

# wetland matters



## OXBOW, INC. NEWSLETTER

P. O. BOX 43391  
CINCINNATI, OHIO 45243

Number 64 March-April 1997

### Elections

At the January meeting the following people were elected to three year terms on Oxbow's Board of Trustees: Anita Buck, Jerry Johnson, Mike Kluesener, Dennis Mason, Greg Mendell, Kani Meyer, Richard Pope, and David Styer. Later in January, at the meeting of the Board, last year's officers agreed to continue to serve.

### Thank You

The Lorika Fund of the Greater Cincinnati Foundation has approved a grant of \$1500 to Oxbow Inc.'s land trust fund. We wish to express our appreciation to Mr. and Mrs. V. Anderson Coombe and the William Powell Valve Company for suggesting this grant to the governing board of the Greater Cincinnati Foundation.

And thank you to the Gardens Alive! Wild Bird Center for donating merchandise for Oxbow to use as door prizes at our monthly meeting. These gifts include suet and squirrel feeders with mounting poles, and books about landscaping for wildlife. Oxbow will continue to award prizes at meetings, but if you're not lucky enough to win one, you can find many similar products at Gardens Alive!

The people at Gardens Alive! also support Oxbow by allowing us to use their parking lot as a meeting place for field trips. To reach Gardens Alive! from Cincinnati, turn north off U.S. 50 just before crossing the levee. Look for a Ford dealership on the corner. Gardens Alive! is at the end of the road on the right. They have a sign you can see from route 50.

### More development

Mr. Greg Davis, of Tepee Developing, visited the January meeting of Oxbow's Board to describe his plans to develop a shopping center in the open area north east of the intersection of Route 50 and the I-275 entrance ramp. The site to be developed extends from route 50 to the "ski lake" by the interstate. There's currently a small fireworks store on one corner, but most of the site is farmland.

Because it floods almost every year the developers intend to pile fill on the land nearest the road, raising it to the level of the street. The only way that this plan is economically feasible, according to Mr. Davis, is to use fill from on-site. He plans to pump gravel and sand out of the bottom of the borrow pit on the property and use it as fill. Engineers have found that this procedure, called "hydraulic dredging," produces very stable, inexpensive fill. Mr. Davis said that the major effect of the dredging will be to change the depth of the lake from about 30 to about 60 feet. He didn't think the procedure would alter the water levels in any of the area's other lakes or borrow pits.

Although considered part of the Oxbow area, the land in question is not in the floodway of the Great Miami River. Mr. Davis said that because the site is not legally a wetland, the only permit he needs from the Army Corps of Engineers is for the dredging operation. He also mentioned that he is aware there may be archaeological sites on the property and that he has hired experts to identify and assess these sites.

Mr. Davis told the Board that he has been planning this development since before the arrival of Riverboat Gambling, and that he hopes to populate the shopping center with stable businesses that will appeal to and benefit the people of Greendale. When asked if he would consider developing a site more removed from the Oxbow, he explained that "Interstate-visibility" is an essential component of his development plans and that it is important that the development be next to an I-275 exit.

# Calendar

## Field Trips

### **March 15 (Saturday) 9:00 A.M. Oxbow field trip**

Meet Ned Keller at the Gardens Alive! parking lot. The waterfowl migration should be in full swing, and Ned knows where to find ducks. Several kinds of hawks may be in migration as well, and hawks are also a special interest of Ned's.

### **April 5 (Saturday) 9:00 A.M. Oxbow field trip**

Greg Mendell and Connie McNamee will lead this trip examining the progress of spring and looking for wildlife around the Oxbow. Meet them at Gardens Alive! For more information, call them at (812) 926-2522.

### **April 19 (Saturday) 9:00 A.M. Oxbow field trip**

David Styer will lead this trip starting from the Gardens Alive! parking lot. Mid-April is an exciting time to visit the Oxbow. For more information, consult David at (513) 772-1287.

## Meetings

**March 11 (Tuesday) 7:30 P.M. Oxbow meeting at the Cincinnati Zoo Education Building.** (Enter through the exit gate on Erkenbrecher Avenue. The gate attendant can direct you to the Zoo's Education building.)

Richard W. Koch from the University of Louisville Large Rivers Program will present some of the findings of his research in the Oxbow area.

**April 8 (Tuesday) 7:30 P.M. Oxbow meeting at the Hamline Chapel — across the street from the Lawrenceburg Public Library.** (From Cincinnati, turn left on Walnut Street. Turn right on High Street. The Hamline Chapel is on the left side of High Street.)

PLEASE NOTE this one-time change from the traditional location of Oxbow's Lawrenceburg meetings.

Dr. Fred Whitford of the Purdue University Cooperative Extension Services is sure to lead a lively discussion about agricultural pesticide use. We'll learn about chemicals that can help save crops while weighing their effects on our health and the environment.

Oxbow Board members Connie McNamee and Rick Pope have both attended programs by Dr. Whitford and recommend them to Oxbow members enthusiastically. Please join us for this informative and provocative program.

## Volunteer

### **April 19 (Saturday) 9:00 to 12:00 Winton Woods Cleanup**

If you're interested in participating in the Cleanup, contact the Forest Park Environmental Awareness Program at 595-LAND (5263) for more information.

All volunteers will meet at Kestrel Point picnic shelter, located beside the Ranger Station at 9 AM on Saturday, April 19th. (See accompanying story)

## Winton Woods Cleanup

The Forest Park Environmental Awareness Program and the Hamilton County Park District are co-sponsoring the Tenth Annual Winton Woods Cleanup.

Volunteers of all ages are needed to help remove the accumulated trash and debris that threaten the scenic beauty of Winton Woods and the health of the wildlife that live there. Volunteers will be supplied with bags and a limited number of gloves. After the Cleanup volunteers are rewarded with a free cookout and raffle prizes. Young children must be accompanied by an adult.

Over the last 9 years, the cleanup has totaled over 3,139 volunteers collecting approximately 66 tons of litter. Last year alone, 314 volunteers picked up 12.73 tons of debris in less than three hours.

The cleanup is an ideal chance for Oxbow members to be good neighbors and return some of the assistance that the Park District has given Oxbow over the years. The H.C.P.D. has always been a strong supporter of (and participant in) Oxbow's conservation efforts. They've purchased conservation easements on flood plain land in Ohio and they allow Oxbow free use of their facilities for the annual Oxbow Birdathon Tally and Dinner.

Please contribute your efforts and help at the cleanup. You'll meet other enthusiastic, conservation-minded people, contribute to a good cause, and have fun. In addition, for the rest of the year you can visit a cleaner Winton Woods Park with a sense of accomplishment and pride.

# Pledge Now for Oxbow's Birdathon Teams

Oxbow will enter three teams in the Birdathon. You are invited to pledge your support for any or all of Oxbow's teams. Pledge for your favorite or for the highest scoring team. Some people pledge a fixed amount while others pledge some amount per species found. Whatever you choose, you can make your pledge by sending in the form below.

After Birdathon is over you will receive a letter telling you how Oxbow's teams did, where they went and what good birds they saw, along with a memo advising you of your pledge total. All pledges to these teams go directly to Oxbow, Inc.

Oxbow's effectiveness at protecting wetland habitat is attributable to its members' generosity. Thank you in advance for your pledge supporting Oxbow's Birdathon '97 teams.

## Oxbow's Birdathon Teams

**Oxbow Team #1** Karl Maslowski will reassemble his team of experts, "The Geriatric Gents and a Junior." These gentlemen, distinguished members of the Tristate's community of naturalists, generously use their influence and well-deserved reputations to help Oxbow raise pledges. Last year they found 109 species of birds.

**Oxbow Team #2** "The Fire and Brimstone Birders Guild" — Joe Bens and Paul Wharton — won last year's competition for the Golden Starling award. Joe hinted that they might be adding a third member to their team in '97.

**Oxbow Team #3** "The No See Ums" — David Styer, Charlie Saunders and Steve Pelikan — will be reassembled again after David's sabbatical year in California. Last year Charlie and Steve found 146 species in the Birdathon area while David found about 150 on a personal Birdathon in California. David hinted that the team may add a new member in '97.

### BIRDATHON '97

#### Oxbow Team Pledge Form

YES! I want to pledge per species: \_\_\_\$2 \_\_\_\$1 \_\_\_75¢ \_\_\_50¢ \_\_\_25¢ \_\_\_10¢ other \_\_\_

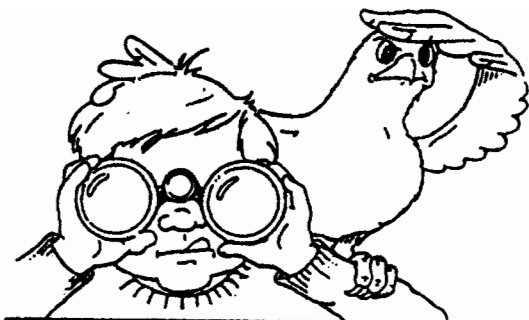
Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

- My pledge is for Oxbow team #1, "Geriatric Gents..."
- My pledge is for Oxbow team #2, "Fire and Brimstone..."
- My pledge is for Oxbow team #3, "No See Ums"
- My pledge is for the highest scoring Oxbow team.

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



## Birdathon '97

Birdathon, Oxbow's annual fund raising event, will be held from 5 P.M Friday May 9 to 5 P.M. Saturday May 10. Prior to Birdathon, participants solicit pledges of money for each species of bird they identify during the 24 hour period. There are a variety of categories in which participants can compete, but many people elect to take part in Birdathon as non-competing participants. This allows them to concentrate on having a good time birding and frees them from observing the official Birdathon rules. All participants, whether competing or not, are invited to the official Birdathon Tally and Dinner held at 5 PM Saturday. Here birders swap stories, report their finds, and enjoy a meal together. Each participant is awarded a Birdathon T-shirt.

Other conservation organizations are invited to enter teams in the Birdathon. They then split the pledges they raise with Oxbow. In Birdathon '96 the Cincinnati Nature Center, Hamilton County Park District, Northwest High School, Northern Kentucky Bird Club, Cincinnati Bird Club, Cincinnati Zoo's Junior Zoologists, and Gilmore Ponds Conservancy and the Roger Tory Peterson Institute were all represented.

Last year's 70 Birdathon participants brought Oxbow approximately \$12,000. We hope to raise even more money this year by encouraging more people to participate and by reminding everyone that collecting pledges is at least as important as finding birds.

If you plan to participate or would like more information before deciding to do so, please call Anita Buck or Steve Pelikan at (513) 681-2574. They will answer your questions and arrange to send you information or registration materials. As far as possible, they'll put you in touch with others with similar interests who are looking for Birdathon partners.

## Birdathon Information

**Time and Date:** The 24 hour Birdathon period is 5PM Friday May 9 to 5 PM Saturday May 10. But it is never too early to register and **start collecting pledges.**

**The Birdathon area:** is illustrated in the map below.

**Categories of competition:** Most categories are available for teams (2 to 6 members) and for individual competition.

1. Most species found in entire Birdathon area.
2. Most species found in a single county of the Birdathon area.
3. Most species found traveling by human/ animal/solar or other non-fossil-fuel power.
4. Most species, high-school age and younger. (Teams may have 1 or 2 older members but 50% of the team must be minors. Individuals may be accompanied by an older, non-participating driver.)
5. Most pledges raised per species. One prize for participants under 18, one for everyone else. Money raised as a team through sponsoring institution doesn't count.

**Registration:** If you plan to participate as an individual or to organize a team, call Steve Pelikan (513) 681-2574 for a packet (registration forms, pledge sheet, a map of the Birdathon region, and a complete set of rules). The deadline for returning registration materials is April 25.



## Birdathon suggestions

Don't you end up buying Girl Scout cookies and magazine subscriptions from all your neighbors' and co-workers' children? Haven't you done so for years? Now's your chance for revenge! Start a Birdathon team and solicit pledges from all these people. Even if you throw yourself whole-hog into the competition, thereby missing an entire night's sleep, and spend 24 dreary hours shivering in wet clothes to see the same Starling over and over while your binoculars fill with rain — wouldn't the chance to ask *them* for money be worth it?

While you're at it, ask the replacement window people who phone you at dinner time for a pledge. Make them a special, first-time pledge offer, and be sure to get their name and address. Try hard for their Visa/MasterCard number as well.

This year I'm going to ask my Congressman to pledge for my team on the off chance he wants to atone for an anti-environmental vote he made. Perhaps I'll try a few City Council members as well. And I once heard a lawyer at a public meeting state that he knew for a fact that there'd never been more than 12 species of birds in a certain City park. If only I could've gotten \$1 per bird pledged by him based on that misconception ... that'd be about 140 easy bucks for Oxbow. I wish I could remember his name.

Somewhat more seriously, here are a few observations about soliciting pledges:

1) Use the pledge solicitation to tell people about Oxbow's goals and many accomplishments. But don't forget to mention the many threats to the Oxbow area.

2) Neighbors and co-workers are generally happy to offer a small pledge. Some Birdathon participants solicit pledges from their church groups or from social organizations they belong to. Some get pledges with a poster on bulletin boards at school or day-care. You can also ask merchants you patronize regularly... many are willing to contribute to a good cause.


3) The true secret of Birdathon success and eternal happiness is to get LOTS of small pledges. Say you plan on seeing about 40 species of birds. 20 pledges at 10¢ a bird would make \$80.00. And each pigeon — er ... sponsor ... — would only be out \$4.00.

4) There's always barter. How about offering "I'll watch your 2-year-old some evening while you go to a movie if you pledge for my Birdathon team." After all, you'll end up babysitting for your friends sometime anyway.

5) Asking for pledges needn't ever produce awkward situations. If the mark — er ... prospect ... — says "No thanks," just reply with something friendly and honest like "No problem, mostly I just wanted to tell you about Oxbow's conservation efforts."

6) After Birdathon, you get to collect the money that was pledged. Many people write up an account of their Birdathon adventures or provide their sponsors with a list of the birds they found. Sponsors seem to appreciate it if you do the arithmetic for them and simply tell them what their pledge comes to rather than making them scramble for a calculator.

7) Pledges to Oxbow are tax-deductible. If one of your patrons needs a receipt for tax purposes, Oxbow will mail an acknowledgment of his or her contribution. You will need to provide Oxbow with the correct name and complete address of the sponsor when you hand in the pledges you collect.

MARCH & APRIL present	
<b>"THE WATERFOWL"</b> NOW APPEARING AT AREA WETLANDS	
<b>A BIRDER'S GUIDE TO THE CINCINNATI TRISTATE</b> by Robert Folzenlogen	
Available at bookstores & nature centers	

## Oxbow Memorials

### In memory of

John C. Bott  
Amos Dewitt  
Margaret Giovanetti  
Alice M. Jones  
Ruth Kammerer  
Onie Pruett  
Ralph J. Schwartz  
Alma Wilzbach  
Frederick C. Young  
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### Donor

Charles E. Noe  
The Brauns  
Helen M. Meyer  
Rosemary and Bill Farrell  
Gerry Braun and family  
Norma L. Flannery  
Rosemary and Bill Farrell  
Helen M. Meyer  
Cincinnati Bird Club  
Roger Marty Cox  
Norma L. Flannery  
Thomas E. Griley  
Ruth M. Groll  
Jean M. Link  
Tim McCann  
Oxbow, Inc.  
Brad and Cheryl Pfirman  
Vera Riesenber  
Bob and Tina Schlegel  
Clem and Myrtle Schwab  
Jerry, Janet and Kelli Smith  
Gene and Anita Vollmer  
Jewell A. Vollmer  
Ruth and Leroy Weber  
Gene and Mary Ellen Young  
Marion C. Young

### Oxbow Tributes

#### In honor of

V. Anderson Coombe  
Norma L. Flannery

#### Donor

Mr. and Mrs. Michael A. Coombe  
Stan and Debbie Boehmer

Oxbow, Inc. has established Memorials in honor of those who have passed on. Each Memorial, established in the name of a friend or loved one, will be enrolled permanently in the records of the Corporation. Each contribution to a Memorial will be acknowledged to the family or to those selected by the donor. Contributions should be sent to Oxbow, Inc., P.O. Box 43391, Cincinnati, Ohio, 45243-0391. Be sure to enclose the names and addresses of those to receive the acknowledgment.

## Field Notes

Morris Mercer

As winter began I was in the Oxbow area helping with the annual Hamilton County Parks winter bird count. Our group was at Shawnee Lookout as the sun came up over the hills, in a frosty blue sky. We moved out and the count began.

Jim Simpson and Yvonne Mohlman started into the flood-plain along the Great Miami River. They were to count the ducks. They also found Wild Turkey, a large number of Killdeer, and gulls. There were five of us to check the hills on up in the park. Four of the five had to leave at noon.

After lunch Yvonne, Jim and I split up to cover as much of the park as possible. I picked Miami Fort Trail. With views from the high ridge down into the river valley, it is one of my favorite places for a stroll. As I walked, I noticed that light snow from a couple days before had melted except where it landed on the fallen logs. The frosty outlining of the logs gave me a wintry feeling, and the chill of the cold breeze definitely added to it.

A few Ring-billed Gulls winged their way above the river. I looked up through the limbs and watched a Red-tailed Hawk as it soared high above. Movement next to the trail caused me to look closely at a brush pile where I found White-throated Sparrows busy in their search for food.

Earlier I had heard ole Woodie Woodpecker off through the woods but I enjoyed actually seeing the Pileated Woodpecker there above the trail. The big, dark bird showed white wing patches as it flapped along. The Pileated Woodpeckers seem to like this area. On previous trips I had noticed their workings — large egg-shaped holes — in some of the yycamore trees.

As I stood there, I noticed a deer lying on the floor of the woods down over the hill. The more I studied the area, the more deer I saw. Some of the deer were lying down, others were standing, but all were motionless and watching me. I raised my glasses for a closer look. One deer got up, and a couple others began to walk away. All seven were moving when two began to run. You might say, "the deer were high tailing out of there." It was beautiful to see them run along the wooded hillside.

Next, I was halted by a flash of blue. I watched as an Eastern Bluebird made several trips to the ground and then back up into a tree. It isn't easy to find anything prettier than a Bluebird. As I walked along I kept hearing a small call, and thought I should see

where it was coming from. After some searching I saw a little Golden-crowned Kinglet. The gold on its head seems to be 24 K when the sunlight hits it.

My stroll had taken me to the "point" overlooking the Ohio and the Great Miami. A check of my watch told me my time was gone, and I must hurry back to join in the big tally.

This is Thursday night, January 16, as I sit to write the field notes. I'm at home and Frances has kept the home fires burning. I must say the fire does feel good, and the popcorn is good too. The music is slow, soft, and sweet.

Tonight was our annual winter night walk at Shawnee. It was 6:45 when I stopped for John Kline. John was outside waiting, and testing a cold-weather face mask. It was a good night to test the mask. Everyone was to rendezvous at 7:30 at the golf club house in the park. John and I wanted to be a little early to beat the crowd.

And we did. The time came to start, but no one had shown up except the ranger, who wasn't going on the walk. We waited. Could it be that no one was coming out on this beautiful winter night? True, there was only a dusting of snow on the ground. But there was a nice moon to light the trail. "No snow" — maybe that was the reason no one was coming.

There was the weather report too. They had told people to stay in if they didn't just have to go out. But this was Oxbow's annual winter walk. I couldn't miss that. They were saying something about a wind chill of 35 below and that *is* cool. It was a great night to test a face mask.

Well, it was a winter night and it was getting late. It was time to move out. The Great Miami was ice-covered from Lost Bridge to the Ohio. A light snow had come after the river had frozen, and so the river was a white ribbon winding through the valley. It was truly Moon River.

Once again Mother Nature had decorated for a party and no one came. John and I did enjoy being out on this beautiful night, and as I said, "It was a COOL place to be." We'll give it a try again next year.

We have late winter and early spring coming up. The waterfowl will soon be moving north to nest. Many will make a rest stop at the Oxbow. It's a great time of year. Don't miss getting out to enjoy the season.



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

mail to: **Oxbow, Inc.**  
 P.O. Box 43391  
 Cincinnati, Ohio, 45243-0391  
 513-471-8001

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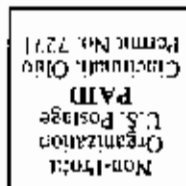
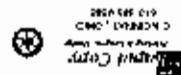
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Wetland Matters, the newsletter for members of Oxbow, Inc., is published bimonthly.



**Need a Speaker? Give Us a Call!**

