



# WETLAND *matters*

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

## Oxbow, Inc., Activities

### Programs

**Tuesday, 14 September 1999, 7:30 p.m. at the Zoo.** John Klein will give us an "Update on the Shaker Trace Wetland Restoration." You are sure to be surprised at some of the wild life found there since the restoration started.

**Tuesday, 12 October 1999, 7:30 p.m., Lawrenceburg Library.** Our speaker will be Les Zimmer, who works with the Indiana chapter of the Nature Conservancy in Land Conservation. He is on the board of Central Indiana Land Trust. His topic, "Land Trusts: What They Are, What They Can Do."

### Field Trips

**Thursday, 9 September 1999, 6:30 p.m.** Meet Darlena Graham (581-2227) at Gardens Alive! for an evening walk around the Oxbow. This should be a great opportunity to see a great variety of wild life.

**Sunday, 3 October 1999, 8:00 a.m.** Meet Paul Wharton (353-3403) at Gardens Alive! for a morning trip to observe the flora and fauna in the Oxbow of early autumn.

## Bassetts Make \$750 Contribution

Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Bassett through the Bassett Family Fund, a part of the Greater Cincinnati Foundation, have donated \$750 to Oxbow, Inc., which is most grateful for their generosity.

## Record Number of Ducks Will Fly South This Autumn

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has estimated that a record number of ducks will wing their way southward, with the Ohio-Indiana Flyway expected to be quite busy with many of them. It should therefore be a banner year for ducks at the Oxbow.

This year the Service, which conducts an annual survey, predicts that the duck population in North America will be approximately 43.8 million, which represents an increase of 12% over last year and 34% more than average.

The annual F&WS surveys, which take place in May, have since their beginning covered the north central United States, from the Dakotas and Montana up through Canada's prairie provinces, Saskatchewan, Alberta and Manitoba, an area in which most North American ducks breed.

The reason for the increase is that much wetland and pothole breeding habitat in this country and Canada was in good or excellent shape this spring and early summer when the birds nested. In this year's survey the number of ponds went from last year's 4.6 million to 6.7 million. Ducks Unlimited to a large degree is responsible for the increase in the number of ducks. Since its founding, the organization has raised more than \$1.2 billion to conserve approximately 8.8 million acres in North America. Last year Ducks Unlimited protected 300,000 acres of wildlife habitat.

Mallards increased 15 percent over last year to more than 11 million. Green-winged teal increased 35 percent to 2.8 million, and blue-winged went to 7.2 million from 6.4 million. Scaup and pintails, species that had been declining, showed increases of 27 and 21 percent respectively. Exceptions to the success story, gadwalls and redheads were down 14 and 3 percent, respectively.

The sky wasn't always blue. A couple of evenings the clouds gathered around the mountain tops. The light flashed, the thunder seemed to roll through the mountain tops and echo in the valley. The storm was something to enjoy if you weren't in the open.

Soon autumn will arrive. The aspens will turn gold and the snow will come once again to the high country. Here around the Oxbow the breeze will cool, the trees will take on their coats of many colors, and migration will be under way. This should be a great time around the Oxbow.

### Correspondence

To Norma Flannery:

I have received three more checks, one from a retiree just returned with his wife from their first retiree trip, one from a donor who currently resides in Venezuela, and one from a fellow worker who just "forgot." This gives us a final total of \$1,532.00 for 1999. It's a record total, which represents \$12.35/species against my personal total of 124 species this year. This brings our 11-year donation total for my P&G group to over \$9,000.

This level of contribution is a credit to my 64 loyal supporters from P&G. Some of them have supported me for all eleven years that we have been raising money for Oxbow, Inc. Some of them have retired, and so far every one of the retirees has asked me to keep them on my supporter list. I have noticed, with some satisfaction, that we are closing in on the total support Oxbow receives from their largest group sponsor of the Bird-a-thon, the Cincinnati Nature Center. This results in mixed emotions for me. While I am proud of the CNC's dedication and selfless support, I feel it should be dwarfed by donations from many other private donation groups that as groups are able to contribute large sums.

We all wish you continued success in the efforts Oxbow, Inc., is making to protect the unique and valuable wetland habitat at the junction of the Ohio and Greater Miami rivers. We hope our contributions will aid you in this important work.

John L. Seymour

### Ducks Unlimited to Sponsor Cocktail Party

The Cincinnati Ducks Unlimited chapter is sponsoring an Autumn Migration Cocktail Party, Thursday, September 30, from 6:30-9:30 pm. at the Losantiville Room of the Cincinnati Museum Center. DU will provide appetizers, raffles, a silent auction, a

live auction, and door prizes. Prizes will include wildlife carvings, prints and sculptures, golf equipment, hunting and fishing equipment and home items. For tickets at \$50 each, call Dwight Poffenberger, 513-241-2324.

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### Oxbow Remembrances

#### In Memory of

#### Donor

Ruth J. Jackson  
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Mary Thayer Mickham  
Mary Thayer Mickham  
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#### In Tribute to

#### Donor

Mr. and Mrs. Gerald Poll  
*Birthdays and Anniversary*  
Dr. David Styer

Malcolm and Ruth Myers  
Lowell and Jane Acomb  
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### A Conservation Success Story

In 1990 farmers grew only 13% of Indiana's corn and soybeans using conservation tillage practices. Today, farmers use conservation tillage to produce 45% of the corn and soybean crops. To control erosion, conservation tillage leaves at least 30% of the previous year's crop residue on the surface of the soil.

In 1990, only 16% of Indiana's crop land eroded below "T". ("T" defines the rate at which mother nature can produce soil. Erosion levels must be kept below "T" to maintain sustainable agricultural production.) The Indiana Conservation Partnership, which cooperatively provides leadership to the state on natural resources conservation issues, accomplished this by working directly with farmers to help them adopt conservation farming methods and install erosion control practices.

Farmers who lease Oxbow-owned land are diligent in utilizing conservation and erosion controlling procedures

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Field Notes  
by  
Morris Mercer

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Summer came to the Oxbow. And it was on one of the early summer evenings Jim Simpson and I made a trip to see what was going on in the area. Just after supper we were on our way. We crossed the Great Miami River on Lost Bridge. There were many birds on the wires near the bridge, cliff swallows from the new colony nesting under Lost Bridge. To add some color were a few eastern bluebirds that had joined them.

We arrived at the Oxbow with the sun low in the western sky. The shadows were long, and the last rays of the sun seemed to spotlight the far end of the water hole. A hen wood duck and her rather large family of half grown woodies were busy feeding in the still water. Here in the big bend were several great egrets and one snowy egret. There were many great blue herons on the bank, others stood in the water, yet others were winging their way above the willows.

There was a squawk, and we looked up to see a half dozen black crowned night herons coming in over the cottonwood trees. They were beautiful there in the last rays of the evening sun. Before we moved on, there were black crowned night herons in the willows all around the Oxbow.

We noticed something that seemed a little strange on the Oxbow lake. The scope was a big help in checking it out. There was a large willow moving across the water, and a beaver had it in tow. Not far behind was another willow being towed by yet another beaver. I think you could say, "they were as busy as beavers."

There were other places we wanted to see, so we knew we needed to move on. Yet with the setting of the sun it had cooled, and we were reluctant to leave such a tranquil scene. Our next stop was Jack-Pot Pond. There were a few killdeers and a couple of great blue herons, but the real beauty was the pair of white tailed deer. They were standing at the water's edge. The doe was dressed in her light brown doeskin coat, and the buck was looking good wearing his nice rack of velvet.

Then it was back across the Great Miami River down to Shawnee and a stop near the Miami Fort power

plant. The turkey vultures came in about dark to rest on some of the towers. When we arrived, many of the large birds were still in the air. They seemed to be enjoying riding the updrafts above the cooling tower. We soon noticed there were some black vultures flying there too. But then the king of the air showed up.

The peregrine falcon really put on a great show. His flying seemed to be just for fun. It was certainly fun to watch but difficult to keep up with. The only fault I could find with the peregrine was that he seemed to spend so much time directly overhead. It was tough on the neck looking up.

Twilight had come to the area of the Oxbow. The wood thrush were singing their last song of the evening. A doe and her small fawn crossed in front of the car. The fireflies twinkled above the fields as we headed for home.

I spent most of the month of July west of the Oxbow. Our family, Marilyn, Jim, Sarah, Frances, and I spent some real cool days in the Rocky Mountain National Park. Our trip across the Great Plains was a very hot trip, as was our stop at the Pawnee National Grassland. We had been watching for the first lark bunting after reaching Colorado. Pawnee Grassland seemed to be full of them. Each water hole seemed to have a flock of white pelicans, and so many other birds. Our stay in the Pawnee Grassland was short with the temperature right around 100 degrees.

We did stay several days between Estes Park and Rocky Mountain National Park. The owner of our motel had bird feeders all over the place. We enjoyed seeing so many birds just outside our place. Clark's nutcracker, black-billed magpie, black-headed grosbeak, red crossbill, Steller's jay, pine siskin, Cassin's finch, and so many more. Seemed we would always see and hear the broad-tailed hummingbird. Or see a flash of gold as the rufous hummer stopped in. Sarah really enjoyed the visits of the ground squirrels, the chipmunks, and Albert's squirrels. They would all show up when they saw her coming.

We all enjoyed our trips to the high country with its fast, cold streams, the home of the trout and the dipper. On up above the timber line among the rocks we found the marmot and the pika. Also the beautiful rolling mountain sides of the tundra. At first glance it looked to be a very short green grass. A closer look and we saw a blanket of very small wild flowers. And there were the patches of snow to remind us that summer is short. Standing out, in more ways than one, on these Alpine meadows were the elk. We saw the majestic elk silhouetted against the Colorado blue sky. A scene to remember.

## 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,  
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Treasurer, Mark Westrich .....(513) 637-2175  
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## Committee Chairpersons

Conservation, Bill Bocklage .....(513) 922-2445  
Easement Inspection,  
Michael Kluesener .....(513) 574-1220  
Richard Pope ..... (513) 637-1365  
Fund Raising, Anita Buck .....(513) 681-2574  
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 Bill Bocklage .....(513) 922-2445

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