



*Way Back Wednesdays!
at the Oklahoma City Zoo
\$1 Admission
every Wednesday through August*

Vol. 3, No. 1.

The Internet Site for Environmental Information in Oklahoma

August-September 2014

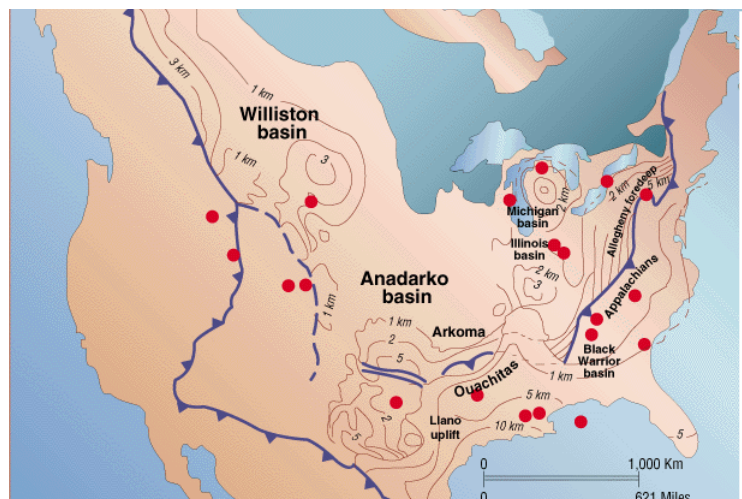
What is an astrobleme?

Editor's Note: While driving around Oklahoma this summer, I saw two signs, one on Highway 132 or Drummond Road and the other on Highway 412 west of Enid, that read "Ames Astrobleme Museum." The question above is what I asked myself.

To answer the question above, it is a meteorite impact site. In mid-northwest Oklahoma lies Ames, Oklahoma; a town with a revealed secret. This formation was only discovered 23 years ago because it can't be seen obviously on the surface of the earth as can Meteor Crater in Arizona. The impact is purported to have happened about 450 million years ago so it became buried in the intervening years under about 9,000 feet of sediment. No wonder we can't see it; that's almost 2 miles of matter. Geologists state that although most of the parts of the meteorite at the impact site would have eroded long ago, an astrobleme can still be identified by a "shatter cone" which is formed in the earth below the impact site. A



Make plans to check out this unique museum in Ames, Oklahoma, in the near future.



*The Ames Astrobleme in the Anadarko Basin.
There is another one to the east in Mississippi.*

shatter cone can only happen as a result of an impact; no other natural phenomenon can cause one. Scientists can use core sampling to expose the existence of the shatter cone.

Ames, Oklahoma is situated in the center of the 8 mile diameter crater and is now home to the only museum of its kind in the world.

The word "astrobleme" itself is interesting — astron from the Greek translates as star and blema as wound — so an astrobleme is a "star wound."

Resources: <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/39939/astrobleme>; <http://www.ogj.com>; http://www.travelok.com/listings/view_profile/id.11104

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Not an Endorsement , but ...



"Oklavision.tv is a high-definition, video-rich network focused on presenting the unmatched beauty of the Oklahoma landscape through a visual experience unlike any other." ...

"Use Oklavision.tv to find information – in a vibrant, engaging format – that will awaken within you a deep and abiding appreciation of a unique state and a people dedicated to preserving their environment."

Quiz! Quiz! Quiz!

We are so used to seeing free-falling water droplets depicted as in the picture below. A droplet looks like this at the moment just before and as it lets go from, say, a faucet. What would a REAL picture of a free-falling water droplet look like?



Find the answer at the bottom of page 9.



An environmental education newsletter for the citizens of Oklahoma sponsored by the Department of Biology at Oklahoma City University. Items appearing in this newsletter do not necessarily reflect the opinions or endorsement of the sponsoring organization.

Editor: Beth Landon
blandon@okcu.edu

Please send any submissions to
 The EnvironMentor Newsletter
 or The Calendar to:
Environmentor@okcu.edu

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If you wish to receive an email
 announcing when a new issue
 has been uploaded, please send
 an email to Environmentor@okcu.edu.

Download your EnvironMentor newsletter in
 pdf form from:
<http://www.okcu.edu/environmentor/>

Visit The EnvironMentor Calendar at
<http://www2.okcu.edu/environmentor/>
 Regularly updated as information becomes
 available.



Blue Thumb
Water Quality
Education
Program

Training Date:
Saturday and Sunday,
August 23 & 24, 2014
8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Training Location:
North of Woodward, OK
University of Central OK's
Selman Living Laboratory

To Register—call or
email:
Cheryl Cheadle
918-398-1804
cheryl.cheadle@
conservation.ok.gov

Blue Thumb

Training for New Volunteers

Sponsored by—Harper County Conservation District, UCO's Selman Living Laboratory, and the
Oklahoma Conservation Commission



Location and lodging
information is on the
back of this flyer

Protect Your Streams!

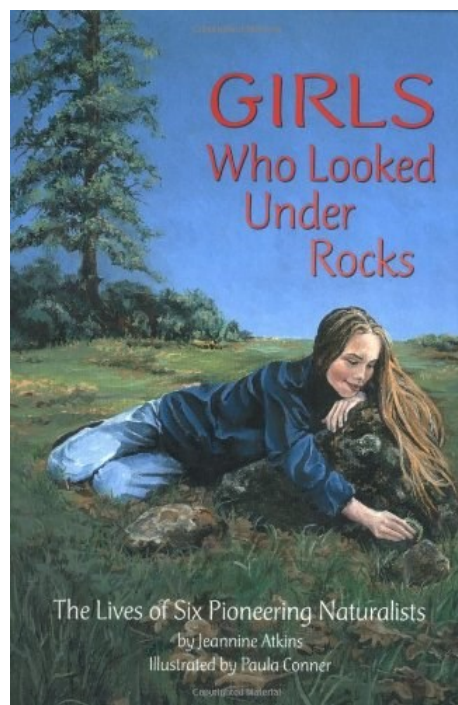
Come to this Blue
Thumb training and learn
about:
⇒ stream ecology
⇒ pollutants
⇒ water testing
⇒ watersheds
⇒ field collections

Who can become a Volunteer?

⇒ Teachers & students
⇒ 4-H members &
leaders
⇒ retired folks
⇒ professionals
⇒ farmers & ranchers
⇒ college students
⇒ anyone with an
interest in clean water

Become a water quality monitor!
Do your part for local streams!

Green Words for All Ages



Thanks to the Martin Park Nature Center, I have this timely quote from Marcel Proust:

“The real voyage of discovery consists not of seeing new landscapes but in having new eyes”

In *Girls Who Looked Under Rocks: The Lives of Pioneering Naturalists* by Jeannine Atkins with illustrations by Paula Conner, you can not only have new eyes, but also see new landscapes with the six girls who became women in this book. Although most of us have some information on Rachel Carson and Jane Goodall, we haven't heard of Maria Sibylla Merian, Anna Botsford Comstock, Frances Hamerstrom, or Miriam Rothschild. More than one hundred years before Darwin, Maria Merian brought specimens and paintings of insects back from South America to Europe. After becoming a teacher at the age of 14, Anna Comstock went on to write the 900-paged *The Handbook of Nature Study* as the first female professor at Cornell University. Frances Hamerstrom was still studying habitats in Africa at age of 90. And, although Miriam Rothschild grew up in the company of zebras and other large animals, she preferred what she could see under a microscope. This book is just a taste of the lives of these girls and women and the landscapes of their lives.

Review by Sarah Markham



The purpose of the Oklahoma Native Plant Society is to encourage the study, protection, propagation, appreciation and use of Oklahoma's native plants.

Join!

The Oklahoma Native Plant Society

<http://www.oknativeplants.org/membership.html>

Students are Free for 2014
with a faculty sponsor.

2014 Anne W. Long Award for the Promotion of Native Plants

Please consider making a nomination for the Anne Long Award, which is given in remembrance and honor of one of the ONPS founders, and an early state leader in wild-flower protection. The award recognizes individuals or groups who have made outstanding contributions to the stated purpose of ONPS. Nominations must be in writing, and must include the complete names of the individual(s) making the nomination and the nominee(s); a contact person if the nominee is an organization or group; and sufficient documentation of the nominee's activities promoting native plants. For additional information, or to see a list of previous winners, please see the ONPS Awards page on the ONPS website. Send or email nominations by August 31st to: Gloria Caddell, Department of Biology, University of Central Oklahoma, Edmond, OK 73034 or gcaddell@uco.edu.

Fundraiser for the Tulsa Audubon Society:

Tickets Now On Sale for "A Birder's Guide to Everything"

On Tuesday, August 27th the Tulsa Audubon Society is hosting an exclusive Tulsa screening of the movie "A Birder's Guide to Everything" at the AMC Southroads 20 Theater at 7:30 p.m.

"David Portnoy, a 15-year-old birding fanatic, thinks that he's made the discovery of a lifetime. So, on the eve of his father's remarriage, he escapes on an epic road trip with his best friends to solidify their place in birding history."

You can learn more about the movie, starring Ben Kingsley, and view the trailer at:

<http://www.tugg.com/go/zo9ohu>

This is a fundraiser for the Tulsa Audubon Society, and the way it works is you order your tickets on-line in advance, but your card will not be charged immediately. There is a minimum number of tickets they need to sell (64 in their case), and once that is met the movie is confirmed and you are charged. Tickets are \$13.01.



If you are able to go please be sure to reserve your tickets ASAP, so they can get the showing confirmed.

Announcing the 1st Ever Blue Thumb Video Contest!

Help tell the world (or at least Oklahoma)
about Blue Thumb!

Categories

1. Keeping Oklahoma Creeks Beautiful

Develop a 60- to 90-second video on what motivates you to monitor, how you help keep Oklahoma creeks clean and why it's important.

2. Show Your Blue Thumb Enthusiasm

Develop a 30-second commercial about Blue Thumb that could be used as a public service announcement. Include information like how you got involved, why you stay involved and why Blue Thumb is important to Oklahoma.

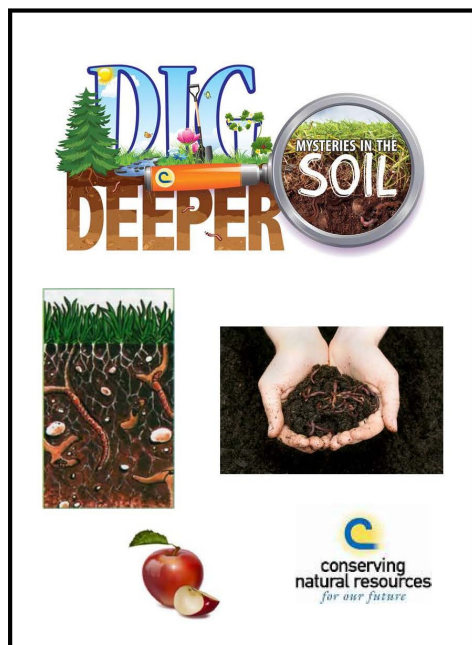
Prizes will be awarded to winners in each category!

Entry deadline is midnight September 7, 2014

**Contest sponsored by Oklahoma Blue Thumb and
Oklahoma Blue Thumb Association**

For contest rules and more information visit www.bluethumbok.com or contact Jeri Fleming at jeri.fleming@conservaton.ok.gov or Cassandra Carter at Cassandra.Carter@osrc.ok.gov.

**Oklahoma County
Conservation District
2014 Poster Contest**



Who Can Participate ?

The Poster contest is open to all students in grades K-5 including students in public, private or home school.

Rules

- Any media may be used to create a flat or two-dimensional effect (paint, crayon, colored pencil, markers, charcoal, stickers, paper or other materials) on poster board.
- Poster size must be 14"x22" only or it will be disqualified.**
- Posters should be packaged so they **remain flat** when sent for judging.
- All posters must be created by an individual student rather than a team of students.
- The 2014 theme **DIG DEEPER—Mysteries in the soil** or just **DIG DEEPER** must be on your poster. (*Don't use any other title.*)
- Although younger students will most likely receive help in planning from parents or teachers, the District encourages students to do as much of the work as possible by themselves. Entries completed by students in their own handwriting and coloring will score better than those designed, drawn and colored by adult assistance.
- On the back of each poster the following information must be listed:
 - Contest Division / Grade
 - Student's Name and Home Address
 - Student's School and School Address
 - Teacher's Name

Deadline:

Posters must be in the Conservation District office, located at 4850 N. Lincoln Blvd, Ste B, Oklahoma City, OK, by Tuesday, September 30, 4:30 p.m. (If you need your posters picked up, please call the district office at 524-4450.)

Contest Divisions:

Division K – Kindergarten
Division I – First Grade
Division II – Second Grade
Division III – Third Grade
Division IV – Fourth Grade
Division V – Fifth Grade

Awards:

The Conservation District will provide awards for the top three winners in each division. First place will receive a trophy and gift certificate. Second and third place will receive a trophy.

**Local first place winners are eligible to compete in the OACD (Oklahoma Association of Conservation Districts) Area Poster Contest. Area winners will compete in the State Contest and State winners will be eligible for the NACD National Poster Contest and prizes. Visit www.nacdnet.org for more information.*



For additional information, please contact Becky Inmon at the Conservation District office at 524-4450. You may also contact us by email at:

oklahomaccd@conservation.ok.gov or
rebecca.inmon@ok.nacdnet.net

Get your own:

“Oklahoma’s Dirty Dozen” poster

This educational poster was developed by the Oklahoma Invasive Plant Council to illustrate to Oklahomans the worst, both economically and ecologically, invasive plants in our state.

Species depicted on the poster are:

Cheatgrass - *Bromus tectorum*
Chinese Privet - *Ligustrum sinense*
Eastern Redcedar - *Juniperus virginiana*
Field Brome - *Bromus arvensis*
Hydrilla - *Hydrilla verticillata*
Japanese Honeysuckle - *Lonicera japonica*
Johnsongrass - *Sorghum halepense*
Musk (Nodding) Thistle - *Carduus nutans*
Russian Thistle - *Salsola tragus*
Saltcedar - *Tamarix* spp.
Sericea Lespedeza - *Lespedeza cuneata*
Siberian Elm - *Ulmus pumila*
Yellow Bluestem - *Bothriochloa ischaemum*



The OIPC will send free posters to anyone in Oklahoma or surrounding states.
To request a single copy, people should send an email with their name and address to okipc@ou.edu

If people want more copies, they can arrange for pick-up or delivery. The Oklahoma Invasive Plant Council is happy to give out large quantities for workshops, conferences, etc... Requests should also be sent to the same address.

BioBlitz! Oklahoma

October 3-5, 2014

Annual rapid inventory of Oklahoma's Biodiversity

For more site
information
see page 9.

Black Kettle National Grasslands
Washita Battlefield National Historic Site
City of Cheyenne, OK

There are
changes this
year. Find out
and register at:

<http://www.biosurvey.ou.edu/bioblitz/BioBlitzCurrent.html>



7th ANNUAL MONARCH IN THE PARK Festival

Lions Park

Blanchard, OK

Located SW 7th St & S Madison

2014

Saturday

September 27

10 am—4 pm

Website: www.oklahomamonarchmigration.com

Contacts: Pam Adams 405.227.7423

Zereta Sucharski 630.802.6366



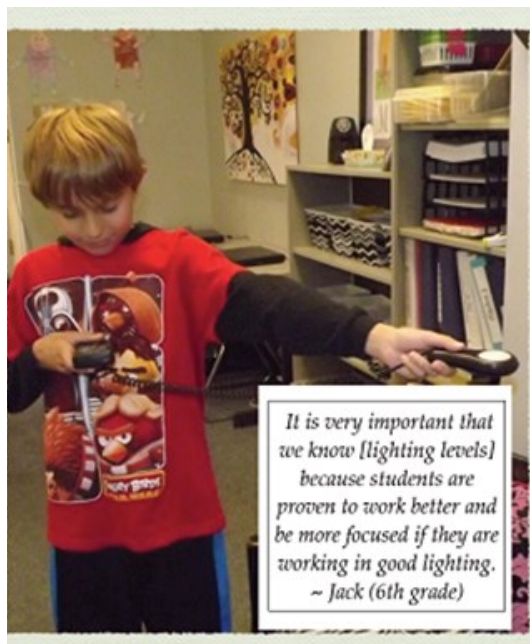
Congratulations to our newest Oklahoma Green Schools!

Riverfield Country Day School

Riverfield Country Day School in Tulsa received their Oklahoma Green Schools Flag for completing the PLT GreenSchools Energy Investigation. Using the Oklahoma Green Schools Program toolkit, 6th grade students were able to measure CO₂, humidity, light levels, electricity wattage and temperature in several buildings on campus. Students found that CO₂ levels were within acceptable range for the classroom, as was relative humidity. Students that investigated lighting found that many of the light fixtures in the school were not of good visual quality and were inefficient with regards to energy use. 6th graders used Kill



Riverfield students receiving their Oklahoma Green Schools flag.



Riverfield student using a light meter to check for proper classroom lighting levels

-a-watt meters to test the energy use of devices in the school. They identified some high energy users; they discovered some bad practices such as too many devices plugged into the same outlet and improper use of extension cords. They brought these to the attention of facilities staff so this could be remedied. Students made several recommendations to the principal and school board such as: replace old or broken lighting with new energy efficient LED lighting; unplug energy vampires that draw electricity even when not being used; add plants to classrooms to help control CO₂ levels and ensure that HVAC air intake filters are changed on a regular basis; add a new electrical outlet near the concession area to fix the issue of too

many devices plugged into the same outlet. The Oklahoma Green Schools Program is excited to have Riverfield Country Day School join the Oklahoma Green Schools Family and we look forward to seeing what investigation they take on next!

Answer to

Quiz! Quiz! Quiz!:

Most free-falling droplets look like the two droplets

pictured here. As droplets

get larger they flatten in response to resistance to air and begin to look like a hamburger bun.



Riverfield students doing the PLT GreenSchools Energy investigation.

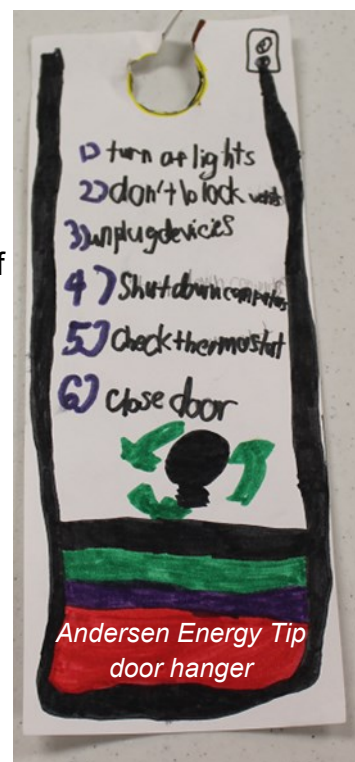
Andersen Elementary Gets Their Flag



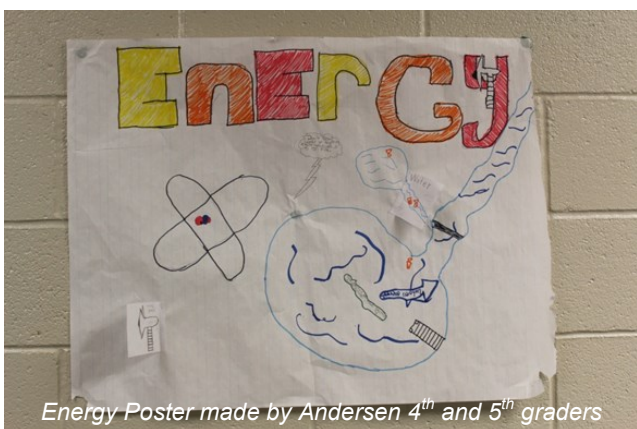
Andersen students, teacher Linda Snowbarger and Principal Harper receiving their Oklahoma Green Schools Flag from Oklahoma Green Schools' Les Pace.

Andersen Elementary School in Broken Arrow also received their Oklahoma Green Schools Flag for completing the PLT GreenSchools Energy Investigation. 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th graders began by learning about energy and taking a student led energy audit of their school building. Students first had to learn the definition of energy and what it looks like. They investigated chemical energy, electrical energy, mechanical energy and light energy becoming Energy Detectives! Each student took a quiz to determine their carbon footprint and were sur-

prised to realize how much energy they use. They looked at the school's monthly electric and gas bills over the past year and used that information to draw conclusions about school energy usage. Students used the Oklahoma Green Schools Program toolkit instruments like the CO₂ meter and light meter and, working in pairs, conducted an energy audit that explored every room in the school. The main focus turned to light energy. Students concluded that with small changes in types of bulbs, a significant amount of energy can be saved. It will be more conducive to student health, which will, in turn, very probably, increase test scores. Each student took knowledge learned about energy and made something to share with the entire school. Second and third graders made energy-saving-tips door hangers and distributed them to each classroom. Fourth and fifth graders made energy posters and displayed them in the halls throughout the school. Also, fourth & fifth graders created an original skit or song to videotape and shared with the school. Energy saving tips were also shared during the school broadcast. Students created a booth for Healthfest which is an evening program the entire school population and families are invited



to attend. At the booth, people could experiment with energy equipment and learn energy saving tips. They created a "Green Team" involving students, parents and teachers to rely on for school wide energy investigations next year. The Oklahoma Green Schools Program is very proud to call Andersen Elementary an Oklahoma Green School and are excited for the 2014-2015 school year and their next project!



Energy Poster made by Andersen 4th and 5th graders



To be able to boast of over 30,000 acres of mixed-grass prairie as well as sheltering over 100,000 wintering geese suggests an amazingly diverse loop! The landscape of this loop includes mixed-grass prairies, wooded ravines, rolling red hills, shinnery oak mottes, creeks, wetlands and the Washita River. Whether a wildlife-watcher, birder, hunter or fisherman, this loop offers recreational opportunities for all. Within Black Kettle National Grassland there is a mixture of both short and tall grass species but it is dominated by the midgrass species known as Little Bluestem. These

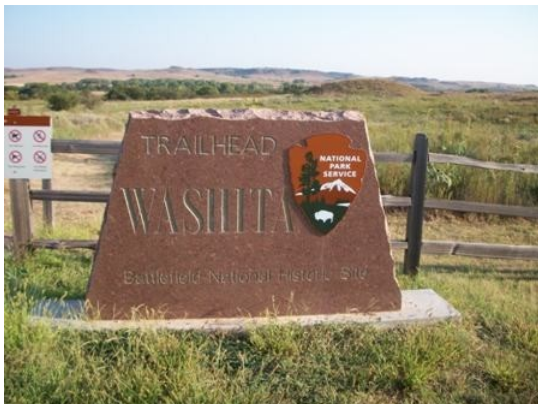
grasses produce seeds that are consumed by rodents such as **kangaroo rats**, **pocket-mice** and **deer mice**. These rodents, in turn, are eaten by **bobcats**, **coyotes**, and numerous **birds of prey**. The grasses provide cover for nesting birds such as **Northern Bobwhite**, **Eastern Meadowlark** and **Grasshopper Sparrow**. The southern region of this loop boasts creeks, wetlands, and reservoirs, all associated with the Washita River. The Washita National Wildlife Refuge provides habitat for impressive numbers of wintering **geese**, **Bald Eagles**, **Sandhill Cranes** and over **250 other bird species**. While traveling this loop, find out the significance of the name "Black Kettle".

Visit: <http://www.wildlifedepartment.com/greatplains/gpblackkettle.htm> for more information about Great Plains Trails.



<http://www.polypld.net/okmaps/black-kettle.html>

The Black Kettle Interpretive Trail provides a glimpse of what life was like on the grasslands. The trail is located at the Black Kettle District Office, which is co-located with the National Park Service's Washita Battlefield National Historic Site. Visitors will see a working windmill; examples of local plants and trees; and a small-scale earthen home.



The Black Kettle NG is over 30,000 acres across approximately 100 tracts of land. The BioBlitz inventory will focus on only a few of the tracks, covering the wide variety of habitats. From shortgrass flats to bottomlands, along the Washita River, from the rough broken country of the red plains to the steep canyon sides, the diverse terrain creates a fascinating heterogeneous landscape for us to investigate in 2014. You'll find shinnery oak mottes, wetlands surrounded by buttonbush, grasses mixed with sagebrush, and more at BioBlitz! 2014. Included in the inventory will be the 315 acres of the Washita Battlefield NHS and the small acreage of Cheyenne's Memorial Park.



A brand new nonprofit organization has formed and it exists to help protect Oklahoma's streams and rivers. The **Oklahoma Blue Thumb Association** promotes clean and healthy water ecosystems in Oklahoma, with an emphasis on fishable and Wadeable streams and rivers, through education, stewardship, and public outreach.

The Oklahoma Blue Thumb Association (OBTA) is unique in that the governing board and by-laws are committed to supporting "citizen scientists" who are outdoors learning about stream health through monitoring and teaching the general public how streams and rivers can be protected. OBTA formed to be a support mechanism for the Oklahoma Conservation Commission's Blue Thumb Water Quality Education Program. With cuts to government programs taking place, OBTA's dedication to this volunteer effort will ensure that citizens who are willing to give of their time and talent to monitor streams will find the support that they need to generate quality data. These volunteers can also be found working with boy and girl scouts, setting up at schools, and at community festivals offering pollution prevention demonstrations and letting people know how small changes can mean big water quality improvements.

Most recently, contributions to the Oklahoma Blue Thumb Association are being used to sponsor "leadership" workshops for existing volunteers. The goal is to have seasoned volunteers helping newly trained volunteers to "get their feet wet," so to say, as stream monitors. Three workshops will be held in various locations across the state. Late in 2013, OBTA participated in recognizing twenty years of Blue Thumb monitoring efforts.

Join Us!

| | |
|---------------------------|-------------|
| Adult Membership Dues | \$10 Yearly |
| Youth Membership Dues | |
| (High School and Younger) | \$5 Yearly |
| Lifetime Membership | \$ 75.00 |

(Discount until July 31, 2014,
then it goes up to \$150)
(One time donation)

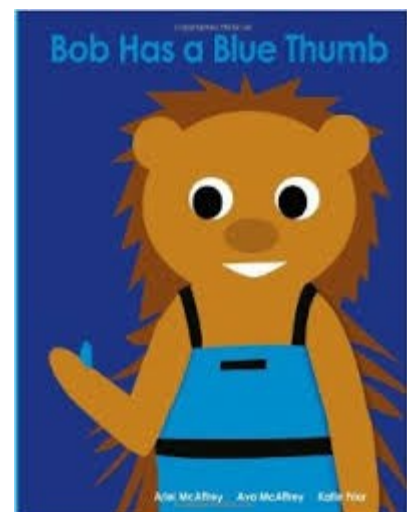
If you wish to join, send your membership to: P. O. Box 58103, Oklahoma City, OK 73112-9998
You may contact us at ok.bluethumb.association@gmail.com.

Contributions to OBTA are contributions to a grass roots movement that keeps Oklahoma's citizens as the eyes and ears of what takes place within our waters. None of us can live without clean water. The streams and rivers here are also critical for our wild animals, the fish, birds, deer, raccoons, and other animals that are at home in Oklahoma.

*"Dragonflies are reminders that we are light
and can reflect the light in powerful ways
if we choose to do so."*



Bob Has a Blue Thumb received a First Place from the Purple Dragonfly Book Awards/Royal Dragonfly Book Awards. The book also received an honorable mention at the Green Book Festival in San Francisco. Congratulations to Ava McAffrey, Ariel McAffrey, and Katie Prior.





Three students were looking for a project to help them earn a Girl Scout community service award as members of Moore Girl Scout Troop 456. What Ariel and Ava McAffrey, and Katie Prior ended up earning was something much more than a badge, they earned a Blue Thumb and so did Bob.

Oklahoma City homeschooled students teach others about protecting water

Blue Thumb is the water quality education program of the Oklahoma Conservation Commission's Water Quality division. Its purpose is to

provide education and outreach on nonpoint source pollution and support volunteers who perform monthly water quality monitoring. The McAffreys and Prior learned about Blue Thumb through a flyer and thought it would be a great fit for them. After completing training in 2013 the trio, along with their mothers began monthly chemical monitoring on Crutch Creek near Sooner Road and S.E. 59th St. The girls check the dissolved oxygen levels, chloride, pH, phosphorous, nitrates, ammonia, temperature, and assess the stream for changes to habitat.

"It has been a lot of fun to see the girls' interest grow, and it gives them first-hand experience in applying science, which enhances their education," said Karen Prior, Katie's mother.

Their experience at the creek has not only enhanced their science knowledge, but has given them a new appreciation for the creek site they monitor. They pick up trash every month they monitor and have come to think of Crutch Creek as "their creek". Gaining this new appreciation for the creek inspired them to help others become aware of the impact everyone has on our streams and rivers. The trio had recently written a book called "Bob has an Idea" about the three Rs, Reduce, Reuse and Recycle for a Girl Scout Silver Award project and thought Bob could help people learn about water pollution and the impact it has on the creatures that live in and near the water. So "Bob has a Blue Thumb" was created.



Katie Prior, Ava McAffrey, Ariel McAffrey

The trio wrote and illustrated the book, which features a hedgehog named Bob as the central character. Bob lives near a stream that is getting polluted by the City People who are dumping trash and other contaminants in the storm drain that leads to Bob's stream. Bob goes into town to tell the City People what they are doing to the stream and they end up working together to help clean it up, and that's how Bob earned his Blue Thumb.

One might wonder how a hedgehog came to live next to a stream, since they aren't native to Oklahoma, but the McAffreys had a pet hedgehog, so they decided to make it their mascot and ultimately the main character in their Bob books. And it just so happens that the girls all have a grandfather named Bob. The trio wouldn't comment on if Bob was named after them, but the granddads think he is. Another family member makes an appearance as well, Mayor James, is named after the McAffreys' younger brother, who they hope will take over their monitoring duties once they graduate.

(Continued on page 12)

(Blue Thumb Students continued from page 11)

The Blue Thumb staff was very excited to see the girls take what they have learned and turn it into something that can be used as a fun, educational tool for other kids. It has also been great to see how they have taken a proactive attitude on water quality.

"They are great to work with. They don't ever ask what more can we do, they just do it," said Kim Shaw, Blue Thumb Quality Assurance Officer.

"That's what we want people to do, go out and take their experiences and what they have learned and share it with others," said Cheryl Cheadle, Blue Thumb program coordinator. "Getting kids involved in teaching others is one of the things that we love to see. We learn from our peers and when kids teach kids it sometimes just sinks in better."

"One of the most rewarding parts is the influence you have on kids," said the trio." Don't just teach us, involve us."

Ava said another reward is the benefit to the creek and watching the changes over time. While they continue to pick up lots of trash, they know their efforts are having a positive impact on the stream. One example of this is the discovery of very high chloride levels in the creek over the past few months. The trio is now learning how you handle a potential pollutant in the stream. They have been working with the city of Oklahoma City, the Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality and the Oklahoma Corporation Commission to try to discover why the chloride levels are so high. They have found the process very interesting and look forward to discovering the problem and how it will be addressed.

"It has been awesome to see them read about something and then get the first-hand experience in helping solve the problem. It gives them a different view on other things in the world and has helped them see actions do have consequences," said Destiny McAffrey, Ariel and Ava's mother.

When asked if their experience with monitoring has changed their minds about what they want to do in the future, Ariel said no it has only solidified her desire to become an environmental engineer.

The Blue Thumb program is funded through the Environmental Protection Agency's Clean Water Act Sec. 319 funds, which are used to address nonpoint source pollution. The EPA has several awards each year for environmental awareness and the trio was nominated for the Region 6 President's Environmental Youth Award and were awarded 2nd runner up.

"The Bob Has a Blue Thumb book represents the full cycle in environmental protection through the Blue Thumb Program that EPA and OCC have worked so hard to develop. OCC has done a tremendous job in connecting agency goals and state needs with citizens," said Mike Bira, EPA Region 6 Oklahoma Nonpoint Source Program Manager. "Ariel, Ava, and Katie have taken the Blue Thumb principles and delivered them to the community through a very innovative, original, and fun idea. Now Blue Thumb can be understood by kids too young to get in the creek and sample, as well as the parents who are teaching them to read. So many levels of success!"



Katie, Ava, and Ariel at Book Signing

In addition to the EPA award, Katie was recently recognized for an essay she wrote on volunteering with Blue Thumb, as the Oklahoma State Honoree for the Prudential Spirit of Community Award. She travelled to Washington, D.C. to be recognized at a national award ceremony in May.

(Continued on page13)



Who is a volunteer naturalist?

It is someone who enjoys being outdoors sharing the experience of nature with others.

Volunteer Naturalist Training Begins in September

The Oxley Nature Center in Tulsa offers two Volunteer Naturalist Training Programs. The weekday session runs through September, two days a week from 9:00 A.M. until 12:00 noon. If evening and weekend training is more convenient, and there is enough interest, Oxley will provide training nights and weekend days. Please call for more information about the training schedules.

During training participants will become familiar with the Oxley trail system, exploring prairie, wetland, and forested areas. The training emphasizes leadership skills and interpretation methods. All of this is done in a fun atmosphere. Upon completion of training, participants will join other naturalists, each guiding a small group of visitors, on weekday, evening, or weekend tours. Participants must be 18 years old or older, enthusiasm is a plus, and no previous experience is necessary. Call for more information.

Other Volunteer Staff opportunities: Visitor Center Host, nature store, trail work, Adopt a Trail, Naturalist Rover, and more!

Join others at Oxley on August 14 for the Volunteer Roundup, at 10:00 A.M.-12:00 Noon or 7:00-9:00 P.M. to learn more! Current Volunteer Staff will be available to answer questions. Please RSVP 918/669-6644.

(Blue Thumb Students continued from page 12)

The girls sell their books on Amazon and have donated all proceeds from the sale of “Bob has a Blue Thumb” to the Oklahoma Blue Thumb Association, which is a nonprofit established to help support Blue Thumb volunteers.

“We thought the Association was a good cause and want to make sure monitoring and education continues,” said the trio.

On April 2, 2014 the girls presented Beth Landon, OBTA secretary a check for over \$173 from the sale of the books on Amazon and another \$180 from a recent book signing. Bob is now having a statewide impact on water quality as the Association funds various water quality education programs and projects.

Landon said, “Beyond the check, having the girls involved is everything we want in the Association.”

For more information on “Bob has a Blue Thumb” and his other adventures visit his Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/BobHasAnIdea> or his website <http://www.bobhasanidea.com/#!/pageSplash>.



Beth Landon, Ariel McAffrey, Katie Prior, Ava McAffrey, Kim Shaw

By Jeri Fleming, Blue Thumb Communications Coordinator

FOLKTALE:

The Wonderful Water Plant.



A rich man built himself a mansion in the country, surrounded by beautiful landscaped gardens. Of course he needed an ornamental lake. And he asked his gardener to plant the lake with beautiful water plants.

"I found something new, boss," said the gardener. "It's hardy, strong-growing, not bothered by insects or diseases, and it has gorgeous flowers!"

"Sounds perfect," said the rich man, "get some. It will look pretty with my swans." So the gardener planted a patch of the new water plants at one side of the lake.

The new plants grew so well that every day they DOUBLED the area of the lake that they covered! The boss was delighted.

However, by the end of the month, this water plant had completely covered the lake. There was no room for the swans. The rich man was furious.

From The Earthteller,

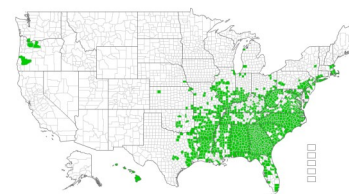
Fran Stallings

Here's a question for you: If the lake was completely covered on the last day of the month, on what day was the lake only HALF covered? (see below* for the answer)

FACT TALE: Kudzu -- the plant that covered the South.

Kudzu ((*Pueraria lobata* or *P. montana*) first came from its native Japan to the U.S. in 1876, at the Philadelphia Exposition where it was introduced as a beautiful landscaping vine and a quick source of shade. Its pretty purple flowers resemble wisteria. By the 1930's, farmers were planting it for animal forage and erosion control. A legume, kudzu enriches the soil with nitrogen. Its deep roots bring up minerals.

But kudzu grows so fast (up to 1 foot a day) that it can quickly swarm over trees, fences, buildings, even parked cars! Its big leaves block sunlight from the plants it covers, often killing them. Its vines grow through windows and pry under shingles. Now out of control in the deep south, kudzu has been found in Oklahoma as far north as Tulsa and Guthrie. An ecologist even found it in Canada, on the shores of Lake Erie!



How to get rid of this "good idea that ran amok"? Dig up the roots--but be sure to get every piece, because even a tiny bit can regrow. Cut down the vines--but be careful to destroy the cuttings, because they can root and start new vines. (Some people warn that if your "grapevine wreath" from the deep south was made from kudzu rather than grape, if it gets wet it can take root even after hanging on the wall for years...) Now some towns let goats and llamas eat it: if they overgraze it for several years in a row, they do a better job even than fire or herbicides.

Kudzu! It seemed like a good idea at the time.

*If it's doubling every day, and covered the whole lake on the last day of the month, that means that on the next-to-the-last day it had covered only half the lake. I'll bet the boss thought he didn't have a problem because his swans still had half the lake to swim in!

Looking for an Internship?

| | |
|---------------------|--|
| Position: | Internship for The EnvironMentor Newsletter and Calendar |
| Location: | One position at Oklahoma City University |
| Compensation: | This is an unpaid position. Acceptable work can result in an item that may be included in the curriculum vitae of the applicant. Exemplary work can result in a letter of recommendation from the editor. |
| Hours: | To be determined. Much of the work will be assigned when the work is available; for example, when someone needs to be interviewed or an article needs to be written. |
| Education: | Applicant must be high school aged or older with good verbal and writing skills. |
| Work Opportunities: | Work will include creating items for inclusion in The EnvironMentor Newsletter, writing articles, doing research for items for The EnvironMentor Calendar and Newsletter. |
| Work Requirements: | Must have either a valid Driver's License or access to reliable transportation from a responsible adult. Must be willing to listen to and follow instructions. Must be willing to meet deadlines. Must understand that all work will be published at the discretion of the editor and is subject to the policies of The EnvironMentor Newsletter and Calendar. Most importantly, the applicant must be reliable, have a good work ethic and a desire to learn. |
| Experience: | No experience is required, but preferred. |
| Applying: | Mail or email a one-page letter of interest and a resume to: Beth Landon Department of Biology 2501 North Blackwelder Oklahoma City, OK 73106 blandon@okcu.edu |

On February 23, 2013 The EnvironMentor dipped a toe into social media. We made this decision because, at this time, there are two to three months between issues of the Newsletter. During this past gap an important event had an application deadline of April 1st so an announcement went out from Facebook. We won't bother you with anything trivial, so ...

“Like” The Environmentor on Facebook!!



QUIKList Oklahoma

Oklahoma Blue Thumb

<http://bluethumbok.com/>

Oklahoma Blue Thumb Association

ok.bluethumb.association@gmail.com

Oklahoma Green Schools

<http://www.okgreenschools.org/>

Oklahoma Master Naturalists

<http://okmasternaturalist.org/>

Oklahoma Native Plant Society

<http://oknativeplants.org/>

Oklahoma Recycling Association (OKRA)

<http://www.recycleok.org/okra/>

Project Learning Tree (PLT)

<http://www.plt.org/>

<http://www.forestry.ok.gov/project-learning-tree>



10301 South Sunnyslane Road
405-814-0006

<http://>

www.museumofosteology.org/

Monday - Friday 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Saturday 11 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Sunday 1 p.m. - 5 p.m.

Project WET

(Water Education for Teachers)

<http://projectwet.org/>

[http://projectwet.org/where-we-are/host/
oklahoma_conservation_commission/](http://projectwet.org/where-we-are/host-oklahoma_conservation_commission/)

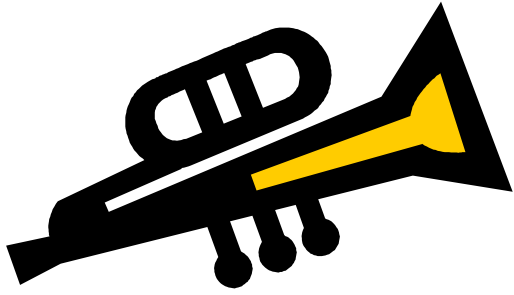
Project WILD

<http://www.projectwild.org/>

As with all hyperlinks in The EnvironMentor Newsletter, these are clickable.

Do you know an environmental group in Oklahoma that should be listed. Send that information to:

environmentor@okcu.edu



The Calendar

Most people who remember The EnvironMentor Newsletter know that the pages at the end of the issue were reserved for The Calendar. Being online has some great advantages. When you downloaded your copy of the newsletter you may have noticed the box on the right side of the webpage. This is a convenient listing of the next events from The Calendar. This will always be up-to-date because it happens automatically. For more information on the event just click on it and a window will open up with all the details. If you wish, you can access the rest of the calendar from there.

To have your event posted to The Calendar, copy and paste the following list into an email, fill in as much information as you wish, and send it to: Environmentor@okcu.edu

Title of your event:

Start Date and Time

End Date and Time

Location

Location Address

Contact Name

Contact Phone

Contact Email

Details in Narrative Form

Location Link

Event Link

Map Link

Please note: We are not able to publish for-profit information.

To go directly to The Calendar click on:

<http://www2.okcu.edu/environmentor>