



January — February 2013

No. 159

WETLAND *matters*

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

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What's Taking Flight?

.....by Jon Seymour

The year 2012 started with a revision of the bylaws governing both of our organizations, Oxbow, Inc. and Oxbow of Indiana, Inc. The primary result of the bylaw changes was a change in how the Board of Directors is elected. Instead of being elected by the attendees at the annual meeting the election is now by mailed ballot. This January will be the first election held by this new mechanism that we hope will allow many more Oxbow members to participate in our election process.

Early in 2012 was also the time that our farm lease program recycled and Oxbow accepted new bids from local farmers for a five year lease package from 2012 to 2016. The bidding year was successful resulting in a record yearly farm income for Oxbow of Indiana, Inc. (the official holder of the leases) and possibly more importantly the addition of another farmer to the list of lease holders, putting our total of farmers working Oxbow land to four. The fourth farmer new to our lease program just happens to be a young man dropping the average age of our tenant farms considerably. The Board was very pleased to welcome him to the Oxbow.

The increase in farm income pays another benefit - the board directs us to try to keep our operating expenses down to the level of the farm income. Most years we have done well but some years we have exceeded the guideline (it is not an edict). The new income will help us stay within the guideline set by the Board.

While we were unable to acquire any additional land in 2012 it was not for lack of trying. We had correspondence with one of the remaining landowners in the floodplain which resulted in us

making an offer on one piece of property which unfortunately was not accepted. We continue to hope that the landowners will think better of our offer and reconsider. In the meantime we are trying to enter into negotiation for another property and we hope that will be more successful.

Speaking of property, The Archaeological Conservancy purchased the property at the top of the hill overlooking the interchange of the I-275 exit, IN Highway 1, and US Highway 50. The property, referred to as the Oberting-Glenn site, consists of 40 acres containing most of the hilltop ceremonial site found there. This site, a smaller twin of the extensive ceremonial site directly across the floodplain at Shawnee Lookout, is the only site like this in the State of Indiana. It is also part of the State Park concept put forward by Greendale in partnership with several local government organizations.

While acquiring The Archaeological Conservancy as neighbors, we also acquired some other new neighbors. If you have not been to the Oxbow for a while you might be in for a bit of a shock. The first will be the new Waffle House standing on the corner of the road over the levee. Now there will be no doubt about directions - Turn on the road between the Shell station and the Waffle House. You can't miss it! Your next shock will be what lies ahead of you as you cross the levee. NO MORE CEMENT PLANT. Our new neighbors, Best Way Disposal, purchased the property this summer and the trappings of the cement plant are gone. No longer can you drive to the front of the cement plant and turn. There are no visual clues that a road to our entrance exist there. That should make the rest of the journey to our entrance much more exciting for first time visitors.

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What's taking Flight? (Continued from Page 1)

We had another successful Birdathon, raising nearly \$5000 for habitat and access improvement. If you were watchful this summer as you entered the Oxbow property you may have noticed the latest habitat improvements right by our entrance. John Klein and Kani Meyer, our land manager dynamic duo, supervised and toiled (along with several volunteers) over the creation of two vernal ponds. These two made wet depressions intended to be free of fish. The fishless environment is then ideal for the development of frogs and salamanders. Once built these two ponds were stocked with locally captured larvae of Spring Peeper, Tree Frog, and Spotted Salamander. However this was not an easy feat such as just digging two holes in the ground. Because the soil in the Oxbow does not trap and hold water (it is gravel based and leaks like a sieve), these holes had to be specially crafted to contain water. Clay soil lining covered with a specially designed plastic liner covered again with soil and sand to create a very small lake fed only by rain water. The main enemy are borrowing crayfish. They can dig through a liner and let all the water drain out. Vernal ponds can dry up, but need to be wet from January to June so that the amphibian eggs can be laid in the pond and have time to develop to adults. John and Kani have been adding other natural features such as stones and tree branches to the pond to provide habitat for the adults and young as well as locations that eggs may be attached.

In the access department we had to repair the spillway that stabilizes the Oxbow Lake road as it passes between Oxbow and Osprey Lakes. This narrow spot has been prone to washout ever since Osprey Lake was first created. Our first attempt to build the spillway showed us that our "hillbilly" engineering methods (as Board member Rick Pope refers to them) did not completely work. We had piled rip-rap (large rocks) up on both sides of the new cement spillway as means of stabilizing the bank. We were amazed at the power of the water at this point. While the winter/spring floods had not disturbed the rocks on the Oxbow Lake side of the road, the Osprey Lake side of the spillway was a completely different story. The rocks on that side had been moved 8 to 20 feet by the force of the water passing over the spillway. A project was launched to pull the rocks back into place, drill some tie rods into the existing concrete and pour flowable concrete over the rocks, thus extending the spillway down to the

water's edge. Hopefully this will work and this winter's flood will tell us if we are right.

We again had volunteers that pulled trash out of the Oxbow during the Clean Sweep of the Great Miami and the Ohio River Clean Up. Seeing fewer tires than in past years, we seem to be getting ahead of the deposition rate. A good and muddy time was had by everyone. Other volunteers armed with saws, axes, and paint brushes or sprayers, attacked and did glorious battle against the invasive plants such as Amur Honeysuckle, Garlic Mustard, and Callary Pear trees. Plans are being made to burn the prairie area around Oxbow Lake. Unfortunately the State of Indiana changed its process and now issues five year permits rather than one year permits. Sounds nice, but the amount of paperwork increased in proportion to the years, and the initial approval process took forever and a nightmare. We have just received the permit, but have already missed a couple of excellent opportunities. If the winter floods reach the prairie areas before we can burn, the chances of having a good burn drop considerably. Not because the ground is too wet but because the flood will wash away the built up mulch and detritus that currently covers the ground. It is this detritus that sustains the burn and heats the ground killing the roots and seeds of the trees and shrubs, while allowing the prairie plants to grow back unhindered by the competition.

Efforts by Kathy McDonald led to a butterfly count and compiling our records of butterflies seen in the Oxbow. The list is now on our Website. Please feel free to come to the Oxbow, find an unlisted species, and tell us so we can add the species to our list. We are currently aware of 65 species seen in the Oxbow. Discovery of a small colony of Southern Dogface in the Oxbow caused some fluttery excitement.

We added our 287th bird species this year with the spotting of a Neo-tropic Cormorant in the Oxbow. On July 30th Steve Kolbe spotted a small, dark, thin cormorant hanging out with several larger Double-crested Cormorants. He was able to identify the lone bird as a very out-of-place Neo-tropic Cormorant. A review of the records for this species in the Midwest showed very few such sightings but indicated that these rare sightings might be increasing slowly. Many folks tracked through the Oxbow in search of the Neo-tropic Cormorant, and most were rewarded with a sighting. Since the 1992 publication of David Styer's book, "Birds of the Oxbow" we have added 13 more species to our species list, over one-half of

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What's taking Flight? (continued from page 2)

them since 2007. I believe this increase is due to habitat improvements we have made and increased access allowing more birders into the Oxbow on more days of the year. More eyeballs and greater variety and quality of habitat equals more species found.

Oxbow continues to encourage outdoor education. This year through the Art and Ginny (Witte) Wiseman Grant Fund we helped fund outdoor education projects at the Queen City Bird Festival run by Audubon Miami Valley, trail improvement in the school woods for Bright Elementary, and a wetland construction project that will become an outdoor biology lab for Dater Montessori. These grants are available to education groups in the tri-state area. I would like to remind all Oxbow members that they too can contribute directly to the Art and Ginny (Witte) Wiseman Education Fund. Just send your check to Oxbow, Inc. and mark it for the fund. We will take care of it from there and you will receive recognition in *Wetland Matters*. This important fund has already helped hundreds of school age children become more familiar with their natural world.

The Board expanded our annual scholarship awards to include all five area high schools. \$500 scholarships were awarded to a college bound senior who would be studying the natural world in each of the three Dearborn County high schools and to a senior in both Harrison High School and Taylor High School. The students, selected by the high school, receive a substantial award that helps ease the burden of costs of a student entering their first year of college.

As the year was wrapping up we were astounded by the turnout for our Great Outdoor Weekend. We tripled our previous weekend high of 30 to nearly 90 people for the weekend. Also at the end of the year we entered into a public/private partnership with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. This partnership helps private land owners design their land for wildlife. Since we had installed the vernal ponds the USFWS representative in the area was anxious to try to provide some extra value. We agreed they could provide educational signs that we could use in the Oxbow describing the value of the ponds, woodlands and prairies. Look for these signs near the entrance parking lot and near the Osprey Lake prairie.

Once again another year has passed and when I look back I am always amazed at how much we accomplished together. Behind the scenes about 75 volunteers make the organization work. Some volunteer an hour here and there, others live and breathe Oxbow much of the year. We are blessed to have these dedicated folks. Their work is supported by the donations of all our members, so everyone has a hand in the success of the Oxbow. If you are a Oxbow member, then thank you for making it all possible with your donations. Have a wonderful 2013!



Moving your nest?

Make sure *WETLAND MATTERS* goes with you!

Name _____

Old Address:

Street _____

City/State/Zip _____

New Address:

Street _____

City/State/Zip _____

MAIL TO:

Oxbow Inc.

P.O. Box 4172

Lawrenceburg, IN 47025

Please mail right away - *Wetland Matters* is third class mail and is not forwarded!

Horseshoe Bottoms Diary

.....by Jon Seymour

December 13, 2012

Off to the Oxbow early in the morning headed for a meeting with Briana Walsh, the newly appointed Community Representative for Cincinnati of The Nature Conservancy of Ohio. Briana is from the northern part of Ohio so the area around Cincinnati is new to her. I noted last night that the river was expected to peak at 40 feet this morning which is definitely a kink in my plan to introduce her to the Oxbow area. At 40 feet (Cincinnati) the Oxbow Lake Road is cut in two places and the entire center section around Osprey Lake is inaccessible to a car. Ed Gemperle is joining us at the Oxbow office to start the tour. However, there is another complication as I pull into the lower Great Miami Valley. There is a thick fog hanging over the flood plain. As I descend down the hills on I-275 into the valley the sunshine disappears behind me and the fog is sitting over the valley in what looks to be about a 300 foot thick cloud. Lights go on and my car disappears into the fog bank just like the car in front of me did a few seconds ago.

Usually such fogs in the valley are more isolated to the river, but the river is in flood, the air is cold, the water is warm and it is spread out over the entire valley. Thank goodness the sun is out in full, in a cloudless sky, somewhere above me working on vaporizing the fog. The cloud even extends into downtown Lawrenceburg and the visibility from the office is about one block in any direction. Not the best scenario for showing off the Oxbow to anyone. I have been in the Oxbow many times before when I was unable to see more than a 100 feet but it is not a good way to introduce the Oxbow to someone who has never seen it. "As we look out from this point you have to imagine a shallow lake with mallards and herons along the shore.....? Well, you understand my dilemma.

Ed arrives early and we discuss the recent audit that we just concluded on our 2011 finances. I have a box full of material from the auditors to return to Ed (our Treasurer). At least it is a box of paper that Ed has to deal with and not me. I am grateful for that but Ed is looking at it sadly. Having been a Treasurer for several organizations, I can fully sympathize with Ed. The job of being Treasurer

for Oxbow is huge. Briana arrives a few minutes late. She got lost on the way and missed the turn from Highway 50 onto Walnut St. in Lawrenceburg. I look out the window and I still can only see about a block. It is slowly getting better but not good enough. For the next 45 minutes I talk about the Oxbow and the structure and history of Oxbow, Inc.

Finally I can see about 3 blocks down the street and I can delay the tour no longer. Briana has been asking excellent questions but maps and verbal imagery can only go so far. I decide to drive around the floodplain first to give the fog just a little more time to lift. So up Highway 50 I go, with Briana riding shotgun and Ed in the back seat of my Prius. I think that maybe Briana can get a view of the Oxbow from the bridge and get a bit of a feel for the extent of the area. In the back of my mind I am thinking the fog is over the Great Miami and that the Ohio will be nearly clear. As I pull onto I-275 south to Kentucky, I can see immediately that I am really, really wrong. The Ohio is solid (can only see 100 feet in broad daylight solid) fog. So it is over and back with nothing gained. At the top of the hill on the Kentucky side of the bridge it is a bright, sunny, blue sky day. Not so just above the river. So, back to Ohio and up to Lost Bridge and over to Shawnee Lookout. This way we will have circumscribed the Oxbow floodplain and Briana can get a feel for the size of the area. At Lost Bridge the river is clear and visibility is ½ mile. Now it is time to enter the Oxbow. Down Highway 50 to the entrance it is clear so I am confident we will be able to see much of the Oxbow but the river is still in flood. That means that Oxbow Lake Overlook, the best spot to look "around" at the Oxbow will be inaccessible. As we drive in we stop to discuss the vernal ponds and our clean-up efforts. At the first culvert the road is blocked by flood water but Great Blue Heron and several small groups of Mallards are busy near the flooded culvert. We enjoy the lingering and transient effects of the morning's hoar frost and its decoration of feathery grass stalks and spider webs, then head to the south entrance near the casino.

As we enter the casino entrance we come into the Lawrenceburg Conservation District and approach the drainage slough to the Ohio River. At the slough we see a single Double-crested Cormorant trying to dry its feathers while perched on an old stump protruding above the flood water. His friends left the area for warmer climes several weeks ago but this bird has only ½ of its left wing. It must try to survive here

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Oxbow's Christmas Wish List for 2013

It is the Christmas Season so like many others we have prepared our Wish List for Santa. In the past Santa has filled several of our wishes so we must have been on the good list. We hope that if members know about items and talents that we need, they might realize ways they might be able to help, and may want to play the part of Santa.

- ◆ We still need a volunteer interested in interviewing other volunteers and writing up short stories on their efforts, for publication in the Wetland Matters. This is very important since our volunteers are wonderful and deserve to be recognized in many ways for their unselfish efforts.
- ◆ We need a volunteer coordinator to make phone calls and send email messages to the many volunteers who participate in our activities through the course of the year. While we have many activities that could use volunteers during the year, we have no one to drum up support and follow up with the volunteers and their efforts.
- ◆ If you have a truck in good shape that you are no longer using and wish to donate it to Oxbow, we are interested. Having a truck available to use, when we have to haul something in or out of the Oxbow, is a valuable necessity. Lack of a truck has more than once caused us to lose the opportunity to haul a piece of trash out of the Oxbow when conditions were right to do so. We have an offer of a nearby location where we can park the truck when not in use, so all we need is a donor and a truck that works.

If you can help with any of these needs or think you know someone who can, please call Jon Seymour at 513-851-9835.



A Review of the Plant Kingdom

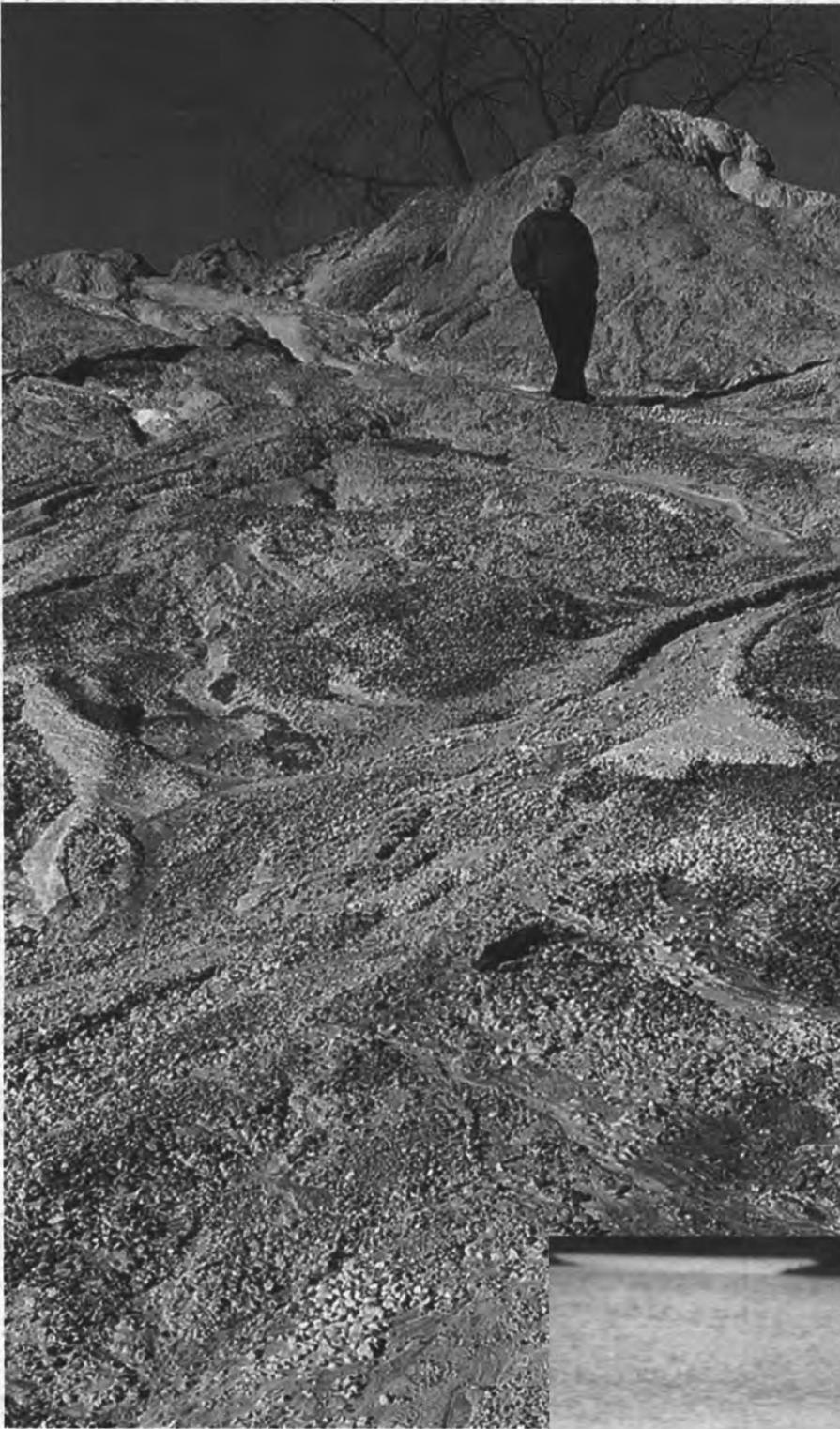
.....by Kani Meyer

Our November meeting featured biologist and teacher Jack Berninger. Jack reviewed the plant realm from the earliest cyanobacteria that produced the first oxygen for our atmosphere over 3 billion years ago, through the liverworts, mosses, ferns, and flowering plants. Many examples of plant fossils were passed around. He touched on the often complex reproductive cycles of these groups and emphasized how important plants are to all life on Earth.



Member Communications Committee:

Jennifer Borneman
 Joanne Earls
 Lynda Mason
 Velda Miller
 Jackie Seymour
 Pat Shanklin
 Suzanne Skidmore
 Barb Varland
 Jim Wilgenbusch



Oxbow President, Jon Seymour, is not walking down the face of Mammoth Hot Springs in Yellowstone. He is carefully picking his way down the slope of the cement dump on the Best Way property left by the former owners. The cement is a mix of hard set and crumbly cement surface that is also rife with erosion channels. Oxbow, Inc. is actively working with Dearborn County to look at the problems left by the previous owners and to prevent any issues from arising with the new Best Way owners. (photo by Tim Mara)



A view of the concrete "waterfall" created by the previous owner as seen from the corner of the Oxbow, Inc property and the Best Way property. (photo by Tim Mara)

While searching for butterflies, the census group found something much larger working the shallows of Osprey Lake. This Avocet is normally a resident west of the Mississippi River. They show up in the Midwest on occasion and Oxbow is often a place that looks like home. (photo by Craig Barnett)





Rick Pope stands by the newly installed US Fish and Wildlife Service provided educational sign for wetlands. In front of the new vernal ponds the sign explains the value of wetlands. (photo by Jon Seymour)

Jon Seymour uses newly installed US Fish and Wildlife Service provided educational for forests for support. Placed in front of the 3 acre woodland surrounding the entrance parking area, the sign explains the value of forest lands. (photo by Rick Pope)



This photo of a Green Heron, taken by Paul Miles, was taken in the Oxbow earlier this year. It is one of many pictures taken in the Oxbow during Paul's search for shore birds.



The heavy fog and low temperature on Dec 13th made for the unusual condition of a hoar frost that was still visible for about an hour after the fog lifted. The spider webs and tips of grass blend together in the frost to create an icy brush. (photo by Jon Seymour)

Oxbow Inc. PROGRAMS—submitted by Kani Meyer

To reach the Oxbow, Inc. office take Highway US 50 west from the #16 exit off I-275. Pass the Hollywood Casino exit and turn left at the second stop light onto Walnut St. 301 Walnut is on the right side at the second stoplight at the corner of Walnut and Center Streets. Free parking is available on Walnut St., Center St., and in the parking lot behind the building. All meetings are at The Oxbow, Inc. Office, 301 Walnut St., Lawrenceburg unless otherwise noted

Tuesday, January 8, 2013—7:30 p.m.

The Captivity of Daniel Boone - the best-known name in the old frontier is captured at the Blue Licks along with 26 of his men, carried into captivity in an Ohio winter & adopted into the Shawnee nation. Historian **Tom Stofeldt** will relate how Boone's charm, cunning, and ingenuity enable him to survive his ordeal & escape to warn the Kentuckians of an impending attack.

Tuesday, February 12, 2013-7:30 p.m.

Naturalist and raconteur **Jim Williams** will talk about our American Bald Eagle and it's life on the river. We will follow the eagle as it goes about it daily life of - hunting, raising their family and how it almost did not become our national bird.

Tuesday, March 12, 2013- 7:30 p.m.

Xavier University professor emeritus **Stan Hedeem** will present a comprehensive narrative of Big Bone Lick from its geological formation forward explaining why the site attracted animals, regional tribal people, European explorers, and scientists, and eventually American pioneers and presidents.

Oxbow Inc. FIELD TRIPS—submitted by Jay Stenger

To reach the upper Oxbow, Inc. parking lot near the waste collection plant , turn south from Rt. 50 at the Shell gas station in Greendale, drive back to the waste collection plant, turn right to the end of the road, then left. The lot is on your right.

Our Annual Moonlit Evening Winter Walk—Friday, January 25, 2013 at 7:00 p.m.

Meet: At the Shawnee Lookout Golf Course Parking Lot

Leader: John Klein, (513) 941-4877

John Klein will once again lead this unique annual January field trip, which honors the memory of one of Oxbow Inc.'s founders, the beloved and venerable Morris Mercer. John likes to refer to this outing as the MMM (Morris Mercer Memorial) field trip.

Morris always loved the night woods, especially during the winter with snow on the ground. Many years ago he began leading this January evening trip in the Shawnee Lookout woodlands that overlook the Oxbow. John and Morris were good friends and John joined Morris for many of those walks and John has kept the tradition alive.

We will meet in the parking lot of the Shawnee Lookout Golf Course at 7:00 P.M., and John will lead us on a leisurely two hour walk around the park. John, a current Oxbow Inc. board member and recently retired land manager of the Hamilton County Park District, is a skilled naturalist. A nearly full moon should provide good visibility. John will try to hoot up some owls, we'll look at the constellations and see what other denizens of the night woods are out and about. John has begun his own tradition on this walk and will pass out M&M's. It's a fun and out of the ordinary trip and you should try to make it. And as Morris would always say, "Let's hope there's some snow on the ground". The park is normally closed at this time of night but the rangers will have the gates open for us. Be sure to dress warm. Call John if you have any questions.

Early Spring Waterfowl Migration—Saturday, February 23, 2013 at 8:00 am.

Meet: Meet in the upper Oxbow parking lot at the main entrance just beyond the cement plant

Leader: Paul Wharton, (513) 353-3403, pwharton@fuse.net

If you like seeing ducks you should consider joining Paul for this morning trip into the Oxbow. Early spring waterfowl migration should be in full swing by this date and they will be the primary focus of this trip. However a diverse number of other winter and early spring migrants will also be seen. It's also a great time of year to find Bald Eagles in the Oxbow. Paul is an expert birder and has great bird finding abilities so expectations are high. Paul will move around to several spots in the Oxbow area depending on accessibility and water conditions. Aside from seeing waterfowl and other birds, mud is also guaranteed, so dress appropriately. Feel free to contact Paul if you have any questions regarding the trip.



by Dave Styer

The Evening Grosbeak: Wishful Thinking?

Once you start watching birds, you will not soon forget the first Evening Grosbeak you see. They are so striking, with their heavy bills, their bright yellow, and black and white and brown plumage, and their unique voices, that memories of them seem almost fresh years after you have seen them. I saw my first Evening Grosbeaks in the summer of 1953. I never (until now) wrote it down; I remember. When school let out for the summer, my Aunt Margaret and I went on a car vacation from south-east Pennsylvania to Vermont. At our northern-most point we stopped for lunch at a beautiful lodge. It had bird feeders with sunflower seeds, and this wonderful flock of Evening Grosbeaks. I can still almost see and hear them! I wanted to stay there, but the place was too expensive for us.

I asked my wife, Jane, if she remembered her first Evening Grosbeak. Well, sure; clear as day. That was only eight and a half years ago, in Yosemite National Park. It was summer, and we were in the car eating lunch near the closed ski area. A couple of Evening Grosbeaks decided to have lunch in the lawn in front of us.

Getting back to the Oxbow area, when I wrote *Birds of the Oxbow* Velda Miller provided the only record I could find of Evening Grosbeaks in the area. A couple of days ago I said to Jane, "I'll bet Velda remembers her first Evening Grosbeaks." So I called Velda, and, sure enough, she saw Evening Grosbeaks at her home in Cleves and at Shawnee Lookout during the harsh winter of 1978. In both places Velda was filling bird feeders.

Since Evening Grosbeaks have hardly been seen in the Oxbow area, it is wishful thinking to hope they might be seen there this season. Of course, in some years they are more likely than others. An email from Denis Conover about the neat winter finches he was seeing in Spring Grove Cemetery got me to thinking that this might be a good year to be on the outlook for Evening Grosbeaks. Then I checked ebird and found that this has already been a great season for seeing Evening Grosbeaks.

In fact, an Evening Grosbeak had already been seen at the Cincinnati Nature Center on November 10th.

I'll tell another Evening Grosbeak story as I remember it being told some years ago. It didn't happen in the Oxbow area, but it wasn't far away, and it has the strongest Oxbow connections. Morris Mercer's young prodigy, Alan Knue, was participating in a bird count when he called out "there's an Evening Grosbeak!" The team leader looked askance as a distant bird flew over and landed in a more distant tree. They did manage to get a spotting scope focused on the bird, and, sure enough, it really was an Evening Grosbeak. The team leader said, "Wow! You must really know your Evening Grosbeaks." Alan's reply was: "It's the first one I've ever seen." In birders' terminology, "it's a life-bird."

This was a good story, but did I remember it right? Was it, in essence, true? One way to find out: I googled "Alan Knue," and found the Manager of Program Operations at the University of Washington Center for Technology and Disability Studies. I phoned the Center and asked for Alan Knue. Yes, this was the same person who grew up in Morris's neighborhood. Now, my theory kicks in: if the story I recalled was correct, then Alan would remember, because we always remember our first Evening Grosbeak. So, I told Alan the story. Yes, the story was right, and the event happened on New Haven Road while they were participating on the Western Hamilton County Christmas Bird Count on December 18, 1983.

Have I told you about the Blue Grosbeaks?



along the Ohio River. I am not confident that it will make it, but if it finds its way to the Ohio River during a flood it has a chance. Maybe not a good chance, but a chance! Further on we pass the Conservancy District ponds and are forced to stop by the water across the road at the seasonal flooding area. A scan of the area shows more Great Blue Heron and more mallards in the flooded field. We conclude the tour and Briana and Ed return to their lives and obligations.

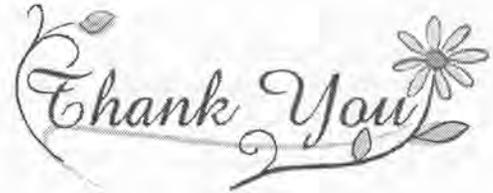
For me it is a trip to the post office to pick up the Oxbow mail. Grab a take-out lunch and consume it back in the office. I open and sort the incoming mail and make a call to Board member, Rick Pope. Rick has already arrived at the entrance parking lot, so I throw two of the three signs provided to us by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Partners in Wildlife Program) in conjunction with our installation of the vernal ponds. Susan Knowles of the USFWS at Muskatatuck was instrumental in putting in the application to obtain the signs through the USFWS at no cost to Oxbow. Rick and I are planning to install the three signs, but I only take two because I already know that we cannot reach the desired location for the third sign. Rick has all the rest of the equipment and supplies on his truck. The post hole digger cuts through gravel and even a few pieces of brick before we reach subsoil and easier digging. Two holes, one by the vernal ponds and one down the slope from the parking area are dug. The treated 4X4s are pulled from Rick's truck and placed in the holes.

At this point I am on familiar ground having done this before. But now Rick departs from my normal method by dumping in a dry bag of cement into the hole around the post. I have always added water to the cement and added the slurry to the hole. I quickly compute that the first rain will set up the cement but now I get to wondering how complete the set up will be. I ask Rick whether he had ever dug up a post set in this manner and if the cement had set completely? Rick responds yes to both questions so I chalk up another new fact for my aged brain.

With the wetland sign at the vernal pond location and the forest sign down the hill from the parking area, we are done for the moment. I think the casual visitor to the Oxbow will enjoy reading these educational signs, take away a fact or two and hopefully a greater appreciation of the Oxbow.

Oxbow, Inc. Honorariums & Memorials

Donor	In Memory of
Patrick & Elaine Carroll	Helen Kruer
Jim Kruer	Helen Kruer



Oxbow Inc. would like to thank the following donors for their generous gifts.

Joanne Jefferey

Andrew MacAoidh Jergens

Jean A. Kearns

Bonnie Pence

George & Jean Perbix

Oxbow, Inc. has established Memorials in honor of those who have passed on. Each Memorial established in the name of a friend or relative 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.

Tributes are also enrolled permanently in the records of the Corporation. Some tributes are birthday or anniversary remembrances, holiday greetings or gratitude acknowledgements. If so desired, "Happy Birthday!" or the like can be inscribed in the tribute notice.

Contributions should be sent to: Oxbow, Inc., P. O. Box 4172, Lawrenceburg, IN 47025. Be sure to enclose the names and addresses of those who are to receive the acknowledgement.

Where Do We Land?

...by Jon Seymour

I opened a member renewal envelop the other day and found a very generous check and an extra sheet of paper with a little note. The note said how much the donor appreciated all we do for the Oxbow but asked a little question: "Does the Oxbow have a long term plan? 5-10 years? Would love to see more on that topic." Now my immediate response was, of course we have a plan, but then I corrected myself and had to admit that it was a plan that had only been shared with a few people and certainly not with the whole membership. So I resolved to do something about that and start to share the plan. In saying that, the reader needs to appreciate that plans once made can change but there is a plan that should reach prominence by about 2017.

This is a big topic and I plan to share it with everyone over a period of time. For starters I am including in this issue the Vision for Oxbow that the Board adopted in 2004. It is an excellent Vision since in rereading it 8 years later, there is nothing that really needs to change in the vision.



Oxbow Vision—2004

♦ **Function: Preserve, protect, and improve the flood plain wetland at the mouth of the Great Miami River**

This is an active process that requires land acquisition, land management, and dedication to constant diligence in this stewardship

♦ **Highest priority to the preservation of the migratory stop over and resting area**

The Oxbow is a flood plain wetland with several permanent lakes, ponds and marsh areas. The main purpose for the existence of Oxbow, Inc. is to preserve the area as a wetland functioning as a major migratory stopover for a large variety of migratory birds, particularly waterfowl and shorebirds, and as a resting/roosting area for a wide variety of waterfowl and wading birds during the summer and fall months. In winter, the area serves as a hunting ground for raptors and a resting area for wintering waterfowl.

♦ **Active land management is required to preserve the Oxbow Area**

In order to preserve the function of the Oxbow the land must be actively managed. Land management tools such as agriculture, limited burns, control of noxious plants and destructive wildlife may be necessary to preserve the function of the Oxbow area.

♦ **Multiple uses can coexist within the nature conservancy**

Fishing, hunting, birding, and other activities associated with the enjoyment of nature can coexist in the Oxbow area. Not all uses can be accommodated in every area but through creative management the Oxbow can support a variety of uses while maintaining its main function as a wetland preservation and wildlife conservation area.

♦ **Accessibility to all encourages ownership and participation**

Members, sponsors, visitors and others dedicated to protection of the environment need to feel close to the Oxbow and to be able to view and participate in the experience provided by interactions with the Oxbow area. Persons with limited mobility should also have the opportunity enjoy the Oxbow experience.

♦ **The Oxbow is a source of knowledge**

The Oxbow is a classroom for teaching all generations about ecology and the close interaction between wildlife and their habitats. Educational activities for children and adults will bring knowledge to new generations that they may also be encouraged to preserve the natural world. It serves as a model of how a group of dedicated individuals can have a significant impact on the environment by working together with farmers, land owners, businesses, local and state governments, regulatory agencies, and other environmental organizations (both profit and non-profit) to achieve a success.



Oxbow, Inc. and Oxbow of Indiana, 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 know 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 area 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.**

Prothonotary Warbler	\$ 15	Wood Duck	\$ 25
Great Blue Heron	\$ 50	Green-winged Teal	\$100
Great Egret	\$250	Osprey	\$500
Bald Eagle	\$1000		
Charm of Goldfinches (Group Level)	\$25		

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Wetland Matters, the newsletter for members of Oxbow, Inc., is published bimonthly.

Printed on recycled paper by Rapid Copy Printing - 513-385-4085

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Need a Speaker?
Give Us a Call!

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