

NATURE WALKS SCHEDULE – SPRING 2016

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 six 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. **American Woodcock and Birds of Prey walk– Freels Bend**

Date: Friday, February 26 (Saturday, February 27 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 7:30 p.m.

Leader: Aubrey Deck, Vincent Pontello (TWRA), Kris Brantley (CRRC)

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 some of the walk will be at dusk or after sunset. Recommended items include water, binoculars, field guide to birds, bug spray if needed. We will see American woodcock flight displays as the sun sets and maybe hear some other night animals calling. Clinch River Raptor Center as well as local falconers will also be on hand to show us some of their birds of prey.

No pets please.

2. **Wildflower walk – Black Oak Ridge Conservation Easement**

Date: Sunday, April 10

Location: Meet at BORCE greenway entrance on Blair Road

Time: 1:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Leader: Larry Pounds and Paul Durr (botanists), Jamie Herold (ORNL)

Limit: 25 (children are allowed)

Recommendations: Walking will be off trail, in moderately rough terrain (distance 1-2 miles).

Since this is an off trail hike in rocky country, participants need to have good balance and stamina. We will see many native spring wildflowers in the woods along the bluffs of Watts Bar Lake. Dress in layers, wear sturdy shoes, and bring bug spray and water.

No pets please.

3. Frog Calls and Bat Monitoring – Heritage Center Greenway Powerhouse trail

Date: Friday, April 15

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

Time: 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Leader: Kelly Roy and Kitty McCracken (ORNL)

Limit: 25 (children are allowed)

Recommendations: We will be visiting some beaver impounded wetlands and ponds to learn how the personnel at ORNL are monitoring local bat populations and how to identify local frog populations based on calls. We hope to hear pickerel frogs, spring peepers, and southern chorus frogs as well as others and we will use an Anabat detector to record ultrasonic bat calls. Walking will be on level dirt/gravel roads (distance <1 mile). Dress in layers, wear sturdy shoes and bring bug spray and water. A reliable flashlight or headlamp is recommended since the walk will continue after sunset.

No pets please.

4. Bird Nature walk – Freels Bend

Date: Saturday, April 23

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

Time: 8:00a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

Leader: Kelly Roy and Trent Jett (ORNL)

Limit: 25 (children are allowed)

Recommendations: Walking will be over dirt/gravel roads (distance 1-2 miles). Dress in layers, wear sturdy shoes, and bring bug spray, field guide to birds, binoculars, and water. We could see Northern harrier or Lincoln's sparrow in the extensive native grass fields and many migrating warblers in the early successional and mature forested areas that border the Clinch River.

No pets please.

5. Reptiles and Amphibians Inventory – Solway Bend

Date: Sunday, June 5

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 and Kathy Strunk (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 sunscreen, bug spray and water. We will collect several turtle species, talk about local snake identification and discuss management of local herpetological populations. There will be plenty of opportunities for children to get involved and learn about the animals.

No pets please.