



# 50 years!

## 50th year brings new vision, mission, branding & website

The Ogden Nature Center was established in 1975 as Utah's first nature center, and for the past five decades we have successfully united our community with nature through award-winning field trips, community classes, special events and volunteerism. For these 50 years we have maintained a beautiful, 152-acre nature preserve in the heart of Ogden. This urban oasis is rich with abundant wildlife, live animal exhibits, trails and "green" gathering spaces. The land for the Ogden Nature Center was set aside by Ogden City to be used in perpetuity as open space. In 1975 a grass-roots group of visionary community leaders established a place where our community can connect with nature. The preserve's most important role is serving as a natural classroom and campus, where people of all ages come to learn about nature and the environment. The Ogden Nature Center has grown and blossomed, and continues to be just what its founders envisioned, a magnificent place to commune with the wonders of the natural world.

As one of Ogden's oldest non-profit organizations, we have significantly grown over the past 50 years. We serve approximately 55,000 people annually and have served well over one million in the past five decades. This incredible benchmark speaks to the importance of the Ogden Nature Center in our community.

And as we migrate into our 50th year, we are excited to present an updated brand, remodeled website, a refreshed vision and mission statement -- which will guide us into the next 50 years. You can see the new logo throughout this newsletter and visit our upgraded website at [www.ogdennaturecenter.org](http://www.ogdennaturecenter.org).

### **Mission Statement**

The mission of the Ogden Nature Center is to unite people with nature and create a community dedicated to environmental stewardship.

### **Vision Statement**

To ignite curiosity, educate and inspire action in valuing nature across generations.

The Ogden Nature Center Board of Directors and staff are planning festivities and events to commemorate the Nature Center's 50th Anniversary. In the coming months watch for details and come celebrate with us. Cheers to 50 Years

photo by Paul Richter



Open Mon.-Fri. 9-5, Sat. 9-4, Closed Sunday  
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# Nature's Log

newsletter of the Ogden Nature Center • fall 2024

# programs & special events

## WILD WEDNESDAYS

Wild Wednesdays will be held in person and outside beginning at 3:45 pm each week. Take part in a 20-minute program led by an Ogden Nature Center naturalist educator, and then explore the Nature Center on your own! Gates close at 5 pm. Dress for the weather! All programs will begin in the amphitheater. Free for ONC members. General admission rates for all others. All ages

### September Wild Wednesdays

4th - National Hummingbird Day

11th - Insect Safari

18th - Badgers, Otters, & Ferrets - Oh My!

25th - Nature's Natural Timekeepers

### October Wild Wednesdays

2nd - Natural Dye

9th - Salamander Secrets

16th - Owl Tales

23rd - Batty About Bats

30th - Amazing Arachnids

### November Wild Wednesdays

6th - Oh Deer!

13th - A Special Veteran's Day Program

20th - Living Close to the Land

27th - Gobble Gobble! All About Turkeys

### December Wild Wednesdays

4th - Plants & Animals Prepare for Winter

11th - All That Scat!

18th - Winter Solstice



## FALL BOOK CLUB

### Eight Bears: Mythic Past and Imperiled

Ages 18+

Aug. 22, Sept. 19, Oct. 24, Nov. 14, Dec. 19 from 5:30-7 pm

\$20 members / \$25 non-members for all 5 sessions

Join an ONC naturalist educator and other book lovers once a month in the fall for discussions of *Eight Bears: Mythic Past and Imperiled Future* by Gloria Dickie. This book discusses each of the eight species of bear; their relation to human myth, and how each of them are under threat from extinction. We'll read through sections of the book, then discuss them at each meeting throughout the fall. Hot beverages and treats provided. Participants bring their own copy of the book. Please register by August 16th at [www.ogdennaturecenter.org/education/community-programs](http://www.ogdennaturecenter.org/education/community-programs)



## KNEEHIGH NATURALISTS

Ages 3-5 (and their adult chaperones)

\$10 ONC members / \$12 non-members / \$8 per child for groups of 5 or more

Join us for this year's theme of animal groups. We will be exploring the wonderful world of buzzy bugs and feathered friends this fall.

Pre-registration is required. Admission includes a child and adult pair. To register, go to [www.ogdennaturecenter.org/education/preschool-programs](http://www.ogdennaturecenter.org/education/preschool-programs)

### Bizzy, Buzzy Bugs

Choose a date and time:

Sept. 10th 10-11 am, or 1-2 pm

Sept. 11th 10-11 am

Oct. 8th 10-11 am, or 1-2 pm

Oct. 9th 10-11 am



### Fair Feathered Friends

Nov. 5th 10-11 am, or 1-2 pm

Nov. 6th 10-11 am

Dec. 17th 10-11 am, or 1-2 pm

Dec. 18th 10-11 am



## HOMESCHOOL NATURALISTS

### Fall 2024 Semester

September 11th, 25th, October 9th, 23rd, November 6th, 20th, December 4th, 18th, from 1-3 pm

\$225 per child for the 8-class series for ONC members

\$250 per child for the 8-class series for non-members

Ages 7-12

Intertwining the natural sciences with environmental stewardship, our curriculum is designed to spark curiosity and exploration as young learners discover the wonders of ecosystems, plants, and animals. Students will not only learn scientific concepts, but also develop a deep appreciation for nature and the importance of conservation.

Students attend the entire 8-class series. Due to high demand and limited space, we cannot offer sibling discounts. Registration deadline is 5 pm, September 5th. Register at [www.ogdennaturecenter.org/education/homeschool-naturalists](http://www.ogdennaturecenter.org/education/homeschool-naturalists)

## WELLNESS THROUGH NATURE SERIES

Presented by Intermountain Health McKay Dee Hospital



### Guided Bird Walks

Sept. 14, Oct. 12, Nov. 9, Dec. 14 from 8-10 am

\$6 ONC members / \$8 non-members for individual walks

Guided by a naturalist educator and in the company of fellow bird nerds, take a tour through 1.5 miles of walking trails meandering through the Nature Center. Learn about the different species who migrate in and out of our region seasonally. The series will take you from summer through fall migration and into the winter birding season. We encourage you to bring your own binoculars but spares are available. Register by the Wednesday before at [www.ogdennaturecenter.org/education/community-programs](http://www.ogdennaturecenter.org/education/community-programs)

### Mind/Body/Nature Retreat with Owls

with instructor Melanie Webb

Ages 16+

August 31st from 9-11 am

\$22 members / \$27 non-members

Anxiety is for the birds! And, it turns out, birds and nature are good for our anxiety! In this mini retreat, body coach Melanie Webb will guide you through movement that prepares the mind to have an immersive, rejuvenating experience in nature. There are both Asian and Native American influences that weave through this experience. Movements include Qigong, the original martial art, and Pleasures of Presence, from Shinrin Yoku, also Hopi and Navajo traditions such as the Navajo Beauty Way Ceremony. Afterwards, grow your mind with a 15-20 minute owl presentation with one of Ogden Nature Center's naturalist educators. Learn how far humans can turn their heads and how far owls can turn theirs! Stretch your wings and learn about the wingspan of owls! How strong is your grip vs. that of an owl's talons? Attendees should bring their own mats, sunscreen, and water.

Please register by August 27th at

[www.ogdennaturecenter.org/education/community-programs](http://www.ogdennaturecenter.org/education/community-programs)



### Senior Strolls

Ages 55+

Thursdays, September 12, 19 and 26 at 9 am

Nature lovers ages 55 and older can join a naturalist educator on Thursday mornings in September for an hour-long trail and nature walk. A different topic will be covered each week. Sign up for one session or

get a discount if you sign up for the series of 3 sessions

\$6 Members or \$15 for the series

\$8 Nonmembers or \$20 for the series

Pre-registration is required. If doing a single session, register by 5 pm the Tuesday before your desired session occurs. If doing all three, register by

5 pm, Sept. 9th. To register go to

[www.ogdennaturecenter.org/education/community-programs](http://www.ogdennaturecenter.org/education/community-programs)

# ...come connect with nature!

## Tai Chi in Nature

with instructor David Weiskopf

Ages 12+

September 14, 21, 28, and October 5 at 9 am  
FREE

Known for its slow, intentional movements, Tai Chi is a popular form of gentle exercise and moving meditation with benefits to mental and physical health. Tai Chi for Health programs are proven to help improve balance, flexibility, and posture. These programs are proven to greatly reduce the risk of falls. Enjoy a mini-series of Tai Chi practice outdoors in the Ogden Nature Center's backyard glen. Each class begins with a gentle Qigong warm up and breathing exercises, followed by Tai Chi movements (forms) each week. No special equipment is required — just comfortable clothing, shoes, patience, and an open mind.

Space is limited to 30 participants. Please register at

[www.ogdennaturecenter.org/education/community-programs](http://www.ogdennaturecenter.org/education/community-programs)

## SEPTEMBER



### Battle of the Bugs

September 13th through October 12th

Free entry for members, general admission of \$6 adults / \$4 children for non-members

This month we're creating a competition to find which bug truly is the best. In a March Madness style bracket, you'll vote with your spare change between two contenders based on Aesthetics, Importance, and Effectiveness. At the end of each round, the invertebrate with the most change in their jar advances to the next round. When we get to the finals, you'll get a chance to enter a drawing for a chance to win a private meet and greet for you and 10 guests with an ONC reptile or bird of your choice. No registration required.

## OCTOBER

### Creatures of the Night

October 18 and 19 from 5 - 8:30 pm (last admission at 7:45pm)  
All ages

\$7 for ONC members / \$10 for non-members

Join us for a non-spooky Halloween adventure. The night is packed with trailside adventures including games, campfire stories, live owl and snake presentations, crafts, a spider web crawl and a crepuscular creep. Costumes are welcome and flashlights are encouraged. Tickets are required for everyone over age 3. Children must be accompanied by an adult. This event will be held rain or shine.

No pre-registration required -- pay upon entry.



## Fall Foraging

October 26th at 10 am

\$8 members, \$10 non-members

Have you ever looked at a berry in the wild and wondered if it was edible? Wonder no more! Join us for a fun program about edible plants in Utah and how to make them their tastiest. We'll have a sampling of a few foraged foods to try with recipes for you to make at home. Please register by October 21st at

[www.ogdennaturecenter.org/education/community-programs](http://www.ogdennaturecenter.org/education/community-programs)

## NOVEMBER

### Starry Starry Night Party

Friday, November 8th from 6-8:30 pm

Adults only

Free

In celebration of our upcoming 50th Anniversary, the Ogden Nature Center is hosting a special evening of stargazing led by Naturalist Educator, Kylie Friedman. Come learn about some of the myths around the constellations and learn some fun facts about the stars and the moon! This adult-only event will be a fun and informative evening with telescopes and warm drinks to enjoy. Space is limited.

Please register by November 1st at

[www.ogdennaturecenter.org/education/community-programs](http://www.ogdennaturecenter.org/education/community-programs)

### Military Family Day

November 23rd, 11 am

All ages welcome

Regular admission rates apply -- free for members and free for Military veterans and their families (please bring your military ID)

In honor of Veteran's Day, we're celebrating our military heroes.

At 11 am join an educator naturalist for a patriotic craft you can take home. What's more, we'll have an animal presentation featuring our resident Bald Eagle, Des Ta Te.

## CUP HOP



Swoop in to one of our local coffee shops to snag your beautiful Great Blue Heron/Ogden Nature Center mug. For \$20 you'll get a mug to add to your collection, filled with a specialty coffee, tea or cocoa at the time of purchase. The mugs will be available on the following dates, at these locations only, while they last.

Special thanks to all of our participating coffee shops!

**Nov. 14-19 Grounds for Coffee, 3005 Harrison Blvd.**

**Nov. 21-26 Kaffe Mercantile, 1221 26th St.**

**Nov. 28 - Dec 3 Daily Rise, 2865 Washington Blvd.**

**Dec. 5-10 Grounds for Coffee, 111 Historic 25th St.**

**Dec. 12-17 Coffee Links / 287 Park Ave.**

## DECEMBER



### Photography in Nature Class

Ages 16+

December 21st at 10 am

\$8 ONC members, \$12 non-members

Join an educator naturalist for this fun session on tips and tricks to taking better photos. Head out on the trails to practice what you've learned when the Nature Center is wearing its December colors. All participants must have their own equipment. Please register by December 18th at [www.ogdennaturecenter.org/education/community-programs](http://www.ogdennaturecenter.org/education/community-programs)

### Holiday Open House, Fresh Evergreen Swag Sale, & Local Artisan Market

Saturday, November 30th -- Shop Local, Shop Small!



### ONC Members Only Hour

- Exclusive Shopping 8 am - 9 am for Nature Center members only
- First choice of swags and merchandise
- If you're not yet a member of the Nature Center, consider joining! Memberships also make lovely gifts!
- Become a member at [www.ogdennaturecenter.org/join-give/become-a-member](http://www.ogdennaturecenter.org/join-give/become-a-member)

### Holiday Open House

Free admission for all, 9 am - 4 pm

Step into a natural wonderland and find unique treasures and gifts in our enchanting gift shop!

Choose a fancy & fresh evergreen swag for your front door. Shop with 15 local artists and creators in our Artisan Market in the LS Peery Education Building. We'll have an old-fashioned bake sale, a make-and-take nature craft for kids, holiday photo opportunities, complimentary gift wrapping, and hot cocoa.

The Nest Gift Shop features quality nature books & guides, beautiful stationary, charming toys, games, art, birdfeeders, jewelry and clothing. It's a great place to find stocking stuffers, neighbor gifts, and fun items for the nature-lovers on your list!

### A Short Winter's Nap

The Ogden Nature Center and the Nest Gift Shop will be closed December 24th through January 1st for a winter break. We will re-open on Thursday, January 2nd, 2025. Happy Holidays everyone!





# 50 years!

These success stories were gathered and written by community artist and writer, Susan Snyder.

## success stories



### Caroline Mullin, Then & Now

Caroline Mullin grew up at the Ogden Nature Center. She says she began visiting before she could walk and completed her first Fly With the Flock 5K in a Kelty backpack carried by one of her parents.

She started summer camp in the preschool Fledglings program and spent every summer doing camps after that — first as a camper and later as a junior camp counselor. She recalls one of her fondest memories being her first overnight campout at Picnic Grove, which she described as being filled with “laughter, friendship, and s’mores.”

Caroline said ONC strengthened her appreciation for the outdoors in many ways. “One of the most significant was showing me the positive impact that humans can have on the environment,” she said. In high school, Caroline did several research projects on increasing the availability of native milkweed plants for Monarch butterflies. She spotted her first Monarch at ONC, she said, and it helped inspire her academic and creative work as a teen. Her research led her to create a Monarch Waystation at ONC. But her connection runs deeper than butterflies. “Spending time at ONC, I also experienced the healing power of nature in my life. This helped me consider a future where I could continue to work for the environment, but also serve people.”



This summer was Caroline’s last as a junior counselor. This fall she enters a pre-medicine program at College of the Holy Cross, in Worcester, Mass., where she hopes to pursue a career as a pediatric nurse.

### Preschool Owner, Monique Hunt

Monique Hunt owns Parkside Preschool in Clinton, and has been bringing her students to the Ogden Nature Center for about 15 years.

“I started teaching preschool 20 years ago. My own children grew up in the Ogden School District, so we had many years of wonderful experiences with the Ogden Nature Center before it was me planning field trips,” she said.

Hunt said the hands-on activities and exploration along the trails in the Ogden Nature Center preschool programs are some of her favorite parts of programs.

“The children love to imagine what poop would come from which animal, and looking for footprints is always fun,” she said. “The coloring projects and butterfly crafts have been fun also.”

One of her favorite memories of taking a class to Ogden Nature Center was a day when the students were on a trail with one of the naturalist educators, who pointed out a large hole in a tree about 20 feet up. “There was an owl we never would have seen, but our guide showed us right where to look,” she said. “Another day, there was a family of deer still hunkered down in the grass along the path of birdhouses. They were so close! It was amazing.”

### Homeschool Mom, Julia Hardman

Julia Hardman is a homeschool mom who brought her three boys to the Nature Center for 15 years. The boys, now ages 17, 15, and 12, came as infants, while the older sibling or two attended preschool classes, summer camp, or the Homeschool Naturalists Program. As the boys grew older, she enrolled them in all the classes and activities offered for their age group. The family still volunteers to fill trailside bird feeders every week in winter.

“The Ogden Nature Center is a big part of my children’s education and their lives. Our favorite memories include snowshoeing, pond-dipping, teachers singing “the Welcome Song,” overnight camps, the Crepuscular Creep, and Cronk the Raven who resides in the mews,” she said. “Everyone loves Cronk!” She said she took her children to many museums and



centers across the Wasatch Front as part of their education, but the Ogden Nature Center remained their favorite.

“The staff, especially the teachers, were at the heart of our experience there. They instilled in my children a deep love and appreciation for nature that I believe they will carry with them always,” Hardman said. “I am grateful that such a place exists right in the heart of beautiful Ogden. The lessons learned and time in nature were so important for my children and provided a richness to their lives that few places can offer.”



Julia's son Nicolas is listening for the popping of the sap when it starts moving through the tree in early spring. Photo by Julia Hardman

Staff and visitors report their sightings and log them on a board inside the Visitor Center. Here's the list from the past few months:

Lazuli Bunting  
 Monarch  
 Red Fox  
 Striped Skunks  
 Mule Deer  
 Magpie  
 Black-capped Chickadee  
 Yellow Warbler  
 Black-headed Grosbeak  
 Turkey Vultures  
 Tiger Swallowtail  
 Cabbage White Butterfly  
 Downy Woodpecker  
 Blue Milkweed Beetle  
 Meadow Vole  
 Red Milkweed Beetle  
 Rolli Polli  
 Weidemeyer's Admiral  
 Butterfly  
 Red Velvet Ant  
 Raccoon  
 White-faced Ibis  
 Praying Mantis  
 Woolhouse Spider  
 Cooper's Hawk  
 Gopher Snake  
 Nightshade  
 Hummingbird  
 Wandering Garter Snake  
 Chorus Frog  
 Mourning Cloak Butterfly  
 Canada Geese  
 Mallards  
 Wood Duck  
 Song Sparrows  
 Red-wing Blackbird  
 White-crowned Sparrow  
 Song Sparrow  
 Lesser Goldfinch  
 American Robin  
 Lady Bug  
 Downy Woodpecker  
 Rio Grande Turkeys  
 Killdeer  
 Red-Tailed Hawk  
 American Crow  
 Sulphur Butterfly  
 Osprey  
 House Sparrow  
 Yellow Rumped Warbler  
 House Finch  
 House Sparrow  
 Mayfly  
 Ring-neck Pheasant  
 Oregon Junco  
 Box Elder Beetle  
 Elm Seed Bug  
 Belted Kingfisher  
 Lesser Gold Finch  
 White-crowned Sparrow  
 Song Sparrow  
 Spotted Towhee  
 Northern Flicker  
 Western Yellow-bellied Racer  
 Common Raven  
 Beaver  
 American Kestrel  
 California Quail  
 Western Screech Owl  
 Great Blue Heron  
 Muskrat  
 Cedar Waxwing



Spring and summer brought abundant wildlife to the nature preserve.

Top:  
 Bumble Bee on  
 Showy Milkweed



Middle:  
 A young Mule Deer  
 in velvet antlers

Bottom:  
 Wild Rio-Grande Turkeys  
 showed up and wandered  
 the preserve this spring.

Photos by  
 Naturalist Educator,  
 Raja Klingele



# summer sightings



# nature news



## **Sarah Kapel, Conservation Manager**

Sarah Kapel was hired as the Nature Center's Conservation Manager. Sarah was born and raised in Las Vegas, Nevada, and spent her childhood exploring the many national parks and public land found throughout the West. She found her passion for conservation and ecology from these experiences.

Sarah earned a B.S. in Environmental Science from the University of Nevada, Reno in 2017, focusing on botany and environmental law. After graduating, she worked in the Spring Mountains National Recreational Area conducting botany surveys and improving endangered pollinator habitat. Sarah pursued her love for restoration by obtaining a master's degree in Ecology from Utah State University in 2024. Sarah's thesis focused on aspen restoration through outplanting seedlings in post-fire environments as part of the Forest and Fire Ecology Lab.

Being shaped by the forest fires witnessed across the West, Sarah has an affinity for fire-adapted plants and educating the public

about wildfire. She is also passionate about promoting native pollinator habitat through active restoration initiatives.

Outside of work, Sarah enjoys the great outdoors by hiking, camping, biking, and skiing. She also loves to spend time at home with her cat Mia and crafting or visiting a local coffee shop.

## **Conservation Work at ONC**

This summer the Ogden Nature Center continued its commitment to restoring native habitat by controlling invasive species. Invasive species devastate ecosystems by damaging watersheds, increasing soil erosion, and negatively impacting wildland plant and animal communities. Invasive species dominate a landscape, making it difficult for natives to establish and stunting revegetation efforts.

With the help of volunteers and the Nature Center's habitat restoration team, 45 acres of the property were surveyed and mechanically treated by hand this summer, targeting species like Dyer's Woad, Scotch Thistle, and Houndstongue. Over 15 acres of the property were chemically treated through herbicide application, targeting species like Poison Hemlock, Yellow Starthistle, Phragmites, and Hoary Cress.

Another method explored this summer was a nature-based control (or biological control) utilizing Canada thistle gall flies. These gall flies are a biological agent applied to prevent the flowering Canada thistle, a prevalent invasive species. This plant is an aggressive and creeping perennial weed and is not palatable to ungulates, meaning it cannot be grazed by deer or other 4-legged animals. It is also a rhizomatous species, meaning mechanical removal can be difficult and eradication typically requires herbicide application.

Using nature-based control is an alternative to herbicide. The Canada thistle gall flies lay eggs on the thistle plant in the early summer when plants are bolting. The developing larvae stimulate the plant to form a hard stem gall. Galling redirects nutrients and results in abnormal flower heads, which in turn reduces seed production. This summer, 840 Canada thistle gall flies were sourced and released on established thistle populations on both the Ogden Nature Center property on 12th Street and ONC North on Mountain Road. The goal is for these flies to develop their own sustainable population for years to come. Following release, areas were surveyed using the State of Utah's Biocontrol survey protocol to monitor fly population retention and

success. Successful eradication of invasive species allows for establishment of native vegetation. In areas where weeds were removed, revegetation efforts through seeding and planting continued.

About 10 acres of the Nature Center property on 12th Street were seeded in early summer with a native upland species mix.

Additionally, over 1,000 riparian plugs, through the use of wetland sod, were planted in Killdeer Pond, which was frequently invaded by Phragmites. Integrated weed management and active revegetation projects such as these aim to accelerate native species establishment and prevent invasive species.



Conservation Manager Sarah Kapel works with the 2024 Volunteers on Water Quality Sampling. Photo by Abbey Soukup.

# nature news



## **Claressa Miljour, Development Director**

Claressa Miljour, our new Development Director, joined the Nature Center staff in April. Claressa is excited to foster growth at the Ogden Nature Center and build on the Center's nearly 50-year legacy of connecting our community with nature.

Claressa brings over a decade of nonprofit leadership experience, with a strong background in developing partnerships, fundraising, and community engagement.

Before joining the Ogden Nature Center, Claressa was the Operations Manager for the GOAL Foundation, where she organized over 70 mass participatory events, including the Ogden Marathon. Her significant volunteer efforts and leadership roles on various nonprofit boards in Weber County highlight her passion for community impact.

Her dedication to the environment and thoughtful planning support the Center's growth and conservation goals. Claressa is honored to contribute to a mission that resonates with her values.

## **Generosity Sustains our Mission**

The magic at the Ogden Nature Center continues to flourish, inspire and educate, all thanks to the incredible generosity of our community. This year has been extraordinary, with new partnerships and steadfast allies.

### **Birdhouse Competition and Exhibit**

Over 100 birdhouses were entered in this year's competition by artists from all over the top of Utah. We are always amazed by the creativity and variety of entries. Special thanks to the sponsors who so generously support this event year after year: Weber County R.A.M.P., Jeremiah's Restaurant, Ogden Blue, Wasatch Audubon Society, The Prairie Schooner, Ogden River Dental, IFA, Shepherd's Bush, Pat & Glen Richter, Jack & Jodi Livingood, and Robin & Brad Farr.

### **Fly With the Flock**

We extend heartfelt gratitude to the L.S. Peery Foundation and Intermountain Health for sponsoring our 20th annual Fly with the Flock Fun Run, a cherished event brought to life by the vision of the L.S. Peery Foundation. With these partners we are able to offer events and programs that foster wellness through nature!

### **Earth Day**

We are also excited to welcome Chromalox, whose generous support for Earth Day included financial contributions and a hands-on seed bomb activity that engaged our guests in nurturing native plants. Their dedication was clear as nearly 100 Chromalox employees joined our celebration, embodying the spirit of environmental stewardship. We also wish to thank Elliott-Hall Company, Ogden City Arts, Weber County R.A.M.P., Northrup Grumman, Grounds for Coffee, and artist Wendy Buehler.

### **Birds & Brews**

With nearly 300 attendees, this fun event was packed with delightful brews, captivating bird presentations, a little wind, and a lot of laughter. Guests enjoyed a variety of local beverages, competed in spirited trivia rounds, and met some

amazing live birds—all while supporting our mission. Thanks to the many volunteers, brewers, and attendees!

### **Summer Concert**

On August 8th we welcomed 400 people to our backyard glen for a lively summer concert by indie-folk duo Stefan & Kerrie Szabo as National Park Radio. Kerrie hand-drew an incredible rendition of our own American Kestrel Amos as a souvenir poster. All of this art, music, and nature had everyone swooning and swaying! Thanks to our long-time supporter, Joan Ahlf for ongoing contributions that make our summer concerts possible. Also, generous support was given by Mara Brown, Summit Sound Entertainment, Abby's Secondhand Style, KB Grants, Insightful Collaborations and Consulting, and Lovin' Cup Catering.

### **Wildwoods BASH**

The 2024 Wildwoods Bash dinner and auction fundraiser received tremendous boosts from Myers Mortuary and the Samuel C. and Diane P. Stewart Education Foundation, our presenting sponsors. Since 1941, Myers Mortuary has been a pillar of support in our community, and their involvement underscores their deep commitment to fostering connections between people and nature. The Samuel C. and Diane P. Stewart Education Foundation's contributions to arts and education resonate profoundly with our mission, and their support as we approach our 50th anniversary is invaluable. We also are incredibly grateful for support from Beaver Creek Foundation, Jack and Bonnie Wahlen, Angela Choberka, Dr. Rosemary Lesser, Dr. Harry Senekjian, and the MSL Foundation.

These partnerships, along with generous contributions of our long-term supporters, make the Ogden Nature Center a beacon of environmental stewardship and community engagement.

## **Thank You Mark Biddle**

We can't thank Mark Biddle enough for the hours of thought, skill, and talent he poured into creating our clean, colorful, and beautiful new branding.

About 30 years ago Mark and his wife Carol designed the Nature Center's "animal puzzle" tree logo, which served the Nature Center very well for nearly 3 decades! Over that time, printing, platforms, and color options have drastically changed, making the tree image limiting.

Mark's goal was to create an updated, full-color logo with a variety of versions, making our brand user-friendly across a variety of platforms. The new logo uses the iconic Great-horned Owl in a modern form and includes our well-loved lettering which retains years of visual collateral.

Additionally, Mark created a 50th Anniversary version of the logo which will be used on special pieces throughout 2025.

Our website is also brand new, with updated operating capabilities, an expanded menu for our ever-expanding nature education offerings, new pages for conservation and our resident animal ambassadors, and new registration platforms for booking field trips and classes online. Take a look at [www.ogdennaturecenter.org](http://www.ogdennaturecenter.org).





# Falling for Great Blue Herons

by Susan Snyder, Ogden naturalist, artist, writer

Fall is arguably one of the most spectacular times to stroll Ogden Nature Center's trails. The trees glow red, gold, orange and bright yellow under brilliant blue cloudless skies. With the Wasatch Mountains' peaks as a distant backdrop, it pretty much rivals the most beautiful picture postcards.

The wild avian dwellers begin to change in the fall, too. The Canada geese leave early, along with the Yellow Warblers, Western Tanagers, and Lazuli Buntings head south to Arizona or Mexico, while the Bullock's Orioles will be bound for Argentina. They are replaced by the Mountain Chickadees, White-crowned Sparrows, and Spotted Towhees that call ONC home for the winter.

However, not all species leave. One bird that can be seen pretty much year-round at ONC is the Great Blue Heron. But to spot one, you have to be sneaky. These tall, blue-gray sentries of the marshes and ponds blend in so well with their surroundings, that they are easily overlooked, but they are abundant.

The Great Blue Heron is the most widespread heron in North America and the one most commonly seen in Utah. During March and April, they build nests in colonies in treetops or on platforms in wetland areas. Males collect the sticks and other nesting materials for the females, who build the nests.

These large, long-legged birds hunt for amphibians and fish in shallow waters, which is what attracts them to Teal Pond and other water bodies at the Ogden Nature Center. They stand very still at the water's edge, and passersby often don't see them unless they move to strike at prey or lift into the sky.

In winter, Utah's Great Blue Herons stick around, hunching over small holes in the ice or the unfrozen edges of ponds and marshes. They are crepuscular, meaning most active in low light conditions of dawn or dusk. But move slowly near the ponds at the Nature Center, and you just might spot one, regardless of the time of day.

One other place you can surely find a Great Blue Heron this autumn is on this year's ONC Cup Hop coffee mugs. They're coming to a coffee shop near you in November and December. Check the calendar for details!



Photo by Jack Rensel

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