View this email in your browser

Last Saturday a team of volunteers including new as well as experienced, spent a couple of hours picking up trash along the banks of Lake Sherry. The lake looked glorious in the sunshine and mild winds made shiny peaks on the water. We could see dozens of waterbirds and also came across several different types of snakes as we worked. It was a perfect day and the lake has never looked better!

Spring is Here!

all photos | Benjamin Brown

Naturalist Notebook

Oxley Otter | Bryan Tapp

What the Heck is a Glorian?

By Karen Harris

Now, I'm a prairie/Ozark uplift kinda gal. The desert, as a hiking destination, has never appealed to me—too hot, too dry, not enough wildlife. However, when one of my favorite nature writers and conservation hero, Terry Tempest Williams, announced a sunrise celebration and book signing for her newest publication, The Glorians, on the day of the lunar eclipse (and my 75th birthday no less), I decided to go to Moab, Utah to celebrate and learn what makes something a "Glorian."

At dawn on my first day in Moab, I set off to find the Moab Slough that Williams praised in her book An Unspoken Hunger. It's a backwater along the Colorado River; water in the desert, an oasis for wildlife. Even walking as quietly as possible, I scared up a coot, a pair of mallards, green-wing and cinnamon teal, Canada geese, a Northern harrier, Red-wing blackbirds, chickadees, kinglets, juncos, spotted towhees, a downy woodpecker, and a sapsucker: all birds (or relatives) we see here at Oxley. Wild wetlands are magnets for birds everywhere.

As the sun rose higher over the La Sal Mountains, I sat on the ground quietly waiting for the birds to return. A few blackbirds came back but the rest stayed away. Then I saw him, a great big beautiful river otter swimming and diving back and forth across the slough. As he approached the shore, not 30 feet from my sit spot, he raised his head several times looking straight at me. I could hear his snort above the calls of the Red-wings. Diving, he took off for the far shore. I continued to watch through binoculars as he swam back and forth, alternately diving, popping up with bubbles trailing behind, and sprinting across the surface. Then I saw THEM. Two sandhill cranes appeared like ghosts out of the reeds. They seemed to

We have otters at Oxley. I have yet to see one. Sandhill cranes migrate through Oklahoma. I have not seen them here. Astonishingly, there I was sitting on the cold ground in the desert, and I see them both at the same time! The thought crossed my mind, if my 75 year-old stiff legs refuse to get me back up,…it's okay. I'll just be right here.

Waiting for my delayed flights back to Tulsa, I finished reading The Glorians. In it, Terry Tempest Williams tells us to "rise with the Glorians," to take heart when we experience something that moves us, be it fear or grief, wonder or love. Wendell Berry wrote "When despair for the world grows in me… I go and lie down where the wood drake rests in his beauty on the water, and the great heron feeds. I come into the peace of wild things." Wetlands nourish prairies, forests, deserts, and our own souls. They are home to Glorians, "the holy ordinary" as well as the extraordinary. While I will always remember my experience at Moab Slough, I am especially grateful for the variety of wetlands here at home at Oxley and the opportunity they afford to be astonished by our own river otters and the many other Glorians that live here.

Artist-in-Residence

Oxley Nature Center Welcomes Taylor Painter-Wolfe as the 2026 Artist-in-Residence

Oxley Nature Center is proud to announce Taylor Painter-Wolfe as the 2026 resident artist.

studied fiber arts at the Kansas City Art Institute, where she first began working with felted wool, and earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts. She later attended the University of Washington, earning a Master of Education in early childhood special education. Painter-Wolfe divides her time between creating her own work and teaching artists of all ages at schools and arts organizations across Oklahoma.

Her artwork consists of abstract landscapes made from felted wool she prepares and dyes herself. Her current work draws inspiration from aerial photographs, satellite images, and her own photography of natural environments and waterways throughout Oklahoma.

"For years, I have loved coming to Oxley to slow down, explore, and enjoy its natural beauty," Painter-Wolfe said. "I am always grateful for this space, and I am excited for this opportunity as the artist in residence to immerse myself in the landscape and create a body of work inspired by it."

Oxley April Programs

Call 918-596-9054 to register for any program that requires pre-registration.

***Nature Journaling Group**
Meets on Thursdays, 2:00 – 4:00 p.m.
Led by Mary Seabourn, this program offers the opportunity to dive in deep with your observations of the more-than-human world. Each session will include time out on the trails, time to reflect, write, and sketch about what you notice, and time for optional sharing and group discussion. Participants can join the group at any time; There is a one-time materials fee of $20. Join online here: https://tulsaparks.recdesk.com/Community/Program/Detail?programId=2739.

Saturday Morning Birding
April 4, 8:00 – 9:45 a.m.
All ages and skill levels are welcome for this free drop-in Birding Walk, guided by a staff naturalist. Bring binoculars if you have them!

2D Needle Felting with Taylor Painter-Wolfe
April 11, 1:00 – 3:30 p.m.
In this two-and-a-half-hour class, participants will create a nature scene inspired by Oxley's landscape using 2D needle felting — commonly called "painting with wool" — a technique that involves fusing colorful wool onto a wool base with

https://tulsaparks.recdesk.com/Community/Program/Detail?programId=2739.

Plant Identification Walk

April 18, 10:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
Oxley Naturalists guide this free drop-in event, where we explore the lives of plants in the forest, prairie, and wetlands.

Little Seedlings, April's theme: "Seeds are Growing"

April 21 and 24, 10:00 – 11:00 a.m.
Experience nature with your little ones. Through stories, crafts, and time exploring the trails, we will help to inspire a lifelong love of the outdoors. Together, we'll look for sprouting plants at Oxley. We'll also make a seed-filled, plantable craft. Ages 1-5 + a caregiver $5 or Free for ONCA members

All about Nature Book Club

April 24, 11:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
April's selection: "Gathering Moss: A Natural and Cultural History of Mosses" by Robin Wall Kimmerer

Spring Discovery Walks

Fridays at 11:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m., and Sunday at 2:00 p.m.
These informal walks will be facilitated by Oxley staff naturalists. Meet by the message board in the parking lot and we'll walk together to see what the trails have to show us. These are free, drop-in events for all ages and abilities.

Project FeederWatch

Every Thursday and Friday, 10:00 – 11:00 a.m.
Join us to observe and record the birds who visit our feeders while helping collect community science data to submit to Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology. This is the last month we will be collecting data until fall rolls around again!

Nature Story Times Update

Our Nature Story Times for April and May are sold out, which has prompted us to offer an additional session. Starting in June, we will have Nature Story Time on select Wednesdays and Thursdays. Registration for Summer Story Times will open May 1.

SAVE THE DATE!! MAY 9 – WORLD MIGRATORY BIRD DAY

Join us to celebrate and to learn more about our feathered friends! If you love birds and have ever wondered what we can do to help them, then this day is for you. Oxley staff and volunteers will be joined by local enthusiasts and experts from Tulsa Bird Collaborative, Oklahoma Native Plant Network, and Sutton Research Center for an afternoon of activities and presentations for all ages.

*indicates that pre-registration is required. To register for programs or to find out more please visit https://tulsaparks.recdesk.com/Community/Program?category=14

Water in Lake Sherry, the Marsh, and Coal Creek | Claire Harkness

Nature Center Hours

Mary K Oxley Interpretive Center hours are 10-4:30PM Tuesday through Saturday, and Noon - 4:30PM on Sunday.

PLEASE NOTE: April 3 - Oxley will be closed in observance of Good Friday
April 18 - The entrance to Mohawk Park will be closed for the Zoo Run until about 10:15 a.m. Oxley will open late at 10:30 a.m.

After Interpretive Center hours, trails are open for hiking until 9:00 PM.

Copyright © 2026 Mary K. Oxley Nature Center Association, All rights reserved.

Want to change how you receive these emails?
You can update your preferences or unsubscribe from this list.

mailchimp