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June is always a busy and beautiful month at Oxley! This month we will be hosting biologist and author Priscilla Crawford when she joins us to talk about her new book, "A Naturalist's Guide to Oklahoma". We will start the morning off with a walk led by Priscilla, followed by a presentation on the ecoregions of Oklahoma and wrap up with a book-signing. This event will be held on June 20th 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Naturalist's Notebook

What TIME is it?

By Karen Harris

Last month I was going to write something about "time," and then I ran out of it. Time has always been a fascinating concept to me because, frankly, I've never been quite sure what it is. When asked to define time, Einstein said that it is something clocks measure. I don't think he knew either. I do, however, know a little bit about the way we measure time with clocks and also with our observations of natural events.

Let's start with clocks. The defining unit of a clock is the second, defined as 1/86,400 of a mean solar day (24 hours). 60 sec/minute x 60 minutes/hour x 24 hours/day = 86,400 sec/day.

Seconds, minutes, and hours can be measured by various mechanisms from sand through an hour glass, increments on a sundial, springs and gears in a wind-up clock, vibrations of a quartz crystal, and even wave cycles of radiation by a cesium-133 atom exposed to microwave radiation. That last one is supposed to

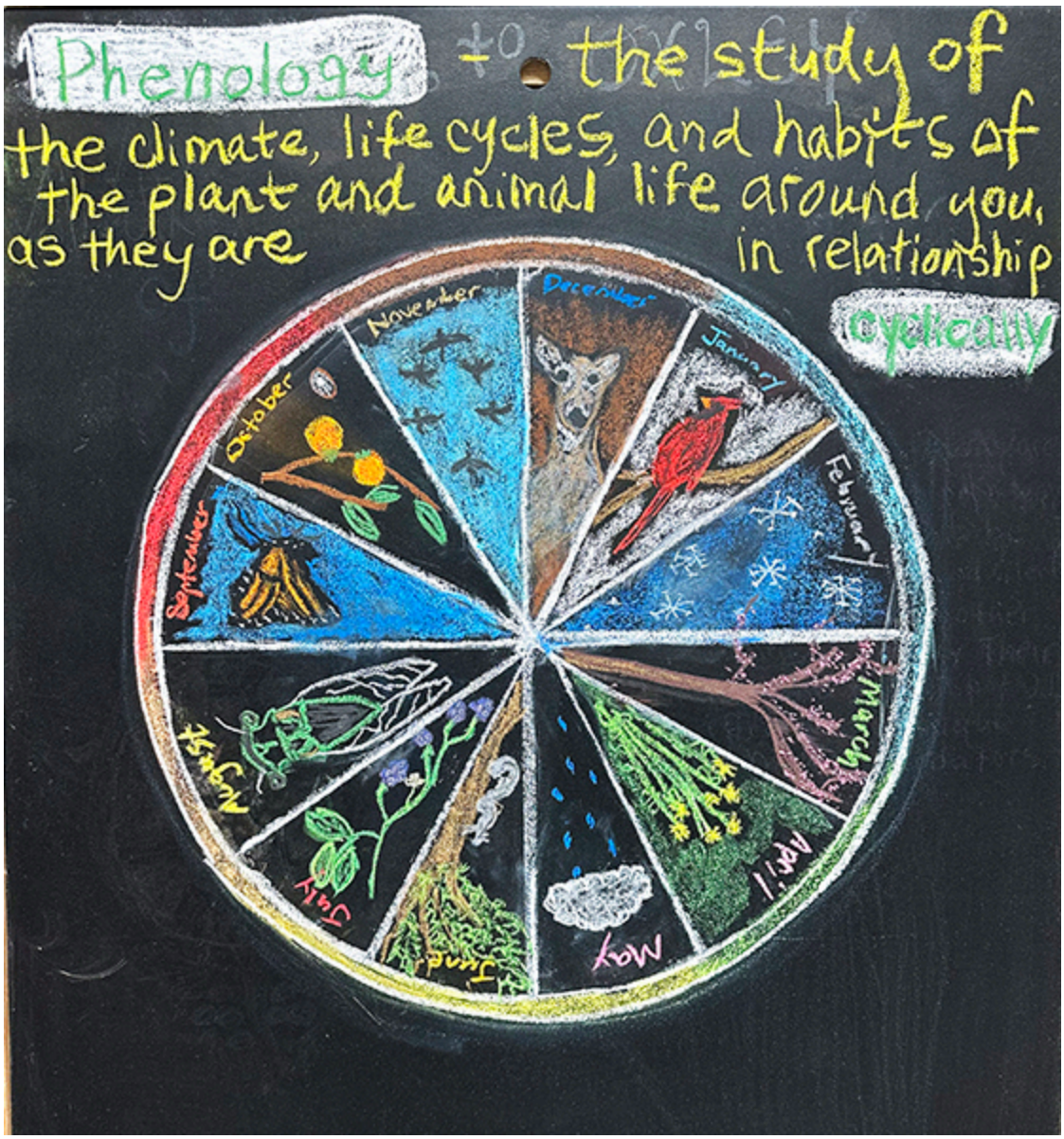
they have to be super accurate or Google can't help us find our way to the grocery store.

Naturalists use other means to track time, methods that are tied, well,… to nature. In January our Oxley bookclub read Our Moon, by Rebecca Boyle and we reviewed the phases of the moon. Last evening I saw a waxing gibbous moon, realized that the month is flying by and I needed to finish this essay before the moon is full. It's been fun reconnecting to the night sky and tracking the waxing and waning of our celestial companion. June 21 is the Summer Solstice, one of the four important markers of the seasons along with Winter Solstice and the Vernal and Autumnal Equinoxes, all functions of the earth's tilt and its rotation around the sun . I always love the increasing daylight during spring and especially enjoy cool mornings in the garden or walks in the park at twilight. The summer solstice also portends hotter and drier days to come so there's that too. As the days shorten again, it's especially nice to experience Oxley at the golden hour when the slanting sunlight streams through the prairie grasses.

Our journaling group and Mary's Junior Naturalists have used a technique called a phenology wheel to chart time by noting changes in the plants and animals. Old-timers used those changes to know when to do things. For example, the saying goes that when oak leaves are the size of a squirrel's ear, it's time to plant corn, look for morels, and go fishing. Leaves grew so fast this spring in Oklahoma, I failed to get any of those accomplished - in time. While I have not been as vigilant as I should have been about recording specific dates of my observations, I remember noticing the first buds on the spicebush in early March, the last blooms on the woodland phlox in late April, the first Parula warbler to arrive at the end of March and the last time I saw a White- crowned sparrow at the feeder about two weeks ago. I know that turtles start to move around in mid-May, and this year I tried to slow down a bit on the highway to avoid another roadkill. I tracked a small part of the spring from when momma mallard led her seven ducklings down Coal Creek to when her teenage ducklings were splashing ahead and leading HER last week. Right now there are increasing numbers of fireflies in the evenings. I'm still waiting to see the first fawn. Aldo Leopold and his daughter Nina kept meticulous records of natural happenings at "The Shack" near Baraboo, Wisconsin. Nina noted changes that occurred from her father's 1940's records through her '70s and early 2000s sightings. Scientific data such as hers show shifts in the cycles and are evidence of changes to regional and global climates. Ecologists worry that organisms using temperature to time migration, nesting, etc. may be foiled because other organisms they depend on may still be using daylength and, consequently, be out of synch. Phenology is both an important scientific research tool and a great way to increase one's intimacy with nature.

What is time? I believe "time" is a human construct like numbers. Astrophysicists may think that time is in unidirectional motion, but here on earth, the clocks we

and ephemeral blooms. I received a birthday card once that wished me peace and joy on my next trip around the sun. Starting at this second (1/86,400 of a mean solar day), I wish that for you. That's what time it is.



Phenology Wheel | Mary Seabourn

Who am I?

Cecropia silk worm caterpillar| Glen Smith

Oxley June Programs

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

REGULAR PROGRAMS

Full Blue Moon Walk
June 1, 7:00 - 8:30 p.m.
Birding Walk
June 6, 8:00 - 9:45 a.m.
Butterfly Walk

Every Friday at 9:00 a.m. and Sundays at 2:00 p.m.

Nature Journaling

Thursdays at 8:30 a.m.

All About Nature Book Club

Meets the 4th Friday of the month

SPECIAL EVENTS!

Bonus Little Seedlings - Felting Edition!

June 9, 10:00 - 11:00

Join us for a Bonus Edition of Little Seedlings in June! Resident Artist Taylor Painter-Wolfe will lead the class in the very tactile, colorful, hands-on process of transforming wool into felt. Everyone will take home their own handmade piece of felt and we will go on an optional nature walk.

Moth Night

June 13, 8:30 - 11:30 p.m.

Come out and enjoy our third annual Moth Night just after sunset at 8:30 PM! This free event will feature 5 or more viewing stations where you can get an up-close look at fascinating nocturnal critters. We will also have some art activities for all to enjoy. Swing by, relax outdoors, explore, and see what shows up after dark! Bring chairs, blankets, and cameras!

Ecoregions of Oklahoma with Priscilla Crawford

June 20, 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Oxley is thrilled to have biologist and author Priscilla Crawford join us to talk about her new book, "A Naturalist's Guide to Oklahoma". We will start the morning off with a walk led by Priscilla, followed by a presentation on the ecoregions of Oklahoma and wrap up with a book-signing. You can find more information on Priscilla's book here: https://www.ou.edu/biosurvey/book

Drum Circle with Leslie Brown

June 21, 1:00 - 2:00 p.m.

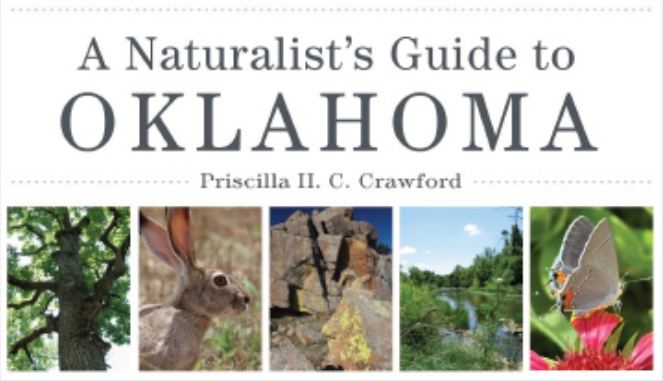
To help celebrate Make Music Day Tulsa, Oxley will host a drum circle! This musical experience will be guided by the one and only Leslie Brown, who has been bringing global rhythms to Tulsa for decades. Using provided instruments, including drums, buckets, shakers, and body percussion, participants will be guided through various beats and rhythms, all culminating in learning a group song that we will play together. We hope to do this in the shaded Fawn Grove picnic area. If the weather is highly unpleasant, we will move it inside to the classroom. All ages and families are welcome and all supplies are provided! This is a free event, but preregistration is required.

MOTH NIGHT
SATURDAY JUNE 13
8:30 – 11:30 P.M.

Saturday
June 20

9am - noon

Guided walk followed by presentation and book-signing



Join author and biologist Priscilla Crawford, PhD, to learn more the ecoregions of Oklahoma

OXLEY NATURE CENTER

Event is FREE but please register to help us plan

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

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

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