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spider web | Greg Silva

November is a wonderful month to really see things at Oxley Nature Center. Leaves have begun to drop, carpeting the forest floor and filling the air with their scent. The newly bared tree limbs make it a little easier to see the Barred Owl as she swooshes softly from her perch overhead. Fawns have dropped their spots too and you see them now lanky and growing bigger daily. Be on the lookout for fungi clinging to the sides of rotting branches, doing their work of decomposing, absorbing, and connecting.

Don't forget! Our member and volunteer only Hayride and Wiener Roast will be this Saturday, November 5th from 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM. Come early and browse our Book Sale held up at the Interpretive Center!

Oxley Up Close



It pays to walk softly and look closely! Wonderful photographer Greg Silva does just that and shares these amazing closeups from his walk at Oxley.

Naturalist Notebook

MIGRATION, by Karen Harris

Last month, volunteer extraordinaire Bryan Tapp came in from the prairie excited to tell us that numerous Monarch Butterflies were covering the White Crownbeard flowers, *Verbesina virginica*. Oxley was serving as a refueling station for them as they migrated from the north to their roost in Mexico. What a thrill to see them fluttering in, landing and fluttering off again to their wintering grounds!

According to Cornell University Lab of Ornithology, over 5.5 million, yes MILLION, birds migrated across Tulsa County on the night of October 12 of this year. Oxley birders have spotted several migrants, some of which continued on their way south and some who will be staying with us for the winter. I've been hearing increasing numbers of White-throated Sparrows lately and we are beginning to spot more waterfowl on Lake Sherry.

- Why do animals migrate?
- How do they know where to go?
- What cues do they use to direct their movement?
- What will they need along their way?

Scientists think they know the answers to these questions but there is still controversy and thus mystery about a couple of them. Cool! We can keep wondering about wandering... except for that last question. We know what migrants need and we should help them get it.

Sara Dykman, author of *Bicycling with Butterflies*, migrated through Tulsa last month along with the Monarchs, stopping to tag a few butterflies and present a lecture about her 2017 ten thousand mile journey. What really spoke to me were the challenging experiences she had that matched those of the butterflies. Just like the Monarchs, she was traveling on her own power and she had to locate places to eat and places to rest along the way. She aimed for 60 miles per day. However, sometimes at around 60 miles there was no place to stop to eat or set up her tent for the night. She had to keep pedaling and that became difficult, and, at times, dangerous. Migrating songbirds also need to refuel, waterfowl need wetlands for food and refuge, and many land animals need safe corridors to avoid being turned into roadkill. Imagine songbirds, that for years used a wild area to refuel, arriving only to discover it had been turned into acres covered by a new factory or warehouse. Picture a flock of ducks finding their wetland stopover drained for agriculture.

That's why places like Oxley are so precious. But I believe citizens of Tulsa can do more. I have heard Anna America, our Director of Parks, wisely say that nature shouldn't just be experienced at Oxley. All of our parklands can play a role. So here is my dream for Tulsa. At each Tulsa park, even some tiny neighborhood pocket park, an area is adopted by at least one or two citizens, a scout troop or some other group and they plant and tend a pollinator garden. A small patch of land is left un-mowed to provide seeds and cover and/or leaf litter is left under a tree or two to provide a place for birds to find insects. And then there are our own private yards. I bet each one of us could find a spot for one or two more native plants that can feed or harbor migrants. Doug Tallamy would tell us to plant an oak for the birds. Sara Dykman would encourage us to tuck in a milkweed or two for the butterflies.

Come to Oxley to view migrants that stopover along their way or ones that stay for the season. As you enjoy the habitats that support them, you might get ideas about what you can do at your own neighborhood park or yard to provide migrants the resources they need for their journey.



Mary K. Oxley Nature Center - November Programs

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

November 5th
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.

November 7th
New! Oxley Seedlings Ages: 1-5 + caregiver
Monday, 10:00-11:00am
Registration is required
Free for ONCA members/ \$5 for nonmembers
What is happening to the tree leaves at Oxley? Together we will discover the colors of fall and have a fun fall leaf art activity.

November 8th
Full Beaver Moon Walk Ages: All
Saturday, 7:00-8:30 p.m.
Registration required and is now open. Registration ends Sunday November 6th at 4:00 p.m.
Please bring exact change or check made out to City of Tulsa.
\$3 ONCA members, \$5 non-members. The moon is named for the beavers that becoming increasingly active as they prepare for winter. Will we see them swimming along Coal Creek or hear them slapping their tails on the water? Dress warmly and wear sturdy shoes.

November 18th
All About Nature Book Club Ages: Adult
Friday, 11:00 a.m.- 12:30 p.m.
Free! Registration required
Join us for a discussion of books related to nature, conservation, and the environment.
October's selection: *Riverwalking: Reflection on Moving Water* by Kathleen Dean Moore.
Please bring your own book (book club titles are also available for purchase in the nature center gift store).

November 26th

Free! Registration not required

Let's look for more colorful leaves and learn some of the ways plants prepare for winter in different habitats.



9-banded Armadillo | Greg Silva

Oxley Nature Center Hours

The Interpretive Building will be closed on November 11th, 24th, and 25th for City Holidays but the trails will still be accessible.

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.



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