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Yes, it's hot. But the natural world doesn't really slow down in the heat. If you come early, you'll hear the sounds of cicadas all around, see dragon and damselflies swooping over the meadow and the creek waters, as well as hear the insistent sounds of woodpeckers, chickadees and wrens. Because of our rains, the forest is green and quite a bit cooler than you might expect. Let's go for a hike, but come early!

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Naturalist's Notebook

By Karen Harris

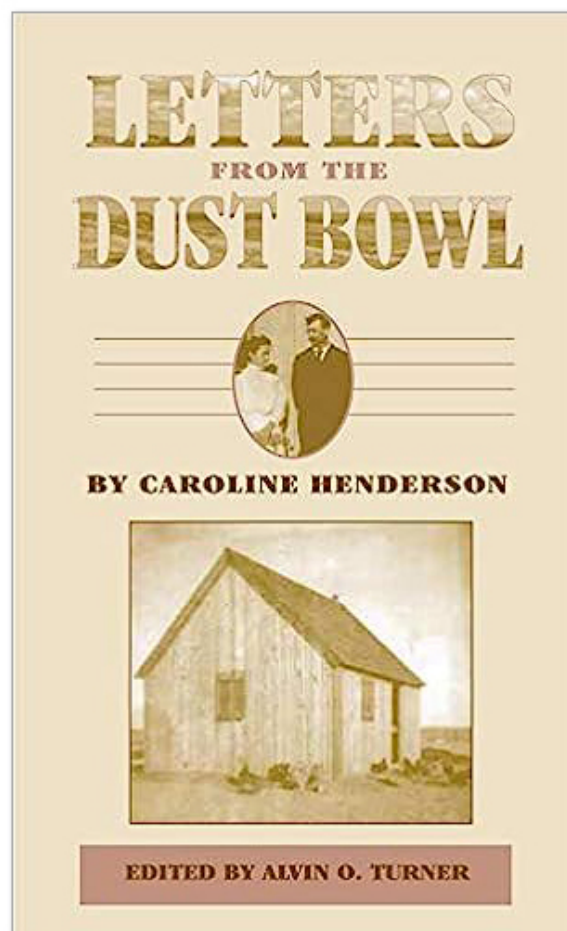
It's the end of July and I am still reeling from the destruction caused by the derecho that, on the night of June 17, swept through Tulsa packing over 100 mile per hour winds. It uprooted huge old trees and broke the tops out of many others. Citizens lost electricity for days, vehicles were totaled, and houses were split in two. A pet sitter reported to the owners that she got their cat out of a tree; the tree was in the owners' living room. Media reported no lives were lost in Tulsa that night. But lives were lost. We found a nest of baby robins under my fallen elm where the barred owl used to sit. A crow was flattened under my uprooted pin oak. As Maggie and I checked the Red Fox trail for hanging branches, we could smell the remains of a critter probably crushed by a fallen tree. Then there were the tree people (as Robin Wall Kimmerer taught us) themselves. For those of us who planted and/or nurtured them, they were people, even friends. They gave us shade and beauty and joy and we mourned for them. Mary and I consoled each other over the loss of one of her oak sisters and my white pine.

On the other hand, a woman who had to cut and drag a few branches told a friend of mine that she was done with trees, that she was headed to the mountains of Colorado to relax (I suspect among the aspen and pine trees). I fear many folks in Tulsa will consider trees a liability and decide not to replant. That would be a mistake.


Last summer my young scientist friend and I did a simple experiment involving Tulsa's urban heat island. She lives on a farm in a very wooded rural area, and we knew that the temperature at her house is almost always several degrees cooler than at my house here

in town. So we measured the temperature a foot above different surfaces like asphalt, concrete, bare soil, and grass. Knowing that cities have a lot of hard surfaces like asphalt and concrete, we predicted that the surface would make the biggest difference. Our results surprised us because the surface didn't matter as much as whether it was in the shade or in the sun. She concluded, as did government scientists, that the best way to cool hot urban Tulsa is to plant trees. I doubt that conclusion will be enough to convince someone whose car was totaled to plant another shade tree near the driveway.

However, I was heartened by several people who asked about Oxley's Grandma Bur Oak. She has lived along Bird Creek for many years and, for decades, children have crawled inside to feel her embrace. We are happy to report she is standing tall. People who form emotional bonds with trees are more apt to replant than be "done with trees." I think of Friends of Oxley as true friends of trees. We who cried for our lost trees will replant so, in the future, robins will have a place to build a nest and the barred owl a place to sit. And the next generation of human people can place benches and put down blankets under the shade of the trees we plant and their children's children might just be able to crawl inside.



This month's All About Nature Book Club selection: [Letters from the Dust Bowl](#), by Caroline Henderson. We are looking forward to Caroline Henderson's first person account of life in the Oklahoma panhandle during 1908 - 1966, a fascinating period in our state's history.




MOTH NIGHT


AT OXLEY

Saturday, August 5
8:30 - 11:30 p.m.

Discover different species at our viewing stations with Oxley Naturalists. Bring chairs, blankets, cameras, and snacks. Remember bug spray! This event is for all ages.



6700 Mohawk Blvd. | Tulsa, OK 74115 | (918) 596-9054
*use the entrance at Mohawk Blvd and N. Winston



TULSA PARKS

Mary K. Oxley Nature Center - August Programs

Interpretive Center is open Tuesday-Saturday 10:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. and Sundays Noon – 4:30 p.m.

Call 918-596-9054 for program reservations.

Friday, August 4 or Saturday, August 5 – **Volunteer Orientation**

10:00 – 11:30 a.m.

Do you love Oxley and the outdoors? Join us for one of these sessions to learn more about

Saturday, August 5 – Saturday Morning Birding

8:00 – 9:45 a.m. All skill levels welcome. Meet in the parking lot. Bring binoculars if you have them. Free.

Join us for our Saturday morning birding walk.

Saturday, August 5 – Moth Night

8:30 – 11:30 p.m. Bring a flashlight if you have one. Free and open to all.

Join us in the Fawn Grove to see what moths are attracted to the lights!

Saturday, August 19 – Wildflower Walk

10:30 – Noon. Open to all.

Come out for a free wildflower walk and discover how some plants cope with the high heat.

Friday, August 25 – All About Nature Book Club

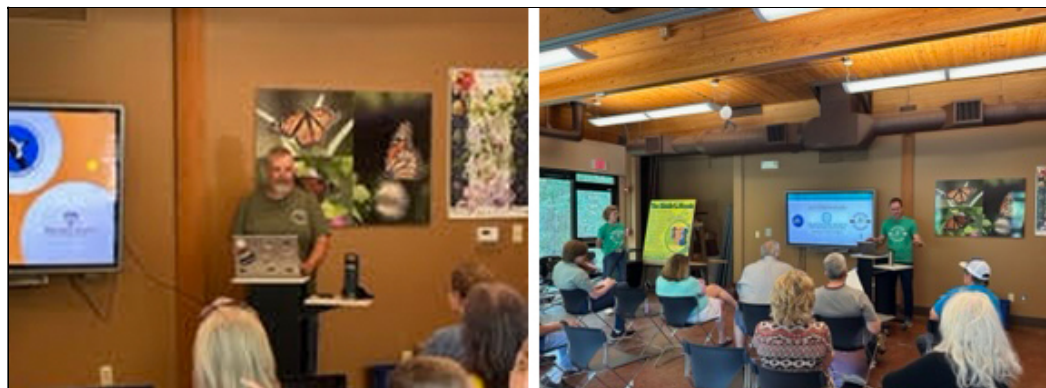
11:00 – 12:30 p.m.

Join our book discussion on nature, conservation, and the environment. We'll be talking about "Letters From The Dust Bowl" by Caroline Henderson.

Saturday, August 26 – Butterfly Walk

10:30 – Noon. Free and open to everyone. Bring binoculars if you have them.

Come find butterflies with us today! .



Many thanks to ONCA members for sponsoring our July lecture series! Jerry Morgan on the left, and Drs. Christol and Green on the right. We also heard from Brenda Smith on dragonflies and damselflies.



This Friday and Saturday! A chance for you to enjoy the outdoors and participate as a volunteer at Oxley Nature Center!



Volunteer Orientation

Friday, August 4
10 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.
or

Saturday, August 5
10 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.



Do you love nature and
the outdoors?
Join our team and help us
make a difference!

Volunteer Opportunities* include:

Volunteer Naturalist
Visitor Center Host
Trail Maintenance Crew
Weekend Ambassador

*Must be 18 years or older

Call or email to RSVP : oxley@cityoftulsa.org | (918) 596-9054

TULSA  PARKS





OXLEY NATURE CENTER HOURS

10-4:30PM Tuesday through Saturday

Noon - 4:30PM on Sunday



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