

NATURE WALKS SCHEDULE – SPRING 2013

On the Oak Ridge Reservation, located in east Tennessee, over 1100 vascular plants, 72 fish, 34 mammals and over 200 bird species have been observed. This year the public is invited to four nature walks designed to highlight not only the rich flora and fauna diversity of the reservation, but also to demonstrate the work being done to sustainably manage and conserve this resource. Walks will take place on several locations across the Oak Ridge Reservation beginning in late winter through mid summer.

Reservations for the following events must be made in advance by noon the Thursday prior to each walk by contacting Tracy Clem, 865-574-5151 (bodinetm@ornl.gov). If inclement weather forces postponement of an event, it will be announced on ORNL's Information Line at 865-574-9836 (i.e. 574-XTEN) at least two hours before the scheduled start of the walk.

More information about these walks is available by contacting Trent Jett at 865-574-9188 (jetttr@ornl.gov).

1. **Winter astronomy, falconry demo and American woodcock “night walk” – Freels Bend**

Date: Saturday, February 23 (Sunday, February 24 if inclement weather)

Location: Meet at the parking lot behind (i.e. south) the ORISE building at corner of Bethel Valley and Pumphouse roads in Oak Ridge, TN.

Time: 5:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Leader: Jim Evans and Vincent Pontello (TWRA), David Fields (ORION)

Limit: 30 (children are allowed)

Recommendations: Walking will be on trails, not in overly steep terrain (distance < .5 mile).

Participants need to have sturdy shoes and should dress in layers. A reliable flashlight or headlamp is suggested as most of the walk will be after sunset. Night vision is very sensitive to white light, so you may consider a red filter or red LED light. Recommended items include water, binoculars, field guide to birds, field guide to stars, bug spray if needed. We should see American woodcock flight displays, we will have a demonstration from a local falconer (Merlin and Harris hawk), and see winter constellations, and several planets.

No pets please.

2. **Bird nature walk – ETPP Ponds and Vicinity**

Date: Saturday, April 27

Location: Meet at ETPP visitors overlook, Oak Ridge Turnpike (Hwy 58)

Time: 7:00 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.

Leader: Jim Evans (TWRA)

Limit: 25 (children are allowed)

Recommendations: Walking will be over level dirt/paved roads (distance 1-2 miles). Dress in layers, wear sturdy shoes, and bring bug spray, field guide to birds, binoculars, and water. We should see bald eagle, red-headed woodpecker, and many migrating warblers as we venture around the ponds and some wetlands near the Clinch River and Poplar Creek.

No pets please.

3. Reptiles and amphibians inventory – Solway Bend

Date: Sunday, June 2

Location: Meet at the parking lot behind (i.e. south of) the ORISE building at corner of Bethel Valley and Pumphouse Roads.

Time: 1:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Leader: John Byrd (CRESO)

Limit: 20 (children are allowed)

Recommendations: Walking will be through fields and over level dirt/gravel roads (limited distances). Dress in layers, wear sturdy shoes, and bring bug spray and water. We will collect several turtle species, talk about local snake identification and discuss management of local herps populations. There will be plenty of opportunities for children to get involved and learn about the animals.

No pets please.

4. Wetland plants nature walk – ETP ponds

Date: Saturday, June 8

Location: Meet at ETP visitors overlook, Oak Ridge Turnpike (Hwy 58)

Time: 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Leader: Larry Pounds and Paul Durr (individual)

Limit: 25 (children are allowed)

Recommendations: Walking will be over level dirt roads and a mown trail, but not in overly steep terrain (distance about 1.5 miles). Dress in layers, wear sturdy shoes, and bring plenty of bug spray and water. Our visit will concentrate on the identification of wetland plant species associated with the pond margins as well as those that dwell in open water areas. Among the species featured will be: mosquito fern, rose mallow, American lotus, yellow pond lily, fragrant water-lily, pickerel weed, lizard's-tail and the carnivorous humped bladderwort.

No pets please.