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Red eared Sliders | Bryan Tapp

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Join us for an exciting evening Herpetology Walk with Greg Silva this Thursday, May 11th! With his eagle eyes and great experience you will be guided to see some of Oxley's most interesting creatures from turtles and frogs to snakes and skinks.



Woodland Phlox | Bryan Tapp

### **Naturalist's Notebook**

By Karen Harris

## THE SURPRISE BOX

Last week I had just finished tucking five Shooting Stars, Dodecatheon media, into a shady part of my native flower garden when my phone dinged to notify me that I had an email from the nursery telling me my order was on the way. What? What order? Did the plants arrive before the email did? Did I win some prize for ordering large quantities of native plants from them? Did someone send me a gift? No, this is the order I forgot I made for twelve Shooting Stars, along with several other plants. It is a problem my gardener friend and I have. We call it the "surprise box of plants we forgot we ordered."

Sarah Stein, author of Noah's Garden, wrote that, in order to turn a monoculture lawn or exotic flower bed into a thriving native habitat, we should not worry about fancy garden design but instead should JUST PLANT! Of course we still need to put the right plant in the right place. There is no need to make shade-loving plants suffer and die by planting them in full sun. And, for the most part orders should be made from local or regional sources so the plants are suitable for our climate. But Stein's point was, in a native habitat garden, there is no need to be fussy about the color wheel or matching just the right plant forms or heights, simply plant in swaths of the same plants so the the birds, bees, and the butterflies can efficiently forage. So see, seventeen shooting stars won't be too many after all.

The same day my new plants arrived a terrific group of hard-working folks from Williams Company came to Oxley to refurbish two native-plant gardens, the pollinator garden near Fawn Grove and the demonstration garden by the interpretive building. Flowers had been lost to deer and armadillo damage or outcompeted by frost flower and sedges. It was time to refurbish and replant. I truly enjoyed working side by side with these volunteers as they dug and cut, carried and tilled, being careful to save the Shining Blue Star, Amsonia illustris

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Oxley). If you are a member, thank you for supporting this effort. Staff and our regular Thursday volunteer crew will protect the young transplants with fencing and hardware cloth cages. Soon visitors will not only get to enjoy the beauty of the native flowers, but, hopefully, will also be inspired to try some of the same plants in their own gardens. Together we can help nature thrive outside of the Nature Center.

Later this month, May 20th and 21st, Tulsa Audubon Society will hold its annual Wildlife Habitat and Garden Tour (https://www.tulsaaudubon.org/wildlifehabitatgardentour). This is a wonderful opportunity for Tulsans to get ideas from local gardens and also purchase native plants from knowledgeable vendors. I encourage you to attend. Oxley will have a display at one of the sites so stop by and say hi. I plan on getting to the tour early to get the best selection of plants. I can always expand the garden to add a few more pollinator plants. It might be wise to add a new plot anyway because I never know when another box of plants I forgot I ordered will arrive to surprise me.

#### BIRD QUIZ: What Bird Is This?



Answer: Northern Parula

#### CALL FOR ARTISTS!

Or more accurately, call for anyone interested in contributing their ideas and talents to creating an artistic, collaborative mapping project of Oxley land.

Given some level of community interest and input, we may be able to submit a group entry to an upcoming art exhibition in Tulsa. https://www.liggettstudio.com/2023/unmapped

This map could be an interpretive physical representation with the potential to include an element of digital storytelling. Here is a link to some examples of other "Story Maps" in the Tulsa area:

https://uploads.knightlab.com/storymapjs/1c6090f491aeaad560c7459ed88a1d6b/indianterritory/index.html

This is an opportunity to collaborate on a collective project to express what the land here at Oxley means to you as an individual and to the wider community of both human and non-human beings. There are really no limitations on how this could be approached and accomplished!

If you are interested in contributing or in finding out more about the possibilities with this project, please get ahold of Nature Programs Manager, Maggie Regan at mregan@cityoftulsa.org or call Oxley at 918-596-9056.

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Professor Justin Alexander's TCC class completing a plant Quadrat Sampling exercise in the prairie at

Oxley April 5

## Mary K. Oxley Nature Center - May Programs

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

#### Friday, May 5th - Full Flower Moon Walk

7:00 - 8:30 p.m.; All ages welcome; Registration required. (Registration FULL); Cost: \$3 ONCA members. \$5 non-members. Please bring exact change.

April showers and sunshine have brought a flush of wildflowers to the land. Join us for an evening walk along the trails. We will explore with all our senses! Wear sturdy shoes and dress for the weather.

## Saturday, May 6th - 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, May 6th - Scientific Illustration Class

 $2:\!00\text{-}\ 4:\!00\ p.m.;$  Registration required. (Registration FULL); Cost: \$5 ONCA members, \$10 non-members.; Ages 16 and up.

Sign up today for a special scientific illustration class with Artist-in-Residence Kayla Anley. All skill levels welcome and supplies will be provided. Dress for the outdoors.

# Tuesday, May 9th or May 23rd (2 session options) - Oxley Seedlings

10:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.; Ages: 1-5 + caregiver; Registration is required.; Free for ONCA members/ \$5 for non-members

In May, the sun's energy helps plants grow and flowers bloom. Bring your little seedling to explore the lush trails of Oxley and make a spring craft perfect for a sunny day.

### Thursday, May 11th - Evening Herpetology Walk

6:30- 8:30 p.m.; All ages welcome.; Free! Registration not required.

Join local herpetology expert Greg Silva for an evening walk to learn more about some of the amphibians and reptiles who call Oxley home.

## Saturday, May 20th - Wildflower Walk

10:30 a.m. - noon

All ages welcome.; Free! Registration not required.

Spring has unfolded with many flowers in bloom. What bright colors will we find among the new leaves?

### Friday, May 26th - 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. May's selection: A Tour on the Prairies by Washington Irving. Please bring your own book (book club titles are also available for purchase in the nature center gift store). This Month, the book club will visit the Keystone Ancient Forest in Sand Springs!

### Saturday, May 27th - Butterfly Walk

10:30 a.m. to Noon; All ages welcome.; 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



White Tail Deer | Bryan Tapp

OXLEY NATURE CENTER HOURS

10-4:30PM Tuesday through Saturday

Noon - 4:30PM on Sunday







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