

wetland matters



OXBOW, INC. NEWSLETTER

P.O. BOX 43391
CINCINNATI, OHIO 45243

NO. 34 MARCH - APRIL, 1992

LITTLE BY LITTLE AND BIT BY BIT -

The broad floodplain of the Great Miami river emerged as the last ice-age glacier retreated from the area. Since that time wildlife has relied on its presence for existence and for a time flourished on its bounty. But, bit by bit, as man began to dominate his environment, the habitat began to shrink. Forests were cleared, rivers dammed, wetlands drained and filled, the Indian displaced from home and land. It was successfully argued these were not acts of dominion or destruction, but only progressions for the good of man and to the benefit of his well-being.

Then, great migrating flocks of birds darkened the skies as their seasonal instinct moved them north or south. Uncounted numbers of ducks, geese, cranes, herons, and shorebirds used the wetlands and mud-flats, feeding and resting in shallow waters that also provided them protection from predation. The buffalo, wolf and bear that hunted the fertile valleys were forced to move on as, little by little, their habitat slowly disappeared.

Today, with no remaining predators to threaten their existence, herds of white-tail deer explode onto our highways and into our backyard gardens.

Today, the birds still come, but not in overwhelming numbers. Critical habitat is gone and few stay to use the area for nesting and breeding. Of the thousands of once-pristine acres, all that remain is a five-square mile narrow strip of floodplain between U.S. 50 and Shawnee Lookout Park from Elizabethtown, Ohio to Hardintown, Indiana. Most of these 2,500 acres are now cropland, farmed between seasonal floods for corn and soybeans. And, progress still continues, its success now measured in cubic yards of poured concrete.

Developers, looking at the floodplain, see only "wasted space". Construction of small business is encouraged at a site designated a "special flood hazard area" by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Little by little, development proceeds at elevations far short of the Indiana Department of Natural Resources Division of Water's 100-year flood level recommendation for such projects.

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Officials of communities argue they should be allowed to develop a wetland and cite jobs, the tax base and the free enterprise system as their reasons. When land use is the issue, few politicians or bureaucrats care about the habitat requirements of wildlife or migrant birds. It is difficult to impossible to point out to them the economic benefits to be accrued by maintaining open space and nurturing the environmental health of an area. Little by little, and bit by bit, they would nibble away until there was no more.

It may be impossible to protect all of the floodplain's 2,500 unique wetland acres but, bit by bit, over the last six years, significant inroads have been made.

Oxbow, Inc., (and here we may substitute the word "habitat"), has benefited greatly from the assistance of state and county agencies and the cooperation of far-sighted land owners. The Ohio and Indiana Departments of Natural Resources became land owners when they "joined hands across state lines" and jointly purchased a little bit of the Oxbow.

The Hamilton County Park District is actively acquiring conservation easements, little by little, on 1,000 Oxbow acres in Ohio.

A number of Indiana land owners, interested in protecting their fields from future threats of development, did their little bit by selling conservation easements on 226 acres to Oxbow, Inc., and another 32 acres will be added in March. The easements supplement 225 acres owned by Oxbow, Inc.

Today, almost 1,500 acres of the Great Miami river's habitat is safe from encroachment. The efforts of many, working together, have accomplished much. The job is not yet done, but, as we prepare for another year of challenge, it is clear that the preservation of the Oxbow will succeed, little by little, and bit by bit.



HIKING OHIO

Scenic Trails of the Buckeye State

by Robert Folzenlogen

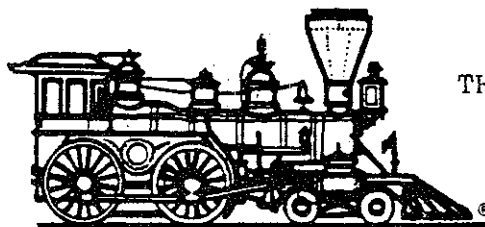
A guide to over 100 Day Hikes at 64 areas across the State.
Illustrated with maps and photos.

Available at bookstores, nature centers, and outdoors shops;
or send \$14 95 to Willow Press, 6053 South Platte Canyon Rd.
Littleton, Colorado 80123

A HISTORY OF THE OXBOW AREA.

Don Bogosian

PART 13 -



THE

LAWRENCEBURG AND

GREENDALE RAILROAD.

The first railroad to be constructed in the area around the Oxbow was the Lawrenceburg & Greendale Railroad. Originally a narrow-gauge line, (narrow-gauge railroads were easier to build), it was built in 1851 near the Lawrenceburg branch of the Whitewater Canal. Railroad proponents intended to provide a connection at Lawrenceburg with the Ohio & Mississippi Railroad for the Indianapolis & Cincinnati Railroad which, in 1853, was constructed only to the vicinity of Hardintown.

The Lawrenceburg & Greendale Railroad operated four trains a day, carrying local passengers and farm produce from the area. Since it relied heavily upon the Indianapolis & Cincinnati Railroad for traffic, it was not long before the I & C took over the little Lawrenceburg & Greendale Railroad.

In 1861 the I & C built its own railbed along River Road. Running from Cincinnati's Mill Creek bottoms, it turned away from the Ohio River at North Bend, crossed the Great Miami River at Cleves, the Whitewater at Valley Junction, and passed through Elizabethtown and Hardintown at what is now called Lawrenceburg Junction. It then went up Guilford Hill onto the Indiana uplands, via Tanner's Creek. This roundabout route of the I & C was necessary to avoid the seasonally flooded Oxbow bottomlands at the mouth of the Great Miami River.

Originally, the I & C was also a narrow-gauge railroad which operated six trains a day. It carried local and through traffic, with a connection in Indianapolis for Chicago and St. Louis. The I & C prospered and built a new bridge across the Whitewater River in 1863. The bridge was washed out three years later in the 1866 flood. In the 1870's the railroad changed the line to standard, 4', 8½" standard-gauge. It suffered another major flood in 1883 and, in 1889, became part of the Big Four Railroad, a subsidiary of the New York Central, and developed into a major trunk line between Cincinnati and Chicago. No. 303, the "James Whitcomb Riley" was for years, the fastest train operating out of Cincinnati.

The I & C had two main line tracks up Guilford Hill featuring automatic reverse signaling for safety and flexibility of operation. (Fast passenger trains could pass slow freight trains via track normally used for trains running in the opposite direction.)

The 1900's saw the peak of operations on this line. The tracks were upgraded in 1909 to allow for greater speeds and heavier trains. As many as 60 passenger trains a day were seen. In addition, numerous freights, Florida expresses, mail trains, and second sections of premier trains such as #303, used the line.

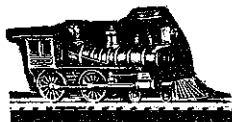
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Short, fast trains required an extra engine to maintain speed up Guilford Hill. After the 1913 flood, the railroad began another track upgrading project with huge earth fills and concrete culverts crossing the bottomlands, and massive bridges crossing the Great Miami and Whitewater rivers. This expansive project was completed in the 1920's.

Traffic declined after World War II and, in 1969, the New York Central became part of the ill-fated Penn Central Railroad which went into bankruptcy soon after. Amtrak briefly ran their version of the "Riley" on the old I & C route in the early 1970's, but the track had deteriorated so much, that the train was moved to another Indiana line and renamed the "Cardinal". Penn Central was folded into Conrail in 1976 and the I & C line was de-emphasized as a through route. It saw only local traffic, mostly to the distilleries in Lawrenceburg via the old Lawrenceburg & Greendale line, right past the Oxbow lake.

The Norfolk Southern Railroad expressed an interest in acquiring the I & C route to Chicago, so Conrail repaired the track in 1988, but the sale was never completed. Today, the I & C line sees only one or two trains a day carrying mostly local traffic between Indianapolis and Cincinnati. These operations could be expanded at some future date.



Next - The Ohio & Mississippi Railroad.

BIRDATHON '92 COMING SOON ! !

For new members and the un-initiated, BIRDATHON is a 24-hour period during which usually normal, staid pillars of the community lose all sense of reality and go dashing over hill and dale striving to win the "Golden Staring Award" by identifying the greatest number of avian species. It is a time when "neither rain, nor sleet, nor dark of night" stops these possessed birders from their appointed destiny. Weather does, however, influence the mood in which they arrive at the tally point. 1991 was too hot and muggy while 1990 was too cold and rainy. One can only wonder what remarks May 8th and 9th of 1992 will elicit.

BIRDATHON is also the time Oxbow, Inc. foregoes its serious side and has a good time doing what most of its members do best - finding and identifying birds. While we're having sll this fun we are also participating in the biggest fundraiser of the year. Our goal is \$17,000 and we urge our members, birders or not, to actively solicit pledges from co-workers, friends, family, and neighbors. If you feel inclined to participate, either individually or as a member of a team, call Anita Buck, 513-681-2574, for entry information. But, right now, fill out and mail the pledge coupon below and be generous with your pledge per species. Your contribution is tax deductible.

- - - - -cut along line- - - - -

BIRDATHON '92 OXBOW, INC. TEAM PLEDGE CARD.

Mail to: Oxbow, Inc., P.O.Box 43391, Cincinnati, OH 45243

YES, I am willing to pledge per species: ___\$3 ___\$2 ___\$1 ___75¢ ___50¢

NAME _____ ADDRESS _____ CITY _____
STATE _____ ZIP _____ PHONE NO. _____

My Pledge is for: ___Team 1 ___Team2 ___Highest scoring team.

Annual Report & FINANCIAL STATEMENT - 1991

1991 was a difficult year for the national and local economy, and for Oxbow, Inc. as well. Compared to 1990, total income was down about \$12,500. The following items were down: dues, \$500; interest income, (less cash in the bank) \$5,300; BIRDATHON '91 \$4,300; and fund raising, \$14,400. A number of items increased: donations, partly due to a settlement, \$10,500; land acquisition, \$1,200; crop income, \$750. Shirt sales show a drop due to a change in accounting procedures. Miscellaneous income represents a grant and equipment donations for Dr. Joo's limnological study. It is partially offset by a miscellaneous cash expense of the amount for the study. The Entertainment '92 books are a new item.

After an adjustment for a one-time, non-recurring item*, expenses were \$2,300 less than last year. This indicates that money is being spent carefully. 1990's ratio of income to expense was 7.4%. In 1991, the ratio dropped to 6% - so, even though income was down, expenses were down slightly more.

Although we were unable to purchase any land, easements held were increased by over \$160,000. We currently are committed to one easement purchase in early spring. Additional funds are due from a pollution settlement and a foundation grant. There are no outstanding debts.

The generosity and commitment of its members, and the dedication and careful stewardship of its trustees, keeps Oxbow, Inc. in good financial shape. Because of this, we can continue to aggressively pursue our goal of preserving and acquiring wetlands in the Oxbow area.

*Limnological study.

Jim Rettig, Treasurer.

STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENSE.

DECEMBER 31, 1991

Income		Expense	
Membership dues	24,815.00	Newsletter	2,380.84
Donations	35,650.12	Office supplies	576.53
Land Acquisition	6,848.35	Postage & Phone	1,488.50
Interest	2,214.47	Fund raising	64.77
Memorials & tributes	2,861.00	BIRDATHON '91	73.31
BIRDATHON '91	12,975.33	Taxes	1,651.28
Shirt sales	830.00	Miscellaneous	5,487.00
Fund raising	2,145.00		
Miscellaneous	5,762.00		
Crop income	8,399.65		
Entertainment '92	156.00		
TOTAL INCOME	102,656.92	TOTAL EXPENSE	11,722.23

BALANCE SHEET

DECEMBER 31, 1991

Assets		Liabilities	
Cash	1,400.13	Liabilities	0.00
Gradison fund	39,193.89		
Land	175,551.60		
Easements owned	219,963.28	Retained earnings	438,804.38
Equipment	357.75		
Shirt inventory	2,337.73		
TOTAL ASSETS	\$438,804.38	LIABILITIES & RETAINED EARNINGS	\$438,804.38

Percent of expense to income for 1991 - 6%

FIELD NOTES

Morris Mercer

The last half of January was very good for waterfowl in the Oxbow area. The colder weather and snow from around the Great Lakes forced the birds down our way. Our wimpy winter must have made it seem like the deep south to them.

On a late January trip to check out the area, I found the Oxbow frozen. The Great Miami river remained open, and though Cemetery lake had some open water, more than half was ice-covered. However, it seemed to be to the bird's liking.

By far, the greatest numbers of birds were the gulls. Of the more than a thousand, most were ring-billed gulls. There were some 500 Canada geese and, in one field, I counted 86 great blue herons. And then, there were the ducks!

Mallards, blacks, gadwall, northern pintail, American wigeon, northern shoveler, wood ducks, ring-necked, canvasback, scaup, common goldeneye, bufflehead, and redheads in good numbers. There were also pied-billed grebes, coots, and hooded mergansers. A big surprise to me was the early appearance of the two northern shovelers and the pair of wood ducks. I usually expect to find them here in March. The gulls have increased in number. There have been large flocks on the ice, in the open water, and in the air. They and the other birds seem to be having great success at fishing. As I watched, a red-tailed hawk sailed low over the water and it looked like a blizzard as the gulls flew up into the sky.

Another unusual sight was mallards eating fish and a red-tailed hawk feeding on a mallard drake kill. It was a visual display of the food chain at work.

I had to look hard through a snow shower to identify a great egret in with a flock of great blue herons - an unexpected sighting at this time of the year.

Now I'm hoping for some high water and flooded fields to greet the birds as they start their trip north in late February and March. It will be a great time to be afield.



Oxbow, Inc. Memorials

IN MEMORY OF

Douglas M. Currie
Amelia Ebinger
Chris Ernst

Stanley Fair
Orpha Gatch
Leo Oppenheimer
Leo Oppenheimer
Lotte Reese
Fern Ulmer
Merle Zeller

DONOR

Norma L. Flannery
John & Susan Ulrich
Employees of the Honeywell
Protection Service
Virginia L. Fair
Mr. & Mrs. D.F. Howe
Mr. & Mrs. Raymond W. Kemper
Dr. Stanford S. Osher
Norma L. Flannery
Nancy Ulmer
Alfred & Sally Ambrosius



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ATTENTION

WE NEED YOU !

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED! ! ! !

FOREST PARK ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS & RECYCLING PROGRAM



The Forest Park Environmental Awareness and Recycling Program's award winning **WINTON WOODS CLEANUP** is scheduled to be held this year on **SATURDAY, APRIL 25TH** between **9 A.M.** and **NOON**. A free picnic lunch and prizes will be provided for those who share a

part of their day in helping to make Winton Lake a more attractive place to relax and enjoy!

Last year, approximately 400 volunteers collected over six tons of trash and debris. These figures say a lot for the volunteers but not much for those that left it behind.

Call Rob Milton, 513- 595-LAND for more information.

VOLUNTEER ALERT! ! !

CINCINNATI ZOO AND BOTANICAL GARDEN



For those members who may not be into trash and debris, we offer an alternative, and less strenuous, volunteer experience. Celebrate **EARTH DAY, 1992** in Oxbow, Inc.'s booth at the Zoo. Saturday and Sunday, **APRIL 25TH** and **26TH**, from **10 A.M.** to **5 P.M.** we will need volunteers to talk to people about the Oxbow, to sell them a Charlie Harper shirt, or to sign up a new member or two. Remember, volunteers receive **FREE ADMISSION** to the Zoo!

For more information, or to volunteer your services, call John Getzendanner in INDIANA, 537-5728, or Anita Buck in OHIO, 681-2574. As Morris Mercer might say, "Spring is a good time to be out and about!"

AND, IT'S FUN!

Election Board Of Trustees

Election of members to the Board of Trustees was held February 11, 1992 at the Lawrenceburg Public Library. Incumbents Bonnie Fancher, Sherwood McIntire, Morris Mercer, Dr. Aaron Perlman, and Edward Thayer were unanimously re-elected to a three-year term.


In a related action, the Board appointed Bill Bocklage to the Conservation committee to fill the interim term of Bonnie Fancher who is on maternity leave. Bill is a retired English professor from the University of Cincinnati. He and his wife Jeanne reside in the Covedale area in Cincinnati, Ohio.

Oxbow, Inc. lost three valued Board members with the retirements of George Laycock and Art and Jinny Wiseman. We thank them sincerely for their past inspiration and support and know we can continue to count on their dedication and direction as the Board goes forward in its work.

NATURAL RESOURCES TAX REFUND CHECKOFF PROGRAM



Tax time again! And with it another opportunity to do good things for wildlife and natural areas. Just check off your refund on your State Income Tax form, directing it to the Department of Natural Resources, **DIVISION OF WILDLIFE** or **DIVISION OF NATURAL AREAS AND PRESERVES**. If you do not have an overpayment, but wish to donate, you can still do so.

-  To donate to **WILDLIFE**, make your check out to "Nongame and Endangered Wildlife, Special Account."
- To donate to **NATURAL AREAS**, make your check out to "Natural Areas and Preserves, Special Account."

OHIO - Mail your check to: The Ohio Department of Natural Resources
Deputy Director, Recreational Management
Fountain Square Court
Columbus, OH 43224

INDIANA - Mail your check to: The Indiana Department of Natural Resources
Division of Fish and Wildlife
Licensing Division
607 State Office Building
Indianapolis, IN 46204

For Federal Income Tax purposes, donations to these funds are tax deductible for those who itemize. Contributions made on your 1991 tax form, filed in 1992, are considered charitable donations made in 1992. The following is an Income and Expense report of the 1991 **OHIO FUND**.



DIVISION OF WILDLIFE

Checkoff Expenditures as of June 1991

- Land Acquisition \$910,430 (22%)
(Program priority is on wetland acquisition)
- Facilities Development \$525,198 (13%)
(Program priority is on development of access for recreation, including handicapped access)
- Special Projects \$2,592,566 (63%)
(These include bald eagle protection, river otter reintroduction, urban peregrine falcon releases, education programs in schools, and a statewide wetland inventory)
- Dept. Taxation Fees \$98,711 (2%)
(required by checkoff legislation)

TOTAL: \$4,126,905

CHECKOFF INCOME: \$4,517,360 donations

\$ 728,000 earned interest
\$5,245,360 total



**INDIVIDUAL INCOME
TAX RETURN**

Department
of Natural
Resources

DIVISION OF NATURAL AREAS AND PRESERVES

Checkoff Expenditures as of June 1991

- Land Acquisition \$1,817,551 (35%)
(2,188 acres at 26 areas in 19 counties)
- Facilities Development \$1,103,665 (21%)
(50 major projects at 67 sites)
- Special Projects \$576,196 (11%)
(examples: county natural area inventory, scenic river monitoring and tree plantings, Breeding Bird Atlas, landowner contact program)
- Research and Preserve Monitoring \$534,094 (10%)
(including 107 research grants on endangered species and natural areas)
- Information and Education (8%)
(examples: checkoff promotion [less than 4%], nature preserve directory, brochures, newsletter)
- Administration \$610,880 (12%)
(salaries and program operating expenses)
- Dept. Taxation Fees \$98,422 (2%)
(required by checkoff legislation)

TOTAL: \$5,152,267

CHECKOFF INCOME: \$5,151,166 donations

\$ 328,849 earned interest
\$5,470,015 total



Meetings

TUESDAY, MARCH 10TH, 7:30 P.M. Cincinnati Zoo Education Building.
Enter through the Exit Gate on Erkenbrecher Avenue.

We have re-scheduled our January program which was cancelled because of inclement weather. Mr. Robert Lotshaw, General Curator for the Cincinnati Zoo, will again attempt to take us on a slide-assisted journey to the "GALAPAGOS ISLANDS." We're hoping the weather will behave itself and allow Mr. Lotshaw to get us there and back successfully this time. Come and join us!

TUESDAY, APRIL 14TH, 7:30 P.M. Lawrenceburg Public Library.
Turn left off of U.S. 50 onto Walnut Street. Turn right onto High Street. The library is on the right side of High Street.

Nancy Wickemeyer from the Cincinnati Zoo's Center for Reproduction of Endangered Wildlife (CREW) will present a slide program explaining how modern reproduction technologies are being used to save endangered plants and animals. This pioneering work is being done under the direction of Dr. Betsy Dresser who serves on the Advisory Council of Oxbow, Inc.

Field Trips

SATURDAY, MARCH 14TH, 9 A.M. 50's Root Beer Parking Lot.

Dependable Dave will be on the prowl
Searching out migrating waterfowl.
Bring binocs and a field-note book -
Dave will point out where to look.

Leader, Dave Styer 513-772-4395



SUNDAY, APRIL 12TH, 8 A.M. Upper boat ramp parking lot, Shawnee Lookout Park. Follow park signs from U.S. 50.

Join Milford's own sterling Steve for a springtime stroll around Shawnee. A motor vehicle permit is required if Steve wanders up into the park. If you don't have yours yet, jump in a car that has a sticker on the windshield.

Leader, Steve Wagner 513-831-7606



Make sure your WETLAND MATTERS newsletter goes with you!

Name

New Address

Old Address

City/State/Zip

City/State/Zip

Effective Date

MAIL TO: Oxbow, Inc. P.O. Box 43391, Cincinnati, Ohio 45243

Please notify us immediately so we can update our records. The Post Office does not forward third class mail.

Corporation Officers

President, Norma L. Flannery	513-471-8001
Vice President, Morris Mercer	513-941-2534
Secretary, Earl Thirey	513-528-3371
Corresponding Sec., Suzanne Skidmore	513-561-5718
Treasurer, Jim Rettig	513-561-0211
Agent, Dave Styer	513-772-4395

Committee Chairpersons

Conservation, Bill Bocklage	513-922-2445
Bonnie Fancher	812-438-3641
Easement Inspection, Michael Kluesener	513-574-1220
Richard Pope	513-637-1365
Fund Raising, Greg Mendell	812-926-1966
Land Management, Dave Styer	513-772-4395
Marketing, Julie Godsey	513-451-5793
Preservation, Norma L. Flannery	513-471-8001
Programs:	
Ohio, Morris Mercer	513-941-2534
Indiana, Betty Myers	812-537-1631
Research, Kaniaulono Meyer	513-948-8630
Speakers' Bureau, Kaniaulono Meyer	513-948-8630
Volunteer Coordinator, John Getzendanner	812-537-5728

Editor

Norma L. Flannery	513-471-8001
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Oxbow, Inc.

A nonprofit organization formed by conservation groups and concerned citizens of Ohio and Indiana for the purpose of preserving and protecting a wetlands area known locally as the Oxbow, Hardintown, or Horseshoe Bottoms, from future industrial development and to preserve the existing agricultural floodplain at the confluence of the Great Miami and Ohio rivers for use as a staging area for the seasonal migrations of waterfowl. This is an agricultural area rich in geological, archaeological, and anthropological history.

Help us save this unique wetland. You can make your state a richer place in which to live by helping us preserve this precious resource.

Membership in Oxbow, Inc. is encouraged and solicited.

Individual	\$10	Organization/Club	\$25	Cornerstone	\$250
Family	\$15	Supporting	\$50	Sponsor	\$500
Contributing	\$25	Patron	\$100	Benefactor	\$1000

Mail to: Oxbow, Inc., P.O. Box 43391, Cincinnati, OH 45243

Need a Speaker? Give Us a Call!



P.O. BOX 43391
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