

[View this email in your browser](#)



Signs of Spring are everywhere at Oxley now. Buds are turning to leaves and flowers and birds have twigs and vines in their beaks instead of seeds and insects. They are building nests and settling in for the exciting period of laying eggs and rearing young.

If you see a Barred Owl these days while out walking in the woods at Oxley Nature Center, it is probably swooping quietly by en route to help it's mate prepare for egg laying. These cavity nesters lay eggs in the early spring, and then both parents work together to feed and secure the nestlings once hatched. Popular food offerings to the young are little snakes, smaller birds and occasionally rodents. Such attentive parents they are too! After an extended period in the nest (8 weeks!) the young "fledge" tipsily, clutching a nearby branch while looking all about their new world, and only mastering flight at around 12 weeks of age. During this three month period Mother and Father owl are keeping a close eye from nearby trees, flying in with food to keep the youngsters fed and safe.





Yellow Crowned Night Heron | Glen Smith

Sign of Spring

This is the Yellow Crowned Night Heron - *Nycticorax violacea* one of our favorite seasonal birds.

I'll bet you have seen one of these Seussian-looking creatures, hunting in the shadows of the marshy areas in Oxley. A real harbinger of Spring, this mid-size heron appears in Oklahoma in March and stays through November, leaving for gulf coast areas to stay during Winter months. Here at Oxley we see them stalking crayfish and frogs. Their thick beak may be an adaptation to eating crustaceans. One of their favorite fishing spots is in the marshy area along Bob's Trail as it approaches Blue Heron Trail. You can also see them along the Blackbird Marsh Trail. Bring your camera because unlike other herons, the Yellow Crowned Night Heron is not particularly shy and will remain fishing and stalking despite your presence!



Mary K. Oxley Nature Center - April Programs

Call 918-596-9054 for information or to register if required (please register 48 hours in advance)

We will practice social distancing

3 April "Saturday Morning Birding" Ages: All

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

Join us for birding at Oxley. All skill levels are welcome. Bring binoculars if you have them.

10 April "Junior Naturalists; At the Water's Edge" Ages: 8-12 years

Saturday, 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Free for Members, Non-members \$5 per session.

Please bring exact change (cash). Registration is required by Thursday, April 8 at 4:30 p.m.

Call 918-596-9054 to pre-register.

How big is Lake Sherry? Who lives near or in it? This month, the junior naturalists will explore the Lake Trail and the rich habitats it supports to learn more about freshwater ecosystems. Please pack

17 April "Butterfly Walk" Ages: All

Saturday, 10:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m. Free, registration not required

Join us for the first butterfly walk of the season. Have you ever seen a Question Mark, a Spring Azure, a Clouded Sulphur or various swallowtails? Bring binoculars if you have them. All skill levels are welcome.

24 April "Explore the Flora" Ages: All

Saturday, 10:30-noon Free, registration not required

This time of year, growth is happening at a phenomenal rate. What new flowers will be coming into bloom? What new discoveries will we make on the trail today?

26 April "Full Pink Moon" Ages: All

Monday 7:00-8:30 p.m. \$3 members, \$5 non-members Please bring exact change (cash).

Registration required by Saturday, April 24 at 4:30 p.m. Call 918-596-9054 to pre-register.

This moon is named for the phlox wildflower that blooms in the early spring. Join us to celebrate this beautiful time of year!



Swamp Rabbit | Glen Smith

OXLEY NATURE CENTER

- The Interpretive Building will be open Monday through Thursday, and Saturday 10:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. and Sunday, noon - 4:30 p.m. We are closed on Fridays.

Subscribe

Past Issues

Translate ▼

RSS 

REDBUD VALLEY NATURE PRESERVE

- Redbud Valley Nature Preserve is open Saturday and Sunday, 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
- The visitor center is open from 11:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.



Copyright © 2021 Mary K. Oxley Nature Center Association, All rights reserved.

Want to change how you receive these emails?

You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe from this list](#).



mailchimp