keep our nature journal as spring approaches. Meet at Oxley. Sign-up begins February 17.

30 "Marsh Madness"

Saturday

\$2 for non-members



Ages: All

10:00-11:30 a.m.

free to members

During a visit to our marsh we'll find evidence to reinforce our ideas of food webs. Could there be Easter Eggs hidden there? Meet at Oxley. Sign-up begins March 17.

April

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.

13 "Butterflies Through Binoculars"

Saturday
Free



Ages: All

10:00-12:00 noon

registration not required

We will be doing butterfly identification for beginners. We will view slides indoors and then go outside for the last 45 minutes. Meet at Oxley. Bring binoculars if you have them.

14 "Early Wildflowers of Redbud"

Sunday

\$2 for non-members

Ages: All

8:30-10:30 a.m.

free to members



Come explore the wildflowers that grace this beautiful area. Meet at Redbud. Sign-up begins March 31.

April 20 is EARTH DAY!

Celebrate the day by joining a service group clean-up or writing a letter for clean air. Simply enjoy the beauty while walking the trails & observe nature's spring renewal.



"Spring Songs"

Join us as we listen for early spring sounds and songs on the night air.

Groups (6 or more)

Thursday, March 14, 6:30-8:00 p.m.

Sign-up begins March 3.

Families and Individuals

Wednesday, March 20, 6:30-8:00 p.m.

Sign-up begins March 10.



Night Walks

\$2 general public, members free

"Creatures of the Night"

Creatures of the night, exchanging glances. Creatures of the night, what are the chances? Will we find any romances?

Groups (6 or more)

Thursday, April 11, 7:00-8:30 p.m.

Sign-up begins March 3.

Families and Individuals

Thursday, April 18, 7:00-8:30 p.m.

Sign-up begins April 7.

Volunteer Training Begins

If you enjoy the company of children and love the outdoors it's not too late to participate in our volunteer naturalist training program! Join like-minded adults 18 years and older for our four-week training beginning March 5. For more information or to enroll please call us at 669-6644.

Hope to see you there!





Outdoors Woman Weekend



Saturday & Sunday, April 27 & 28

Women and men ages 18 and up are invited to enroll in one of a variety of classes being held at Oxley Nature Center. Some sessions being offered include fly-fishing and fly-tying, elm bark baskets, journaling, butterflies--gardening and identification, kayaking, spring botany, herbal teas and back-packing basics.



All necessary equipment will be provided.

Participants must provide their own lunch and drinks.

Payment must be received at time of registration.



To request a registration packet or for more information please call 669-6644.



Member Support

In these trying times we need your support more than ever. Members of **Friends of the Nature Center** help to support our educational programs and allow us to protect the habitat and wildlife at Oxley Nature Center and Redbud Valley Nature Preserve. Members can participate in our programs for free or at reduced rates. They are invited to "Members Only" events, receive a discount at our gift shop and get free year-round admission to Mohawk Park. **If you are not a member but would like to continue receiving our bi-monthly newsletter, please notify us by May 1** by calling 669-6644, faxing 669-6653, e-mailing at oxley@ci.tulsa.ok.us or dropping us a line at the address on this newsletter. We hope you'll join us!

 **How Do I Sign Up?** 