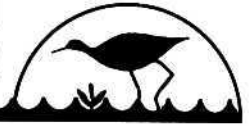


# wetland matters



## OXBOW, INC. NEWSLETTER

P.O. BOX 43391  
CINCINNATI, OHIO 45243

Number 58 March-April 1996

### Gaming Development News

**Wetland Mitigation** On 22 February, the Army Corps of Engineers held a hearing for comments on Argosy's application for a permit to construct their gaming facilities in Lawrenceburg. About 250 people attended. At the hearing, Tim Mara (Oxbow's attorney) made a brief comment indicating that Oxbow, Inc. thinks that the wetlands mitigation plan proposed by Argosy is adequate. Both the Indiana Department of Natural Resources and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service have also commented favorably on the details of the plan to construct wetlands on the Conservancy District land as a replacement for wetlands that will be destroyed by the gaming development. IDNR, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and Oxbow, Inc. all stressed the fact that the mitigation site must be protected permanently, even if gambling operations are discontinued some time in the future. **The proposed agreement between Argosy and the Conservancy District (owner of the mitigation site) contains clauses which would permit the mitigation site to be developed or put to other uses sometime in the future. Unless this agreement is modified to provide permanent protection for the mitigation site, Oxbow will not be able to endorse the plan.**

Argosy's mitigation proposal calls for replacing every acre of wetland destroyed with roughly 4 acres of new wetland. This 4:1 mitigation ratio is considered generous, and is certainly higher than the law requires. The Argosy proposal calls for setting aside extra land surrounding the mitigation site as a buffer zone. Thus, many acres of bottom land near the Oxbow will be protected from development. The mechanism for this protection will be an easement owned by the Army Corps of Engineers.

The Argosy plan calls for monitoring of the newly constructed wetlands annually for 5 years to ensure that appropriate water regimes and vegetation have been established. The proximity of adequate water supply (flood water from the Ohio) and the low-lying nature of the mitigation site are points in favor of a successful mitigation project.

**Billboards** After their application to erect billboards was denied by the Dearborn County Board of Zoning Appeals, Whiteco-Metrocomm filed suit in a

Dearborn County court (asking to have the decision overturned) and in Federal Court (asking to have the county's zoning regulations concerning billboards declared unconstitutional). Oxbow, Inc. will participate on the side of the Board of Zoning Appeals in the Dearborn County suit and has asked to participate in the federal litigation as well. We can best ensure that the Oxbow is protected by playing an active part in these cases. In particular, Oxbow Inc. wants to be able to play an active role should the cases be resolved by some out-of-court agreement.

**Center Street** Traditional access to the bottomlands near the Oxbow lake from Lawrenceburg has been from the east end of Center Street. For years the street ended at a locked gate to which only bottomland owners had a key. Access to the bottoms was via a road across the levee on which all the landowners had the right to travel.

As part of their development plans, Argosy wants to move this access road about 1 block north. The city of Lawrenceburg agreed to this plan, but some of the landowners demanded that the new access road be declared a public street rather than a private right of way. These landowners started a legal action to have Lawrenceburg's agreement with Argosy overturned. Oxbow, Inc. thinks that the access should remain private.

Oxbow's concern is that having a public road into the area will mean more traffic through the bottoms and that it will be more difficult to keep people from dumping trash on Oxbow's land. As things are now, we can ask someone driving down the right of way in a pickup filled with construction scrap to leave, since he has no business being in the area. If the access becomes a public street, such people can be asked to leave only *after* they start dumping trash on our land.

It seems likely that the landowners who want a public street are interested in increasing the potential value of their land for development. Oxbow's president, Norma L. Flannery, suggested that if this is the case, a public road could be put in across their land. That way, Oxbow's land would be screened from the traffic and from possible future development by the railroad embankment. Also, access to Oxbow's land could be maintained as a private way that is regulated by a gate.

## Elections

Because the January meeting at the Zoo was canceled because of the snow storm, the election of board members was held at the February meeting in Lawrenceberg.

Reelected to three year terms were current members Bill Bocklage, Anita Buck, Norma L. Flannery, John Getzendanner, Tom Harrison, Steve Pelikan, Sandy Schnur, and Suzanne Skidmore.

In addition, three new members were elected: Becky Hawkins, Melanie Millsbaugh, and Joe Shomaker.

## Oxbow Research Grant

Oxbow awarded a research grant to Sue Simon, a PhD student in biology at Ohio University. Sue's work is on the reproductive physiology of turtles. Red-eared Sliders are her current project. With the long-term goal of studying how man-made pollutants that can mimic hormones can alter reproductive behavior, her current project is to collect base-line data. The grant from Oxbow will enable her to study Sliders from the Oxbow area.

Oxbow, Inc. promises members that their donations will only be used to buy land and easements to protect the Oxbow area. Funds for Oxbow's research grants come from special grants to Oxbow and from the income produced by renting Oxbow's land to farmers.

### Moving?

Please send your change of address information to

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

The Post Office will not forward *Wetland Matters* to your new address.

## Our Mistake — Sorry!

Some of the information in the last *Wetland Matters* about the tour company recommended by Oxbow members Albert and Debbe Lane was incorrect. Here's the correct information:


The Lanes were extremely happy with a trip they made to Brazil's Pantanal that was led by Douglas Trent. Mr. Trent is an accomplished naturalist who lived many years in South America.

His company is:

Focus Tours Inc.  
14821 Hillside Lane  
Burnsville, MN 55306  
Tel: (612) 892-7830  
Fax: (612) 892-0900  
Email: FocusTours@aol.com

Note that there are other tour companies with similar names (hence the mistake in the last *Wetland Matters*). The above address is the correct one.

Mr. Trent sent a newsletter describing some of his upcoming trips. If you're interested, it will be available at the next few Oxbow meetings.

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

Birdathon is May 10th and 11th!

# Calendar

## Meetings

**12 March (Tuesday) 7:30 P.M. Oxbow meeting at the Cincinnati Zoo Education Building.**

Dr. Stanley Hedeem from the Biology Department at Xavier University (and also a member of Oxbow's advisory council) will be our speaker. His topic is "A Five-Month trip around the Southern Hemisphere."

**9 April (Tuesday) 7:30 P.M. Oxbow meeting at the Lawrenceburg Public Library.**

The program this evening will be given by Dr. Jacqueline Belwood from the Cincinnati Museum of Natural History. She will tell us about the new "Bat Conservation and Research Program at the Cincinnati Museum of Natural History."

## Field Trips

**9 March (Saturday) 8:00 A.M. Gardens Alive/Oxbow field trip.**

Greg Mendell will lead this trip into the Oxbow area. Meet at Gardens Alive (see story at right for directions).

**24 March (Sunday) 8:00 A.M. Oxbow field trip**

Meet Paul Wharton (513) 353-3403 at 50's Root Beer for a look around the Oxbow. There should be many ducks in the area.

**30 March (Saturday) 8:00 A.M. Gardens Alive/Oxbow field trip**

Meet leader Jay Stenger at Gardens Alive. Jay will be looking for migrant birds. Need more info? Call Jay at (513) 522-4245.

**6 April (Saturday) 8:00 A.M. Gardens Alive/Oxbow field trip**

Bill Bocklage will lead this trip looking for birds. Meet at the Gardens Alive parking lot. For more information, call Bill at (513) 922-2445.

**20 April (Saturday) 8:00 A.M. Gardens Alive/Oxbow field trip**

This trip will leave from the Gardens Alive lot. For more information call trip leader Steve Pelikan at (513) 681-2574. After a walk, we'll join the clean-up.

**21 April (Sunday) 8:00 A.M. Oxbow field trip**

To look for shorebirds, ducks and warblers as well as other signs of spring, meet Jay Stenger at 50's Root Beer (513) 522-4245.

## Volunteer

**20 April (Saturday) 9:00 Oxbow Clean up.**

Meet at the Pierson Hollowel site. After the clean up, There will be a program on the archeology of the Oxbow area given by Becky Hawkins. For more information, call Tom Harrison at 353-4878.

**20 April (Saturday) Winton Woods Cleanup 9:00 A.M to Noon**

The eighth annual Winton Woods Cleanup needs volunteers to remove accumulated trash and debris. Volunteers will be provided with trash bags and (a limited number of) work gloves.

For information, contact Forest Park Environmental Awareness & Recycling Program at (513) 595-LAND (5263). Volunteers will meet at 9:00 at the Kestrel Point picnic area.

## Lots of Field Trips Gardens Alive!

Gardens Alive! is a business that specializes in organic gardening supplies; at the outlet in Lawrenceburg you will also find a good supply of bird feeders, bird food, etc.

The proprietor of Gardens Alive!, always interested in furthering contacts with environmental and natural history interests, asked Oxbow about leading bird trips this spring, and offered to let Oxbow field trips meet in the Gardens Alive! parking lot. That is why there are extra field trips into the Oxbow area this spring.

Many of these trips will meet and car-pool from the Gardens Alive! lot. To reach Gardens Alive, take Rudolph Way to its end. Rudolph Way runs north from Rt. 50 just a little east of the levee. Look for the Ford dealership, since it is next to Rudolph Way. Gardens Alive! is at the end of the road. They have a large sign which can be seen from Rt. 50.

## Indiana Audubon Society

The Indiana Audubon Society announces its spring meeting to be held May 3-5 at Connersville, Indiana. There will be meals available and free primitive camping. For more information, call Pamela Keller, (317) 349-2972.



## Birdathon 1996

The Birdathon is Oxbow's only annual fund-raising event. Participants solicit pledges for each species of bird identified and then spend one 24-hour period identifying as many kinds of birds as they can. Funds raised are split 50-50 between Oxbow, Inc. and other organizations and institutions that sponsor participants. Oxbow's income from Birdathon (over \$12,000 last year) goes to the land acquisition fund.

The real purpose of Birdathon is to provide Oxbow with the resources (money) to protect wetland habitat by purchasing land or conservation easements. But area bird watchers also consider it a fun form of competition that takes place (usually in terrible weather) at the height of spring migration.

You are invited to participate! You don't need to be a high-powered birder to have fun and raise money for Oxbow. Indeed, every hour spent collecting pledges produces more for Oxbow than an hour spent birding.

If you'd like to try Birdathoning, call Steve or Anita at (513)-681-2574. They'll answer all your questions and may even be able to give you the names of other people interested in starting a team.

**Time and Date:** This year the 24-hour Birdathon runs from 5 P.M. Friday May 10th to 5 P.M. Saturday May 11th. But it isn't too early to register to participate and to **start collecting pledges.**

**Registration:** If you plan to participate as an individual or to organize a team, call Steve Pelikan or Anita Buck at (513) 681-2574 to request a registration packet (registration forms, pledge sheets, a map, and a complete set of rules). Leave a message on voice mail if there is no answer. Include your name, address, and phone number. The deadline for returning registrations forms is April 20th.

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

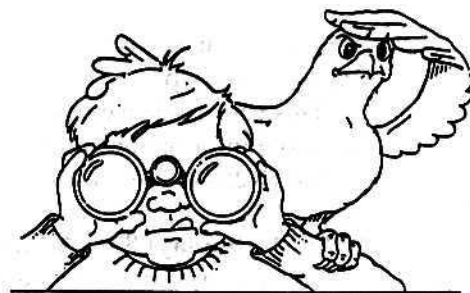
- 1) Most species found in entire Birdathon area.
- 2) Most species found in a single county of the Birdathon area.
- 3) Most species found traveling by human/animal/solar or other non-fossil-fuel power.
- 4) Most species, high-school age and younger. (Teams may have 1 or 2 older members, but 50% of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

**Birdathon Boundaries:** Participants may only count species that they find within the Birdathon region. This includes the whole of any county of Indiana, Kentucky, or Ohio any part of which overlaps a circle with radius 50 miles and center at the Oxbow lake. (See the map.)

In recent years many institutions have sponsored part participants in Birdathon. The Cincinnati Nature Center, The Cincinnati Zoo's Junior Zoologists, Raptor, Inc., Gilmore Ponds Conservancy, the Cincinnati Bird Club, and the Northern Kentucky Bird Club all take part.

In the past, participants have come from as far away as Massachusetts and Detroit to compete. This year we hope to have an entire team from the Roger Tory Peterson Institute in New York participate.

As another Birdathon first, we will have a participant birding in California: Oxbow board member David Styer is doing mathematical research there this spring. He'll collect pledges and count birds as usual. Because he'll be slightly outside the Birdathon area, he won't be eligible for winning any of the competitions — but everyone will envy his bird list.



# Pledge Now for Oxbow's Birdathon Teams

Oxbow will sponsor several teams in Birdathon '96. You're 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, others pledge some amount per species found. What ever you choose, you can make your pledge by sending in the form below. After Birdathon is over you'll receive a letter telling you how Oxbow's teams did, where they went, and the good birds they saw, along with a memo of advising you of your pledge total. All pledges to Oxbow teams go directly to Oxbow, Inc.

Oxbow's remarkable success at protecting habitat is directly attributable to its members' generosity. Thank you in advance for your pledge supporting Oxbow's Birdathon teams.

**Oxbow Team #1** "Geriatric Gents and a Junior." Karl Maslowski has agreed to reassemble his team of expert birders to compete in Birdathon '96. Last year, his team concentrated on Adams County where they found nearly 100 species.

**Oxbow Team #2** "Fire and Brimstone Birder's Guild." Joe Bens and Paul Wharton. Last year Joe and Paul came in second for the Golden Starling Award. They promise to try harder this year.

**Oxbow Team #3** "No See Ums." Charlie Saunders and Steve Pelikan. Last year, along with David Styer, who's spending the spring in California, Charlie and Steve tied for first place in the competition for the Golden Starling.

**Oxbow Team #4** "No SeeUms (west)." David Styer, who's spending the spring in California will participate in Birdathon in Monterey. Because he'll be outside the official Birdathon area, he can't compete for prizes. We hope you'll pledge support for his effort anyway!

## BIRDATHON '96

### 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 Oxbow Team #4, "No See-Ums (west)"

My pledge is for the highest scoring team

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

## Oxbow Memorials

### In memory of

Dennis Betz  
Wayne Betz  
Samuel Blesi, Jr.  
Bill Bolduc  
"Rockie" Shamrock Bones Clark  
Christopher LaBonge  
Zachary Land  
Amanda E. Mueller  
Mae Seifert  
Mahala Wyrick  
Frieda White

### Donor

Mr. and Mrs. Henry J. Radel, Jr.  
Ron and Marian Loesch  
Susan and Ken Faller  
Pat Shanklin  
Martyi Clark  
Cheryl Winslow-Devine D.V.M.  
Jane and Roy Bernzott  
Bob and Tina Schlegel  
Pat Shanklin  
Pat Shanklin  
Norma L. Flannery

## Oxbow Tributes

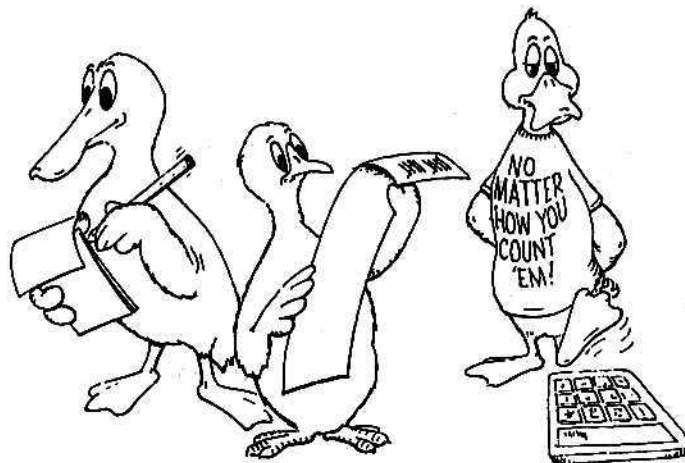
### In honor of

Norma L. Flannery — Merry Xmas  
Pete Thayer  
Robert R.R. Roberts, M.D.

### Donor

Stan and Debbie Boehmer  
The Cincinnati Bird Club  
Ms. L. Patton Davis

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

Winter came to the Oxbow area, and what a winter so far. Our family was going west in search of winter. We made reservations at Yellowstone National Park by snow coach. Because of the government shut-down our trip was cancelled. We thought we had missed the snow. But Mother Nature had a surprise waiting in the wings.

The surprise was the blizzard of '96. A record breaking one-day snow fall came to our area. After cleaning the sidewalks and drives, it was time to head to the Oxbow and Shawnee Lookout. Ducks and geese were using the area in large numbers. The deer were belly deep in snow: it was really winter.

Each day was different and had its own beauty. One cold clear morning ice-covered trees glistened in the sun above the snow-covered hills. One cloudy afternoon I watched as a nice flight of Mallard and Black Duck dropped down to the Great Miami. Farther up the river, through the light snow I made out several lines of birds coming towards me. Soon I heard the cry of geese. Through the binoculars I could see a couple hundred Canada Geese searching for a place to stop for lunch. They made a wide circle, then turned into the wind and began their glide, on fixed wings, into the snow-covered corn field.

The days warmed, the rains came, and the snow was soon gone. This happened upriver too, and soon the waters were rising. The Ohio reached 40 feet.... 45 feet .... then flood stage at 52 feet. It crested a little over 57 feet. The road to Lost Bridge and the Air Park were covered with flood water. The whole area was under water and it was duck heaven.

A west wind chased the waves across the black water one dark, cloudy afternoon. Ducks were everywhere. I counted the wedge-shaped heads of the Canvasbacks bobbing before me: 63. A flock of Goldeneye, Common Merganser, were there too, and half-a-dozen Bufflehead flew past and were gone. The temperature was in the mid-teens and the wind chill was near 0. Standing there, I found myself checking to be sure I'd remembered to put on my pants!

January 30, 1996 was the evening of the winter walk at Shawnee Lookout. John Kline picked me up at 6:30, and we could tell we'd selected a perfect day for the walk. The snow was really coming down! The streets and walks were white, as was Cliff Road. We pulled up to the ranger station at Shawnee, and the rangers were putting the snow tires on the cruiser. The road up the hill was already slick, so we waited at the ranger station for the crowd to show up.

Betsy and Dennis Brain were the first to arrive.

We all watched the snow fall and talked about the beautiful evening. When it seemed no one else was coming we started our hike down the road. There were car lights approaching us so we moved off the pavement wondering, "Who in the world would be out on a night like this?"

The car stopped by us and it was Meg Beacom and Ruthie Craig with her boys Matthew and Michael. (We waited while they parked the car.) The eight of us set out on our hike. We stayed on the road down along the Great Miami River. Turning from the road up through the woods we found Blue Jacket Trail.

Now there were times when we just didn't give a hoot. Except John. It was on his second hoot that a Barred Owl came in, on silent wings, landing in a bare tree about 50 feet from us. It was easy to see the owl as it was silhouetted against a light gray sky. The moon was hidden behind the clouds, but plenty of light came through to illuminate our path through the winter woods.

John gave his "wounded mouse" cry but the owl didn't buy it. It moved on to a different tree and we moved on down the trail. The snow was building up on our shoulders and hats. Except Meg — she wasn't wearing a hat, and you wouldn't believe how fast her hair became white.

Then it was time to turn back and head for home. The snow was soft on our faces and stuck to our nose and eyelashes. It crunched under our boots; this was a night to remember.

Mother Nature had decorated for a party and a fine group had turned out for a real winter walk. We heard the other side of the story on our way home as the radio told us "If you don't absolutely have to be out, please stay in tonight." I-75 was closed at the cut in the hill... but for us it was a beautiful evening with the Barred Owl out hunting, the Great Horned Owl on her nest, and the river bottoms full of ducks. All seemed right with the world.

I'm looking forward to some great times in late winter and early spring at the Oxbow.





## 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

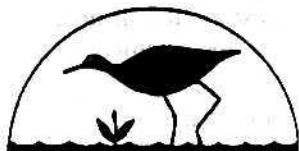
## Corporation Officers

President, Norma L. Flannery (513)-471-8001  
Vice President, Morris Mercer (513)-941-2534  
Recording Secretary,  
Dennis Mason (513) 385-3607  
Corresponding Secretary,  
Suzanne Skidmore (513)-561-5718  
Treasurer, Mark Westrich (812)-637-2175  
Agent, Dave Styer (513)-772-4395

## Committee Chairpersons

Conservation, Bill Bocklage (513)-922-2445  
Easement Inspection,  
Michael Kluesener (513)-574-1220  
Richard Pope (513)-637-1365  
Fund Raising, Greg Mendell (812)-926-2522  
Marketing, Connie McNamee (812)-926-2522  
Land Management, Dave Styer (513)-772-4395  
Preservation, Norma L. Flannery (513)-471-8001  
Programs, Morris Mercer (513)-941-2534  
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Speakers Bureau, Morris Mercer (513)-941-2534  
  
Newsletter Steve Pelikan (513)-681-2574  
  
Wetland Matters, the newsletter for members of Oxbow, Inc., is published bimonthly.

## Need a Speaker? Give Us a Call!



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