



Oxley Nature Center Newsletter

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Thoughts to Ponder by Donna Horton

It came up in discussion the other day: what is it that makes us "human" as opposed to "animal"? We give Humanitarian Awards to people who not only are generous to humanity, but might be considered to be extraordinarily human. Is it their generosity that makes them especially good humans? Or is there some other requirement? What are the standards? It is unlikely that each one of us will get to parade onto a stage on national television to accept a humanitarian award, but we can still make this world a better place by each of us working to become the best human being possible.

So how do we do it? One of our school groups decided upon a new safety rule one day: be kind to every living thing. That seems like a pretty good starting place. But when you think about it, kindness is not limited to humans. Remember the child who fell into a zoo exhibit several years ago? Horrified onlookers expected the gorilla to bite or even to kill the accidental intruder. Instead, the gorilla carefully and gently held the frightened child until he could be rescued from the enclosure. There are many stories of animals caring compassionately for members of their own species and of rescuing or aiding others as well.

Some people argue that humans are the only animals that are self-aware. Others claim that only humans have a sense of humor, or that only humans can grieve. Those of us who have pets would be able to describe examples that would prove all of those theories wrong. Intelligence? By that standard, some animals would qualify as human, while some of our best people would not.

I would like to propose that humans are the animals with the greatest capacity to plan for

the long-term future in a conscious way. And, as we point out in the Nature Center's Riddle of the Woods lesson, humans also hold the greatest capacity to change the conditions of life on our planet.

Over the past few months, I've had the opportunity to think about people who have acted to make positive long-term changes in our community. In the mid-1970s, Dick Sherry and Philip Nelson not only came up with the idea to create a Nature Center for Tulsa, they helped form a group that made it possible. The members of that group, mostly from the Tulsa Audubon Society, are more humans who should be applauded for working to better the interlocking natural and social environments of our community. We have recognized Oxley Nature Center's Director Emeritus Bob Jennings for his positive impact through the years, and for helping give a shape to the early dreams that will last for decades to come.

There are fine humans still hard at work in our small part of the world: the current Nature



Center staff, including the wonderful volunteers. And the all-volunteer Executive Board of the Friends of Oxley. And the good people who support the Nature Center with their memberships and

donations and vocal or written comments to budget administrators who have to draw the financial belt tighter this year.

This is an important time to think about doing all we can to be good stewards, long-term planners and kind, generous humans.

Nature Center Happenings

We will be closed for
the following holidays:

Monday, November 11,
Thursday & Friday,
November 28 & 29
and Tuesday &
Wednesday,
December 24 & 25.

Happy Holidays!!



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.

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

Kid's Saturday Programs

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

Discovery Club (Ages 3-5 years)

Each child accompanied by an adult, please

November 16, 10:00-11:30 "Nature Weaving"
How do different animals build their homes?
We will weave a home for found treasures.
Sign-up begins October 27.

December 21, 10:00-11:30 "Wildlife Holiday"
How do animals survive the winter?
We'll make them some food treats!
Sign-up begins December 8.



Adventure Club (Grades K-2nd)

Kid's only, please

November 16, 10:00-11:30 "Festive Fall Crowns"
We'll use the season's bounty to make glorious
headgear! Bring an adult to help you.
Sign-up begins October 27.

December 21, 10:00-11:30 "Nature Ornaments"
We will use natural objects to create
beautiful ornaments.
Sign-up begins December 8.



"Star Beasts"

Friday, November 22,
6:00-7:30 p.m.
Meet at Lake Yahola

A giant swan, a mighty eagle, a winged horse flying up out of the ocean, a sea monster pursuing a princess and perhaps a pair of bears: the sky is full of beasts and their stories. Bring something to sit on. Binoculars or a telescope may be useful. Sunset: 5:12 p.m. and Moonrise: 7:08 p.m. Meet on the east side of Lake Yahola above the circle drive.
Sign-up begins November 10.

Star Programs

\$2 general public
free to members

All ages welcome

♿ with advance notice

"Winter Stars"

Saturday, December 28,
6:00-7:30 p.m.
Meet at Oxley Nature Center

Cold clear nights mean beautiful, brilliant stars. We will use the telescope to admire the rings of Saturn, if conditions permit. Dress warmly and bring binoculars if you wish. Moonset: 1:19 p.m. and Sunset: 5:17 p.m.
Sign-up begins December 15.

Programs and special events

November

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



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

2 "Fall Colors Walk" Ages: All ■
 Saturday 9:30-11:00 a.m.
 \$2 for non-members free to members



Let's walk the trails at Redbud Valley to view the burst of color autumn offers in the trees, shrubs and ground covers. Meet at Redbud Valley. Sign-up begins October 20.

23 "Magic Cottonwood Walk" Ages: All ■
 Saturday 1:00-2:30 p.m.
 \$2 for non-members free to members



The cottonwood tree has a secret to share. We will hike to search for the magic cottonwood. Meet at Oxley. Sign-up begins November 10.

30 "North Woods Ramble" Ages: All ■
 Saturday 1:30-3:30 p.m.
 \$2 for non-members free to members

Wear your hikin' shoes! We'll cover about 2 miles, as we circle round the North Woods to observe the season circling round towards the end of autumn. Meet at the bend of road on the N.W. corner of the golf course. Sign-up begins November 17.

December

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



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

7 "Twilight Time" Ages: All ■
 Saturday 5:00-6:30 p.m.
 \$2 for non-members free to members



What goes on when the sun goes down? These shortest and busiest days of the year with the longest nights offer a treat. Spend a short time with us and let twilight refresh you; watch wildlife awaken as dark descends. You'll have plenty of time left for "busy-ness" before bedtime. Meet at Oxley. Sign-up begins November 24.

28 "Daddy-Daughter Hike" Ages: All ■
 Saturday 1:00-2:30 p.m.
 \$2 for non-members free to members



If you're like me, it's hard to spend quality time with just my daughter. Here's an opportunity to explore Redbud Valley with your daughter(s). Learn a few secrets of nature in winter that only you can share and then return to the visitor center for hot chocolate. Meet at Redbud Valley. Sign-up begins December 15.

Join us Saturday, November 9 for two special programs
For ages 18 & up. Must prepay to enroll in these classes; space is limited.

Dutch Oven Cooking
 Taught by Debi Groom and Su Davis

Time: 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
Fee: \$25.00 (non-members), \$20.00 (members).

Join us in learning Dutch oven cooking techniques and how to select, care for, and store these versatile cast iron pots. Great for car camping and the backyard. We will prepare meats, breads, vegetables, desserts and home made root beer!
 Wear comfortable shoes and clothes for the outdoors. Bring a chair if you like. Come hungry!

Edible Wild and Herbal Teas
 Taught by Donna Horton

Time: 1:00-4:00 p.m.
Fee: \$20.00 (non-members), \$15.00 (members)

Southern-style wilted greens, sourdough biscuits, dandelion fritter, persimmon bread, wild herb tea... The afternoon session will focus on ingredients that can be collected from a variety of habitats. We'll discuss safety and conservation issues. Weather permitting, we'll go out to collect items, learning the basics of identification. (If it's storming we'll use items collected ahead of time). Finally, we'll try out a variety of preparation techniques and sample our cooking. Bring your own recipes to share!

Congratulations New Volunteers

The following people successfully completed volunteer naturalist training:



Shannon Chatwin and Linda Wallis



We welcome you and look forward to having you on our team!

This Time Last Year...

- A bobcat at water feature outside library window.
- Aurora borealis across N.E. Oklahoma several evenings the first week in November.
- An awesome nightwalk with a sighting of raccoon and opossum and hearing coyotes, Barred Owls and a fox.
- An 8-point buck chasing a doe behind the visitor center.
- A Gray Fox crossing the prairie at 8:00 a.m. being followed by a buck sniffing and scent marking along his trail.
- Butterflies still nectaring (Black Swallowtails, Red Admirals, Whites and Sulphurs, Variegated Fritillary, Common Buckeye and Painted Ladies).
- Seeing a Rock Wren, Towhees, winter sparrows and juncos.

Join us for this years discoveries!