BCP PARTNER EDUCATION SUMMARY

FY 2019 Third Quarter: April 1 – June 30, 2019

City of Austin, Travis County, The Nature Conservancy, Travis Audubon, Westcave & Wild Basin

3rd Quarter: Outreach & Education (All Partners)

Activity	Location	Events	Youth	Adults	Volunteer Hours
Guided Hikes	Onsite	161	1,523	1,895	351
Programs / Presentations	Onsite	39	1,160	445	15
	Offsite	10	185	351	
Land Stewardship	Onsite	91	138	466	1,434
Ecological Monitoring	Onsite	73		107	1,440
Visiting Groups / Educators	Onsite	11		140	
Training	Onsite	1		32	
Administration	Onsite			1	11
April - June Total		**386**	**3,006**	**3,437**	**3,251**
Monetary value of volunteer work ($25.10/hour): **$81,600.10**					

SELF-GUIDED PUBLIC ACCESS (Estimated Annual Visitation)

These numbers are not included in the Outreach & Education chart above. They represent a sample of BCP areas with public access – we hope to include more complete visitation numbers in future reports.

Hamilton Pool (Travis County): 173,136
Wild Basin (St. Edward's Univ. & Travis County): 10,000+
Baker Sanctuary (Travis Audubon): 468
Westcave - BCP portion (LCRA): 6,840

3rd Quarter Highlights

CITY OF AUSTIN

- On the iconic Vireo tract of the Balcones Canyonlands Preserve, staff and volunteers hosted 26 habitat restoration workdays this quarter. And this is the slow season! During spring, Golden-cheeked Warbler surveys dominate BCP staff time, so biologists have scaled back from four days each week to Tuesdays and Sundays. These memorable community engagement opportunities are a great way to involve both brand new volunteers and long-time ambassadors of the BCP to learn about habitat and endangered species protection. The photo above is of a volunteer group planting trees at the BCP Vireo Preserve.

- The City Of Austin partnered with Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center to host a free community Nature Night event: Geology, Fossils, & Caves. City of Austin staff led cave tours for 290 people in La Crosse and Wildflower caves, teaching about the journey of water through the Edwards Aquifer and the impacted flora and fauna. The cave tours were extremely popular and those who didn't have the opportunity to explore a cave interacted with educational activities. The Nature Night coincided with Groundwater to the Gulf, a 3-day training for Central Texas educators to explore river, spring, and cave habitats to bring relevant Texas water cycle curricula back into their classrooms.

BAKER SANCTUARY (TRAVIS AUDUBON)

- Over the last several months, eight guided hikes were given to a variety of folks ranging from birding groups to Cub Scout troops to day camps such as the Carpe Diem School (pictured above). Baker also hosted the fourth grade class of Deer Creek Elementary for an end-of-the-year hike in May where several groups saw Golden-cheeked Warblers (GCWA) in all their finery.

- Five dedicated surveyors invested a great deal of time in the north Baker Sanctuary GCWA territory mapping effort this season. They endured the scratchy embrace of the Ashe Juniper, a variety of venomous snakes, and thousands of spider-webs in the face to gather the needed data. Without their help, the project would not have been possible.

- Volunteers also assisted with a clean-up effort on the Lime Creek Road right-of-way, braving thunderstorms all the while. Hundreds of beer cans, dozens of liquor bottles, many mylar balloons, copious fast food accouterments, and a good deal more flotsam (some best not named) were gathered and recycled when possible. We discovered the beer of choice for litterers is Busch Lite and their fast food affinities gravitate toward McDonalds.

TRAVIS COUNTY

- The Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at UT Austin hosted a six-week seminar about the Balcones Canyonlands Preserve for its members. In a series of weekly 90-minute presentations, BCP staff gave an in-depth look at the preserve, exploring the formation of the Balcones Canyonlands Conservation Plan, the research and monitoring of the preserve's protected species, and how the public can get involved. Organized by Travis County in partnership with the City of Austin, the seminar featured 18 speakers from the City and County, Wild Basin Wilderness Preserve, Westcave Outdoor Discovery Center, and Travis Audubon's Baker Sanctuary.

- It's been a great year for group volunteering. Pictured above are Target employees and interns who helped maintain the native plant gardens at Snowden House in June. We also worked with Generation Serve, employees from Millipore Sigma, Texas Conservation Corps, and a group of Westlake High School students, who all volunteered removing invasive plants.

- The Native Plant Society taught a day-long workshop at Snowden about landscaping for birds, which was attended by 28 people from around the state.

WILD BASIN WILDERNESS PRESERVE

- In May Wild Basin hosted a nature art workshop with 22 students from Linder Elementary, a Title I school in Austin ISD. Pictured above left, students made ink and brushes out of natural materials, and painted a natural cotton bag to take home with them.

- Wild Basin Land Stewards had two amazing groups volunteer time this quarter. Apiture, a local finance corporation, helped clean, clear and plant the native plant gardens and pull invasive plants from around our parking lot. And Honor Society students from the Liberal Arts and Science Academy in Austin ISD (above right) pulled eight bags worth of Beggar's Ticks from our parking lot area.

- In April Wild Basin conducted a Trail Guide Training workshop. Six new volunteer trail guides were trained in natural science interpretation, techniques for working with school groups, as well as learning the basics of the Bee Creek watershed, and the plants, animals, geology of the preserve.

- Wild Basin welcomed artist and assistant professor of art at Texas State, Bethany Johnson, as our Spring Artist in Residence. Johnson is based in Austin and her art explores the intersection between art and science. She hosted two children's art workshops and worked on site weekly.

WESTCAVE PRESERVE

- On April 25th Westcave discovered a large Chinquapin Oak (*Quercus muehlenbergii*) had fallen in the canyon across our main tour trail. This caused for some creative removal so we could safely pass but also interpret what had occurred to our guests. They Might Be Monkeys Texas Tree & Land Company (pictured above) did an amazing job clearing the trail. A "tree cookie" was sent to the UT Austin Jackson School of Geoscience where it was aged to have been 180-200 years old. It is fun to share with guests and have them think about the acorn starting to grow when Westcave was a part of Spanish Territory (1819), newly independent Mexico (1829) or even the Republic of Texas (1839).

- In other news: our executive director, Molly Stevens, retired June 28th and our new director Trevor Hance started July 1st.

ACTIVITY DEFINITIONS

Guided Hikes
Hikes on the BCP guided by staff or volunteers; includes education about the BCP, wildlife, and land management practices.

Programs / Presentations
Presentations by staff or volunteers about the BCP and related scientific and land management topics; includes educational events and programs.

Land Stewardship
Volunteer work on the BCP that includes removing invasive species, preparing for prescribed burns, creating fuel breaks, restoring habitat, patrolling, and maintenance of grounds, trails & facilities.

Ecological Monitoring
Includes surveys of endangered species, vegetation, and nuisance species such as cowbirds, hogs and red imported fire ants.

Campouts
Campouts on the BCP, usually organized by outside groups such as the Boy Scouts.

Visiting Groups / Educators
Groups visiting or hosting an event on the BCP that was not organized by BCP staff.

Administrative Help
Volunteer help with administrative work such as office work, research, and event coordination.

Training
Volunteer training & other trainings that support the BCCP's mission. Examples include educating emergency response and infrastructure maintenance staff about protecting sensitive environmental features and complying with clearing restrictions.