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*"Otter Steals Fish" | Mary Seabourn*

February is a wonderful month for dreaming and and planning and setting new goals. Have you ever considered that one of those goals might be to support Oxley Nature Center by becoming one of our Volunteers? This month on the 9th we will be holding our Volunteer Rendezvous to share information about the Oxley volunteer experience. Fulfill a dream of being closer to nature, plan to have a wonderful time learning and meeting new people, and reach a new goal. We welcome you!



### Oxley Nature Center is looking for some great Volunteers!

Come to our **VOLUNTEER RENDEZVOUS**  
Thursday February 9th  
from 10 - 12 Noon or 6PM - 8PM

Do trail maintenance and/or invasive species control  
Interact with visitors as an Interpretive Center Host  
Serve as a Volunteer Naturalist by leading school tours,  
scout troop tours and/or Full Moon Walks  
Get our message out during Outreach Events  
Work with naturalists on other tasks

You will have a chance to meet our new program director, Maggie Regan, and members of the MKONCA Board and speak with staff naturalists about what each type of volunteer work entails. There will be time for a short trail hike.

Please call 918-596-9054 to register.





### Introducing our new Nature Programs Manager!

We are so excited to welcome our newly appointed Nature Programs Manager, Maggie Regan! Maggie comes to us from OSU's Center for Indigenous Health Research and Policy, where she worked as a research coordinator on projects aimed at supporting the Indigenous food sovereignty movement. As a matter of fact, much of Maggie's professional work has been steeped in empowering diverse communities towards health through gardening and nature connection. She was a garden educator and (later) the program director for Global Garden's in-school programs, not only writing curriculum and supporting students in the classroom but also bringing them and their families together in the garden after school and throughout the summer through family food farms. At Tulsa Botanic Garden, Maggie brought many of these passions to bear in a new setting. As director of programs and events, she was instrumental in creating opportunities for both school-aged children and the public to connect not just with the gardens, but also with the pollinators who depend on them.

Maggie's commitment to bridging the gap between communities and the outdoors is a natural fit for Oxley Nature Center. And her love for Oxley isn't new either. She was born and raised right here in Tulsa and has been exploring the trails out here since she was a child. These days, her favorite trail is Thrush, mostly because she discovered it as an adult and it still feels fresh and new. As for Maggie's aspirations for her new role here at the nature center, she hopes to be a good steward and to inspire the next generation to foster relationships with the wild. Welcome Maggie!



### Naturalist's Notebook

By Karen Harris

I've been thinking a lot about dead things lately.

Amy Marcoux and I were working on a new trail guide for Red Fox Trail and were impressed by the number of standing dead trees (snags) and decomposing logs in the area. These were probably caused by damage from the 2007 ice storm. What a treasure trove for two naturalists! Amy would see a big hole in a log stuffed with oak leaves and ask "What's going on in there?" Then I would notice a possible den dug at the base of a snag and ask, "What do you think lives in there? Ground Hog? Armadillo?" Would a fox find a mouse hiding under that exposed root? Would the acorn left by a squirrel in a hollowed out depression sprout in the newly formed soil of the decomposing log?

Snags and logs are dead but are important habitat, providing cover and nesting sites for hundreds of species. Several years ago I learned that dead trees serve as shelter required

While I was “transplanting” it to the edge of my new pond, I looked up to see my neighbor leaning on the fence grinning. When I asked him what he thought, he said “I know you are pretty good with plants, but, really, I don’t think that one is going to grow.” It didn’t grow a tree, but the woodpeckers came, as did cardinals and bluebirds, and even a Cooper’s Hawk flew in to perch on one of the broken branches.

Wildlife use practically every part of a dead tree. In fact biologists have recently begun to refer to snags as “wildlife trees.” Birds and some mammals make nests in their cavities and crevices. Decaying wood attracts insects and supports growth of mosses and fungi all of which are food sources for wildlife. The Cooper’s Hawk was using the perch as a “Crow’s Nest” to spot potential prey. Squirrels, mice, and birds tuck seeds and nuts under peeling bark and opening cracks to store for later. And, as the wood decays further, soil is replenished and nutrients are returned to be used by new plants. Decaying logs frequently act as “nurse logs” for seedlings.

So maybe I haven’t been thinking so much about dead things after all, but more about the life they support. Come walk Red Fox or Bird Creek Trail and enjoy observing and wondering about all of the nurse logs and wildlife trees that are found there. And I encourage you to “plant” a snag in your own yard, but if you do, you may want to warn your neighbors so they know you really are not trying to bring a dead tree back to life.



Book Review Corner

from the All About Nature Oxley Book Club

TALKING TO THE MOON by John Joseph Mathews  
Review of January’s Nature Book Club Book

From the Forward: “This is John Joseph Mathews’ *Walden*...it is the *Walden* of the plains and prairies, of the 1930s and 1940s, by a Native American.” Mathews returned to his homeland to build a simple sandstone cabin among the blackjacks of the Osage country north of Pawhuska Oklahoma. He lived alone there for ten years and organized his memoir according to the Osage Moon calendar. He wrote of trips to western mountains to hunt big game and trips to Washington DC to represent the Osage tribe to the Federal Government. He includes vignettes of visiting with his Osage neighbors (some of which are hilarious) and he philosophizes about the meaning of life, the assimilation of Osage children, and his own mortality. But he weaves it all with his return to the solitude of the blackjacks and his interactions with the natural world. It was hard to read about the times he killed snakes, coyotes and Marsh Hawks (Northern Harriers) or seemed to shoot quail sometimes just for the pleasure of it. But he also wrote of being awed by the coyote’s ability to trick a hunter’s dogs and escape. He wrote lyrically of the prairie, “The sun was coming up to take charge of the world as fresh as mint flavor, appearing suddenly with the glistening blackjacks etched in its red like an inlay, like some cloisonné conceived by a whimsical artist.” *Talking to the Moon* is an essential read for Oklahomans who love nature. Mathews is our Thoreau.



Nature detectives in Junior Naturalists

Mary K. Oxley Nature Center - February Programs

**Saturday, February 4 - Saturday Morning Birding**  
8:00 - 9:45 a.m.; All ages welcome; Free! Registration not required  
*Join us for birding at Oxley. All skill levels are welcome. Bring binoculars if you have them.*

**Saturday, February 4 - Full Snow Moon Walk**  
7:00 - 8:30 p.m.; All ages welcome; Registration required and is now open; Cost: \$3 ONCA members, \$5 non-members. Please bring exact change.  
*Witness the night’s magic transform the trails under the light of the Snow Moon, so named for February’s typical cold, snowy weather. The Osage call this moon “Light-Of-Day-Returns Moon” because it marks the season of lengthening days.*

**Thursday, February 9 - Volunteer Rendezvous**

for our volunteer rendezvous to learn more about some of Oxley's rewarding volunteer opportunities. RSVP by calling the nature center at 918-596-9054 or emailing [oxley@cityoftulsa.org](mailto:oxley@cityoftulsa.org)

**Monday, February 13 - NEW! Oxley Seedlings**  
10:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.; Ages: 1-5 + caregiver; Registration is required; Free for ONCA members/ \$5 for nonmembers  
*Bring your little seedling to learn about how beaver families show love, look for signs of beavers in nature, and make a special beaver themed craft to take home.*

**Friday, February 24 - All About Nature Book Club**  
Ages: Adult; 11:00 - 12:30 p.m.  
*Join us for a discussion of books related to nature, conservation, and the environment. February's selection TBA.*

**Saturday, February 25 - Explore the Flora**  
10:30 a.m. - noon; All ages welcome; Free! Registration not required  
*Plants are preparing for spring. They seem eager to get started. Buds are swelling and at ground level little ones are sprouting. Let's see what we can find.*



Deer in Lake Sherry | Bryan Tapp

OXLEY NATURE CENTER HOURS

10-4:30PM Monday through Saturday  
Noon - 4:30PM on Sunday

