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Oxley Nature Center | Bryan Tapp

It's hard to pick a favorite season at Oxley but Spring is kind of miraculous. Seeing the flashes of bright yellow in the forests and spotting the Prothonotary Warbler and the other visitors who only come this time of year reminds us of the amazing journey that birds make from their winter resting spots in Mexico and South America all the way to their breeding spots in the Eastern US including some parts of Oklahoma and Texas.



This month for our Volunteer Spotlight, we are so pleased to honor Claire Harkness, who shares her gifts and time so generously at Oxley Nature Center. Claire publishes the newsletter, is a member of the Friends of Oxley ONCA Board, helped design the new interpretive signs along the trails, assists visitors in the nature center as a front desk host, has taught watercolor painting to adults and children at Oxley, and even shares her art in the Burr Oak gift store through her beautifully illustrated cards depicting Oklahoma wildlife.

Claire began volunteering at Oxley in 2017 but like many of us, has been enjoying the trails out here long before that. When she moved to Oklahoma with her family in 1990, they found Oxley pretty quickly and as she puts it, "My boys really grew up out here." For Claire,

her volunteer work, Claire spends her time learning about ceramics and working with clay. A longtime painter, she has found her true passion as a potter over the last couple years and loves sculpting animals from clay, really enjoying the process from vision to creation. Claire also loves to hike and explore Oklahoma and says she doesn't have a favorite place but loves it all: the outdoors, the red dirt, the wildlife, the heat, the people. Here at Oxley, though, her current favorite trail is Thrush because she saw a barred owl on it, but she was quick to point out that her favorite trail is always changing. To Claire, if she had to describe Oxley in a few words, she would say "bountiful nature." She loves being a part of the Oxley community and offered that she would encourage anyone with an interest in nature to volunteer out here. For her, it has been the most satisfying activity she's pursued following retirement.

Thank you Claire for all of your hard work and commitment to Oxley Nature Center!



Spring Sightings : Prothonotary Warbler, Bluebird, Orange Tip, Eastern Towhee, Yellow Crowned Night Heron, Blue Gray Gnatcatcher | Bryan Tapp, Janis Blanton

### Welcome to Oxley newest program: Discovery Packs!

We are thrilled to share this amazing new offering at Oxley Nature Center: Discovery Packs! Borrow one of these packs on your next visit and use the tools inside to deepen your nature connection, hone observation skills, and share your experience in the community nature journal! For explorers of all ages and available for checkout everyday from 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. on a first come, first served basis!



Explorers of all ages are invited to check out one of our new Discovery Packs! Uncover the mysteries of the natural world around Oxley Nature Center with an interactive pack full of field guides and an assortment of tools designed to help you have a richer outdoor experience!

#### WHAT'S INSIDE :

-  a trail map
-  pocket identification guides
-  pair of binoculars
-  a compass
-  a magnifying glass
-  community nature journal
-  a trash bag



*White Faced Ibis hunting for crayfish | Janis Blanton*

A white faced Ibis was a surprise visitor to the Nature Center in April! Oklahoma is a migration zone for this special bird.

### Mary K. Oxley Nature Center - May Programs

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

7 May "Saturday Morning Birding" Ages: All

Saturday, 8:00-9:45 a.m.

Free, registration not required.

Join us for birding and meet at Oxley. Come learn about birds from experienced birders.

7 May "Big Day Count"

8:00 -1:00

Ages - All Free, registration not required.

You are invited to participate in Tulsa Audubon Society's annual Big Day Count, which will focus on Mohawk Park this year. Birding for Big Day Count is from 8:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. All skill levels are welcome. Bring binoculars if you have them.

16 May "Full Flower Moon Walk" Ages: All

Monday, 7:00-8:30 p.m. Registration required by Saturday, May 14 at 4:00 p.m. Please

bring exact change or a check made out to City of Tulsa. \$3 members, \$5 non-members.

trails.

21 May "Butterfly Explorations" Ages: All  
Saturday, 9:30-11:00 a.m. Free, registration not required.  
As the weather warms up we will be spotting not only more individual butterflies but also a greater abundance of species. No experience necessary. Bring binoculars if you have them.

21 May "Junior Naturalists: "Exploring the North Woods" Ages: 8-12  
Saturday, 10:00-12:30 p.m. Registration is required and begins Sunday, May 1st @ 12 noon.  
Free for Members, Non-members \$5 per session.  
Come join us for a morning of adventure and nature connection. This month, we will be exploring the North Woods Unit!

28 May "Explore the Flora" Ages: All  
Saturday, 10:30-noon. Free, registration not required.  
It is greening up everywhere. The forest canopy is closing in. Wildflowers rise from the leaf litter, prairie grasses take on growth, and plants bloom along the water's edge. What will we discover?



**Oxley Nature Center Hours**

Oxley Nature Center will be closed Monday, May 30 for Memorial Day. The Interpretive Center will be closed but you may hike the trails.

Park in the Oxley parking lot from 8:00 a.m.to 5 p.m. or outside the gray stone gate from 5-9 p.m.

