



Oxley Nature Center Newsletter

Volume 159

September/October, 2005



You are invited to **BioBlitz**, a celebration of biodiversity at Mohawk Park, on September 9 and 10, 2005.

BioBlitz is a rapid inventory of biological diversity done once each year at a select site in Oklahoma. It is an exciting scramble to find out how many different kinds of plants, animals, and other living things can be found in the target area during 24 consecutive hours. It serves as a one-time "snapshot", a brief but revealing view of how many different kinds of living things share this part of our world with us (right on the edge of the city!) This year, the target area is one of the largest municipal parks in the U.S.—Mohawk Park!

BioBlitz is hosted by the Oklahoma Biological Survey and conducted by volunteers from around the state. Teams of biologists search for and identify mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, fish, invertebrates, plants, and monerans—as many living things as possible. A running tally is displayed at the base camp, and final results are announced at the BioBlitz grand finale.

This is an exceptional opportunity for everyone to meet with scientists, learn about field techniques, see some secretive and unusual critters, and enhance awareness of the inhabitants all around us in the meadows, forests, waters, and even along the roadsides. Prepare to be amazed!

Join Oxley Nature Center and Tulsa Zoo staff and volunteers on Friday evening and Saturday for some special activities and presentations. See enclosed insert for details. We hope to see you there!



Volunteer Naturalist Training Begins

Have you got "time to share"? Do you enjoy nature and being outdoors? Becoming a volunteer naturalist offers you the opportunity to experience and share the mystery and wonder of nature with local area school children.

Volunteer naturalists are required to attend a series of basic training sessions during September. No previous experience is necessary, just enthusiasm and a love for children and nature. Participants must be 18 years or older. Please call for more information.



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 young naturalists, call us for enrollment information. This program involves nature hikes, exploration, adventure, and creative activities. Come experience the mysteries of nature and join us for the fun!



Nature Center Happenings

**Oxley Nature
Center
& Redbud Valley
will be closed
Monday,
September 5, 2005.**



Happy Holiday!

A \$2 per car Mohawk Park fee will be charged weekends April through October. The west gate will be closed. Oxley members get in free.



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 7:00 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. Programs with insufficient registration may be cancelled 48 hours prior to program.

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



Astronomy Programs



\$2 for general public, free to members, open to all ages, please register in advance

Both programs meet at the circle drive east of Lake Yahola (not easily accessible to strollers or ♿)

Saturday, September 3, "**Bright Planets**" 7:30-9:00 p.m. Have you been watching the bright planet Jupiter and the even brighter planet Venus drawing closer and closer to each other in the western sky at sunset? Weather permitting, we'll peek at them through the telescope tonight! Bring binoculars if you have them, and perhaps a chair or blanket to sit on.

Wednesday, October 19, "**Autumn Stars**" 7:30-9:00 p.m. We'll learn how to connect patterns of stars to find heroic figures in the night sky. We may get a preview of our neighbor Mars, which will grow very bright in our sky this month. Bring binoculars if you have them, and something to sit on.

Coming in November: "**Mars Watch II**" will take place Friday and Saturday, November 11-12 at the Polo Field in Mohawk Park. Oxley will co-host this event with the Astronomy Club of Tulsa. Telescopes will be available to view a brilliant red Mars as it lines up with Earth on the same side of the sun. Watch for more information.

Full Moon Walks

Registration required, \$2 for general public, free for members, all ages, ♿



Friday, September 16, 7:00-8:30 p.m. "**Harvest Moon**"

With the long, hot days behind us, we may now reap the benefits of the season's bounty. Let's walk the trail at Oxley as the full moon rises to view the changes that lie ahead during shorter, cooler days.

Monday, October 17, 7:00-8:30 p.m. "**Hunter's Moon**"

Leaves are falling, and fields and forests are being gleaned of their bounty by all kinds of "hunters" that make Oxley their home. Let's see if we can find signs of all this activity as preparation for winter begins.

Programs and Special Events

September

3 "Saturday Morning Birding" Ages: All

Saturday
Free



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

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

3 "Butterfly Walk" Ages: All

Saturday
Free



10:30-11:30 a.m.
registration not required

Join us on our monthly butterfly walk. Will the monarchs be migrating? Bring binoculars if you have them. Meet at Oxley.

9 & 10 "BioBlitz" Ages: All

Friday
Saturday
Free



3:00-10:00 p.m.
8:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.
registration not required

Join us for this very special event in Mohawk Park! BioBlitz is a celebration of biological diversity. Several activities will be available at the Base Camp at Shelter #2 in Mohawk Park and at Oxley Nature Center. Please see details on page 1.

17 "Field Sketching" Ages: All

Saturday
\$2 for general public

9:00-11:00 a.m.
free for members

Bring a sketch pad and take a walk in the woods. Sketch trees, flowers, animals, and even rocks. Meet at Redbud Valley. Please register in advance.

24 "Wildflower Walk" Ages: All

Saturday
Free



10:30-11:30 a.m.
registration not required

Will we find goldenrod, asters, and broomweed in flower? What about prickly pear and sumac in fruit? Meet at Redbud Valley for a wildflower walk.

25 "Dusk at Blackbird Marsh" Ages: All

Sunday
\$2 for general public



6:30-8:00 p.m.
free for members

We will walk to Blackbird Marsh to find out what critters are going to bed and which ones are getting up. Meet at Oxley. Please register in advance.

October

1 "Saturday Morning Birding" Ages: All

Saturday
Free



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

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

1 "Butterfly Walk" Ages: All

Saturday
Free



10:30-11:30 a.m.
registration not required

Join us on our last butterfly walk of the season. Bring binoculars if you have them. Meet at Oxley.

9 "Trees-the Fall Preview Show" Ages: All

Sunday
\$2 for general public



3:00-4:30 p.m.
free for members

It's a little early for much fall color, but it's a good time to meet the performers before the show begins! Collecting is not normally permitted, but program participants may take home a few leaf specimens trimmed from the trail by the naturalist. Meet at Redbud Valley. Please register in advance.

16 "Silken Secrets" Ages: All

Sunday
\$2 for general public



8:30-10:00 a.m.
free for members

What is this amazing fiber and how is it used by the various spiders who weave it? A fall morning is a great time to see spider webs of all kinds. Meet at Redbud Valley. Please register in advance.

22 "Wildflower Walk" Ages: All

Saturday
Free



10:30-11:30 a.m.
registration not required

We will look for fall colors in the wildflowers in this last wildflower walk of the season. Meet at Oxley.

29 "Saving Seeds?" Ages: All

Saturday
\$2 for general public



9:00-11:00 a.m.
free for members

What do your favorite wildflowers look like after they are finished blooming? We'll collect seed and learn how to store or propagate them for your "wildflower garden". Meet at Oxley. Please register in advance.

Wonders Never Cease

by Amy Morris

I was looking through "The Red Book" the other day. This simple, college-ruled, 5-subject notebook contains documentation of significant sightings recorded by staff naturalists over the past 15 years. The entries are intermittent, and dependent on both individual perspective and collective agreement. What is noteworthy, and to whom?

Many clues; some brief, written in pencil in an apparent rush; others penned with obvious excitement, emotion, and detail; lay quietly in the pages of this nondescript notebook.

They may offer insight into a piece of the puzzle that makes up something as grand as migration in nature:

"Sept. 28, 2000--Gorgeous weather this week! Monarch migration at its peak. Reba found, ... east of the teaching shelter parking lot, a tree festooned with monarchs!"

Or they may speak to someone's expression of joy at their discovery of a remarkable sight:

"Sept, 1990--Several bobcat sightings near the interpretive building ... one was seen catching a rabbit and walking away with it ... one adult and 3 kittens were seen drinking at the north end of the pond ..."

They may point to the emergence of possible patterns. In September and October, monarchs, kettles of hawks, and other birds are heading south; while various species of sparrows, juncos, and towhees are coming from the north to spend the winter with us. Raccoon, woodchuck, armadillo, coyote, bobcat, and squirrel have appeared near the bird feeders to thrill us with their presence. The worker bees have dragged the drones out of the hive to die. The animal kingdom is very busy now.

Great change is in the air. Years of journal entries speak of *"record-breaking heat and drought in July and August"*. This only to be followed with: *"Sept. 23, 1999--Finally--it RAINED!"* Years of September entries mention "cold fronts" dropping the daytime temperatures into the low 70's. October days offer frosty mornings, and *"October 8, 2001--First freeze. 26 degrees!"*, promises relief from summer heat.



So what is noteworthy? Why don't you come out and decide for yourself. I guarantee you will see something we don't. Hear the end of the summer chorus of insects. Feel and smell the change in the air. Let the child "in you" or with you embrace the season!



BioBlitz Schedule



Friday, September 9th

3:00 p.m. BioBlitz begins!

There will be many activities in which you and your family may take part. For more information about any of the programs, please call Oxley Nature Center at (918) 669-6644 or visit www.oxleynaturecenter.org.

Activities at Oxley Nature Center

- Indoor live animal presentations by Tulsa Zoo
- Outdoor walks with Oxley naturalists

	Indoors:	Outdoors:
6:00 p.m.	Bats Up Close	Evening Walk
7:00 p.m.	Creepy Crawlies	Evening Walk
8:00 p.m.	Bats Up Close	Night Walk
9:00 p.m.	Creepy Crawlies	Night Walk

Activities at Base Camp

(located at Shelter #2)

- View samples of what has been found
- Visit with a biologist
- Come to the **Base Camp Amphitheater** for a program with live animals presented by the Tulsa Zoo.

6:00 p.m.	Owls
7:00 p.m.	Things That Go Bump-Screech-Howl in the Night
8:00 p.m.	Owls
9:00 p.m.	Things That Go Bump-Screech-Howl in the Night

Saturday, September 10th

Activities at Oxley Nature Center

8:00 a.m. Birding

Bring binoculars if you have them, for a hike to look at birds.

9:00 a.m. Plant Personalities

Walk through prairie and forest and look for green dragons, passion vine, dog bane, or grass as high as an elephant's eye.

10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Indoors with live animal presentations by the Tulsa Zoo and outdoors with Oxley naturalists.

	Indoors:	Outdoors:
10:00 a.m.	Pond Life	Dip Netting
11:00 a.m.	Mammals	Tracking
12 noon	Pond Life	Dip Netting
1:00 p.m.	Mammals	Tracking

Activities at Base Camp

(located at Shelter #2)

- View samples of what has been found
- Visit with a biologist
- Come to the **Base Camp Amphitheater** for a program with live animals presented by the Tulsa Zoo.

10:00 a.m.	Reptiles
11:00 a.m.	Birds of Prey
12 noon	Reptiles
1:00 p.m.	Birds of Prey

3:00 p.m. Grand Finale


BioBlitz ends with a summary presented by the Oklahoma Natural Heritage Staff.

Fall Art Classes at Oxley Nature Center

Nature Art I

Dates: Thursdays, Sept. 1 through Nov. 10

Time: 1:00-2:30 p.m.

Ages: 5-9, 

Tuition: \$65 for members, \$75 for non-members


Instructor: Heidi Contreras

This afternoon art class is a great opportunity for home school students. Students will be using pencil, acrylics, pastels and sculpey clay.

Nature Art II

Date: Thursdays, Sept. 1 through Nov. 10

Time: 2:30-4:00 p.m.

Ages: 9 and up, 

Tuition: \$65 for members, \$75 for non-members

Instructor: Heidi Contreras


This afternoon class is an opportunity for home school students to explore the world of nature through drawing with pencil, charcoal, pen, pastels, and sculpey clay.



Fundamentals of Nature Art

Date: Wednesdays, Sept. 7-28.

Time: 6:00-8:00 p.m.

Ages: 14 to adults, 

Tuition: \$65 for members, \$75 for non-members

Instructor: Brenda Knapp

This class is for the student who wants to understand the core concepts of drawing as it applies to natural art. Students will learn to draw sunlight and shadow, textures found in nature, botanical illustrations, and landscapes in perspective.



Preregistration is required for all classes. A supply list will be provided. Fee must accompany registration.

Kids' Butterfly Books

Date: Saturday, Sept. 24

Time: 10:00-11:30 a.m.

Ages: 10-12, 

Tuition: \$8 for members, \$10 for non-members

Instructor: Brenda Knapp



Learn how to make your own butterfly-shaped book and how to illustrate it with pictures of butterflies.

Watercolor Butterflies

Date: Saturday, Sept. 24

Time: 1:00-4:00 p.m.

Ages: 14 to adults, 

Tuition: \$8 for members, \$10 for non-members

Instructor: Brenda Knapp




Come explore the beauty of butterflies through the medium of water color.

Kids' Painting Fall Leaves

Date: Saturday, October 29.

Time: 10:00-11:00 a.m.

Ages: 7-10, 

Tuition: \$5 for members, \$6 for non-members

Instructor: Brenda Knapp



Learn to achieve a natural look using color mixing, shapes, and tone variation. We'll gather colorful fall leaves and paint pictures of them in tempura.

Black Walnut Ink Workshop

Date: Saturday, Oct. 29.

Time: 1:00-3:00 p.m.

Ages: 14 to adult, 

Tuition: \$15 for members,
\$18 for non-members



The Old Masters knew the secret of this rich, warm-colored ink. Black Walnut ink color ranges from coffee brown to a deep chocolate brown. Students will learn how to make their own ink from walnuts, and will do a drawing using ink washes. Bring a small sealable plastic jar if you'd like to take some ink home. Other supplies are provided.

