



WETLAND *matters*

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

Autumn Activities Schedule

Programs

Tuesday, 9 November 1999, 7:30 p.m. at the Zoo. Steve Maslowski, a friend of Oxbow and a film maker, will share a film with us, "Amazing Birds of America."

Tuesday, 14 December 1999, 7:30 p.m. at the Lawrenceburg Library. "Farming with Wildlife in Mind" is the title of Richard Pope's talk on procedures he uses in farming in the Oxbow area.

Field Trips

Saturday, 6 November 1999, 9:00 a.m. Meet David Styer (772-1287) at Gardens Alive! for an autumn walk around the Oxbow.

Saturday, 11 December 1999, 8:00 a.m. This is the date of the annual December bird count by the Hamilton County Park District. To volunteer for this activity and receive an assignment, interested persons should call the Park District at 521-7275.

Oxbow, Inc., About To Close on Property Acquisitions

In furtherance of its goal to protect as much of the Oxbow area as possible, Oxbow, Inc., will soon complete negotiations for two real estate parcels, one from the Mullins family and the other from Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Clark, Jr.

Twenty-seven acres of the Mullins property lie west of where I-275 crosses the southern end of the Oxbow area. Another five acres lie east of the I-275 crossing between the Ohio river and the railroad and adjoin the recently acquired Weatherford property.

The Clark property that Oxbow, Inc., has bought is contiguous with Oxbow, Inc., owned property toward the northern edge of the Oxbow area and consists of a five-acre pond.

Both of these purchases were made possible by a grant from the estate of the late William Rowell Chase, former P&G executive and long-time Oxbow, Inc., benefactor.

President Norma Flannery said that Oxbow, Inc., continues its policy of seeking to add to its property whenever additional units become available. With the two new additions, Oxbow, Inc., will control over 700 acres in the Oxbow area, either through conservation easements or outright purchase.

FIELD NOTES

BY MORRIS MERCER

This is a cloudy, misty, cool October evening. But it feels good after the extra dry, hot August and September. There are a few trees taking on a little color, mostly yellows and browns. The poison ivy is a pretty red, the iron weed with its purple blossoms, the New England asters, and the yellow of the golden rod all add their beauty to the autumn days. The last couple of weeks of August and the month of September were great around the Oxbow. The wildlife seemed to find it to their liking.

Most of my trips have been in the evening after supper when the sun is low. One evening I stood in one place on the bank of the Oxbow and counted 126 great blue herons, 56 great egrets, and just before dark more than 50 black crowned night herons came in. On one of C.G.&E.'s towers there were between 50 and 100 turkey vultures. Another evening we counted 15 black vultures on another tower.

There on the bank of the Oxbow someone asked me what was moving on the water. I looked and said it was a carp's waving fin. I jokingly said the carp was waving good-bye. It was a couple of weeks later I thought it might not have been a joke, as there were hundreds of large dead carp all around the Oxbow. It seemed to me, with the water level so low, the large fish had run out of oxygen. I didn't see any small dead fish, but a hot day isn't a good time to check dead fish.

There were so many things to see, and I'm so glad Oxbow, Inc., owns as much of the area as it does. One day Frances and I were crossing Lost Bridge when we saw a beautiful mature bald eagle flying above the Great Miami River. I called Dave Styer to tell him we had seen the eagle. Dave saw a bald eagle on his next four trips to the Oxbow. He was sure it wasn't the same bird each time as he saw both the mature and the immature. Dave said he saw the eagle take a fish from Oxbow Lake. I had never seen eagle at the Oxbow this time of the year. It must be that the "fishin's" good.

I saw a flock of 25 or 30 wood ducks drop in, and they added color to any autumn day. A flight of 15 blue winged teal came in over a gang of Canada geese

feeding in a field next to the water. There were a few shovelers, and a nice flock of mallards in the water hold, but neither add much color at this time of year. One evening I saw a flock of tree swallows; there must have been two or three hundred birds in migration. I often wonder how much wildlife stops in that we never see.

Now that I don't spend as much time walking as I once did, I find that there is much to be seen from sitting on the bank. The ducks and other birds come and go. The long legged wading birds slowly fish the shallow water. A beaver swims across the end of the water hole, a deer comes out to the water's edge. The evening breeze causes the leaves to lose their fragile hold. I watch the falling leaves. Some leaves seem to float down, others seem to just spin down, while others glide down and gently kiss the water.

The corn in the nearby field is ready for harvest. The breeze seems to whisper in the brown leaves of the corn. While I sat there a nice fat fox squirrel came out of the corn field. The squirrel wasn't bouncing as squirrels usually do but was walking more as a kid sneaking from a cookie jar. A Cooper's hawk flew out through the tree line. There is so much to enjoy on a beautiful autumn evening at the Oxbow.

On an evening as wet and cool as this, I thought of popcorn. Now here beside me is a crisp tart apple with a couple of bites out of it, a cold glass of apple cider, and a bowl of popcorn. When I reached for a handful of popcorn, I couldn't help but notice my walnut stained fingers. The stained fingers reminded me the walnuts have been hulled and are drying. When they are dry, cracked and picked out, how good they will be. I can picture a snowy winter night in front of the fire. There will be that pan of fudge laced heavily with black walnuts. That might not be the very best thing for me, but what a way to go.

Yes, autumn is a great time of the year, but don't sell winter short. It too is a great time around the Oxbow.



Avocet Sightings Reported

On his web site in mid-October, Ned Keller reported that three persons had reported Avocet sightings in the Oxbow.

Oxbow Memorials

In Memory of	Donor
Frederick C. Cooper	Peg Gatch and Susan Jurcisin
Julie Godsey Sheba Grow	Norma Flannery Oak Crest Animal Hospital, Cheryl L. Devine, D.V.M.
Mary Thayer Mickham	Fred and Peggy Gatch
Mary Thayer Mickham	Philip and Susanne Geier
Joan K. Schuermann	Michael and Nancy Hartings
Joan K. Schuermann Joan K. Schuermann	Augustina Schwartz Mr. and Mrs. Carl Shadix
Joan K. Schuermann Joan K. Schuermann	Jane Webb Mr. and Mrs. David B. Yelton

Oxbow, Inc., has established Memorials in honor of those who have passed on. Each Memorial established in the name of a friend or a loved one, will be permanently enrolled 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., PO Box 43391, Cincinnati, Ohio, 45243-0391. Be sure to enclose the names and addresses of those who are to receive the acknowledgement.

MOVING?

Please send your change of address information to:

Oxbow, Inc.
P. O. Box 43391
Cincinnati, Ohio 45243-0391

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OXBOW RESEARCH

Lead Content of Water, Soil Sediments, and Plants Measured

As part of its stewardship, Oxbow, Inc., sponsors research projects in the Oxbow area. With the prospect of having trumpeter swans as winter residents, the Board of Directors authorized a study of the lead content in components of the Oxbow area. Three members of the Chemistry and Physical Sciences Department of the College of Mt. St. Joseph, C. R. Cornett, M.M. Riestenberg, and W. M. Hunt, made the analysis.

Samples of smartweed leaves and stems were collected. Sediment samples were collected from the shallows of the area known as "Junior's Pond" as well as from the adjacent body of water and the first plowed field upon entry into the Oxbow. Two of the four samples taken from this location were classified as sludge. Three water samples were taken from "Junior's Pond."

The investigators concluded that though "a more exhaustive sampling would provide a much more precise evaluation of the lead deposition in this Greater Miami Oxbow, at this point there does not appear to be a sufficient level of lead to merit concern for this ecosystem."

Four Fish Species Identified

In another project, David Riestenberg of the College of Mt. St. Joseph collected four species of fish not previously observed within the Oxbow. They were Mosquitofish (the only known natural population in the tristate area); Shortnose Gar, a very rare fish because of the depletion of oxbows and backwaters, their natural habitat; Brook Silverside; and Golden Redhorse Sucker.

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		

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Give Us a Call!**

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