



WETLAND *matters*

Published bi-monthly for the Friends and Members of Oxbow, Inc.

Programs

May 12 (Tuesday) 7:30 P.M. Oxbow meeting at the Cincinnati Zoo Education Building. (Enter at the regular auto entrance and tell the gate attendant you're there for the Oxbow program.) Dr. John Ferner from the Biology Department of Thomas More College will present this evening's program *The Philippines Biodiversity Inventory: So many species, so little time.*

June 9 (Tuesday) 7:30 P.M. Oxbow meeting at the Lawrenceburg Public Library on High Street. Dr. Ferner will reprise his May program for Oxbow's Indiana members. But he has so many fascinating stories to tell about field research in the Philippines, many people will want to attend both these programs.

Field Trips

May 14 (Thursday) 6:30 P.M. Oxbow field trip
Darlena Graham will lead this evening trip into the Oxbow. Meet her at the Gardens Alive! Parking lot. If you have questions, call her at 581-2227.

May 16 (Saturday) 9:00 A.M. Oxbow field trip
Meet Steve Wagner at the upper boat ramp parking lot at Shawnee Lookout Park. You'll need a Hamilton County Parks motor vehicle permit. For more information, call Steve at 831-7606.

June 2 (Tuesday) 6:30 P.M. Oxbow field trip
David Styer will lead this evening trip into the Oxbow. Meet him at the Gardens Alive! Parking lot. Call Dave at 772-1287.

June 6 (Saturday) 8:00 A.M. Oxbow field trip
Ned Keller will lead this trip starting from the upper parking lot for the boat ramp at Shawnee Lookout Park. Hamilton County Parks motor vehicle permit required. More information? Ask Ned: (513) 641-6497

Birdathon '98

Oxbow's annual fund raising event is the Birdathon. Participants solicit pledges of money for each species of bird they identified and then spend a 24 hour period in early May scouring the Tristate area looking for birds. This year the birding part of the event will be held from 5:00 p.m. Friday May 8th to 5:00 p.m. Saturday May 9th.

Oxbow will enter several teams of its own in the Birdathon competition, and we invite members (and others) to pledge money in support of one of these teams. All funds pledged to these teams go directly to Oxbow. You can make a pledge by filling out and mailing the form below. After Birdathon is over, you'll receive an account of how Oxbow's teams did—where they went and what they saw—as a memo of what your pledge comes to.

Oxbow's Birdathon Teams

Oxbow Team #1 Geriatric Gents and a Junior (Karl Maslowski will assemble a team of his associates and friends.)

Oxbow Team #2 The Fire and Brimstone Birders Guild (Joe Bens, Paul Wharton, Jay Stenger)

Oxbow Team #3 The No See 'Ums (David Styer, Charlie Saunders, Steve Pelikan and friends)

BIRDATHON '98 PLEDGE FORM

Name _____
Address _____
City/State/Zip _____

My pledge is per species found
___ \$1 ___ 50¢ ___ 25¢ ___ 20¢ ___ 10¢ Other _____
or for this amount \$ _____

My pledge is for
___ Oxbow Team #1 (Geriatric Gents)
___ Oxbow Team #2 (Fire and Brimstone)
___ Oxbow Team #3 (No See 'Ums)
___ Highest Scoring Team

Mail to: **OXBOW INC.**, PO Box 43391,
Cincinnati, OH 45243

Field Notes

by Morris Mercer

The first day of Spring it is a good time to think back on winter around the Oxbow. At a glance the day looks like winter with snow cover, except that there are bright daffodils sticking through the snow.

We have had a very wimpy winter but for a few days in early Feb. One of those days we were to have had our winter night walk at Shawnee. I've always said we would cancel the walk if it was colder than 25 below or if we had more than a foot of new snow. This year we had 18.5 inches of snow and no place to park the cars even if we could have gotten to Shawnee.

The snow came as a real surprise, most of all to the weather forecaster. But we did enjoy it. After Frances and I cleaned the deck and the walk for the third time, we headed for Shawnee. The snow clung to each branch and twig, blanketing the hills and the valley of their imperfections. All was still and peaceful—a truly winter wonderland. We saw several deer, many lying in the snow. I knew the valley would be even more beautiful in the moonlight. Why not take a walk while we still had the snow and a nice moon?

We picked a night, and on my way to Shawnee I watched the moon playing peek-a-boo from behind the clouds. I was surprised at the number of people wanting to join me. Louise Bettman, Connie McNamee, Velda Miller and her children Pat and Elizabeth, Dave Styer, and Rick Bramstedt. We started down along the Great Miami River. To our left were the snow-covered hills of Shawnee, to our right the hill fell away abruptly to the floodplain.

We hadn't hiked far when we noticed all the clouds had been swept away and the moon's silver disk lit our path. The wooded hills were a study in black and white, all moonlight and shadow. On our return trip a deer crossed in front of us and adding its beauty to the winter night.

Back at the car I got out the sweet rolls Frances had baked for us. She had them in a warmer so they were much as they were when she had taken them from the oven. Warm and delicious.

We left the hills and the valley under a heavy white blanket all snuggled down for a long winter night. Once again I was reminded why I enjoy a real winter so much.

Next came St. Patrick's Day, Tuesday, March 17, 1998. The day broke cloudy. Light rain was chased by a cold west wind. This was the day we were to go in search of a GREEN-winged Teal.

The tradition started several years ago on a field trip to the Oxbow. Karl Maslowski brought Lorna Doone cookies, and set the rules: no cookies until we found a green-winged teal. Now Karl is tough and he was the keeper of the cookies.

Our party—Karl, George Laycock, John Oney, Jim Simpson and I—headed into the Oxbow by the back way: down by the riverboat, and up over the levee. We parked near Jackpot Pond. There were Northern Shovelers and American Widgeon, but no teal.

We walked on back to the Oxbow to a picture that would warm your heart. Across from us hooded and red-breasted mergansers worked in the flooded willows. A few Wood Duck were in with them as well. Along the big bend in the lake were blacks, mallard, gadwall, a pied-billed grebe and several Coot. To our right were Ring-necked Ducks, Scaup, and a Tundra Swan. While we were standing there a flight of ducks came in high and fast. I followed them with my binoculars as they swooped down pulling out just above the willows and banking hard to the left. They weren't Blue Angels, but they were Blue-winged Teal—the first I'd seen this season. I'm not able to fly with them, but I sure like watching them do their stuff.

We hadn't seen a Green-winged Teal so we moved on to where we could see the sky pool in the middle of the Oxbow field. Jim was on the scope as he has the younger eyes. Soon, he stepped back with a big smile and said, "There they are." Each of us had a good look at several Green-winged Teal. Karl broke out the Lorna Doones and said that Jim should have the first cookie as he'd found this St. Patrick's Day's first Green-winged Teal. The cookies were extra good this year, as was this fine winter day shared with good friends. We hope to meet again next St. Patrick's Day to search for teal again.

Now winter is over and Spring is here. Can there be any season more beautiful than Spring? The willows are turning green, and soon we'll enjoy redbud, dogwood and wildflowers. On a moonlit night the fragrance of locust blossoms will come to us on a cool breeze. Ah yes—spring is one of the four seasons I really enjoy around the Oxbow.



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IN MEMORY OF

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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 ecosystem known locally as the Oxbow, Hardintown, or Horseshoe Bottoms, from industrial development and to preserve the floodplain at the confluence of the Great Miami and Ohio rivers for use as a staging area for the seasonal migrations of waterfowl. This agricultural is rich in geological, archaeological, and anthropological history.

Help us save this unique wetland ecosystem. 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

Corporation Officers

President, Norma L. Flannery(513) 471-8001
Vice President, Morris Mercer(513) 941-2534
Recording Secretary,
Dennis Mason(513) 385-3607
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Committee Chairpersons

Conservation, Bill Bocklage(513) 922-2445
Easement Inspection,
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Richard Pope (513) 637-1365
Fund Raising, Greg Mendell(812) 926-2522
Marketing, Connie McNamee(812) 926-2522
Land Management, Dave Styer(513) 772-1287
Preservation, Norma L. Flannery(513) 471-8001
Programs, Morris Mercer(513) 941-2534
Research, Meg Riestenberg(513) 921-3986
Speakers Bureau, Morris Mercer(513) 941-2534
Newsletter Steve Pelikan(513) 681-2574

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