



BCP PARTNER EDUCATION SUMMARY

FY 2019 Second Quarter: January 1 - March 31, 2019

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

2nd Quarter: Outreach & Education (All Partners)

Activity	Location	Events	Youth	Adults	Volunteer Hours
Guided Hikes	Onsite	141	1,685	885	381.25
Programs / Presentations	Onsite	34	953	273	19.5
	Offsite	8	1,800	1,771	136
Land Stewardship	Onsite	102	114	499	1,876.25
Ecological Monitoring	Onsite	111	33	170	446.5
Visiting Groups / Educators	Onsite	8	82	251	
Campouts	Onsite	1	28	14	
Training	Onsite	12		203	902
Jan - Mar Total		417	4,695	4,066	3,761.5

Monetary value of volunteer work (\$24.64/hour): **\$92,683.36**

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



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2nd Quarter Highlights

CITY OF AUSTIN



- The City of Austin hosted 11 volunteer trainings this quarter, including field and classroom trainings for new hike guides and land steward leaders, cave guides, and Golden-cheeked Warbler re-sighters, as well as two continuing education workshops. The photo on the left above is of a training about mushrooms for BCP volunteers. Through these trainings, the City extended its capacity to monitor warblers, share the BCP's message, support habitat, and build community around the BCP.
- The City continued to promote cave stewardship and public understanding of karst species and habitat through outreach events with partners and the public. 120 firefighters across 27 Austin Fire Department units attended cave rescue practice at Midnight Cave to practice skills and receive a brief overview of karst habitat from BCP staff. Austin Cave Festival was attended by more than 3,300 people, making it the largest event at the Wildflower Center to date. BCP and partner staff led 389 people on cave tours, pictured above right. Thousands more learned about karst species and habitat through the interactive CaveSim exhibit, virtual reality cave tours, puppet shows, and educational activity booths.



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BAKER SANCTUARY (TRAVIS AUDUBON)



- In February, Baker Sanctuary hosted the annual Great Backyard Bird Count, which was attended by 20 adults and 33 children from the Leander/Cedar Park area (pictured above). Attendees were split into four groups based on age and family units and were guided by Travis Audubon volunteers as they diligently birded four of the trails at the Sanctuary. A total of 15 species and 516 individual birds were observed over the two-hour effort with the highlight being the multitudes of American robins chattering about.
- Also in February, the Sanctuary Steward led a hike for six Leander ISD (LISD) science curriculum vertical team staff members (K - high school). The hike was to familiarize the educators with Baker Sanctuary and to facilitate discussion on possible ways to incorporate the Sanctuary into curriculum. A follow-up meeting will occur in the near future to further refine ideas.
- In March, the Sanctuary Steward gave an Ecology presentation to the fourth grade class of C.C. Mason Elementary (LISD). The 130 students and five teachers heard about Texas Hill Country ecology, the BCP, golden-cheeked warblers, black-capped vireos, and karst invertebrates.



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TRAVIS COUNTY



- This spring, a number of corporate and community groups came out to the preserve to help pull invasive plants, and be led on educational guided hikes. Pictured above is a group of families who came out to pull vinca with Generation Serve, a local nonprofit that partners with organizations and agencies to provide volunteer opportunities for kids and families. Travis County BCP was also lucky to have groups from American Conservation Experience, Millipore Sigma, The Arc of Texas, and a group of Peace Corps Alumnae volunteer pulling invasive plants on the preserve this spring. In total, they contributed more than 400 hours removing invasive plants!
- On March 29, County BCP partnered with County Parks to host a volunteer-appreciation pot luck and star party at Milton Reimers Ranch Park. After an evening pot luck under the pavilion, Park Supervisor Michael Brewster led an educational astronomy presentation at the Reimers Observatory under a clear, star-filled sky, which was enjoyed by all.



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WILD BASIN WILDERNESS PRESERVE



- Wild Basin gave guided hikes to over 220 students from seven schools, including several Title I schools, as pictured to the left above. Grant funding allowed them to offer transportation assistance to low-income and other schools that have never visited the preserve. Brandon Eckert of Connally High School said, "It was great to get our Environmental Science classes outside. This was a new experience for them, many have never been on a hike before."
- Wild Basin hosted "Wild by Wild Basin," a week of special educational events, guided hikes, and a Family Fun Day when visitors enjoyed live music from Bill Oliver and The Otter Space Band, participated in family activities hosted by local non-profits, and took family portraits with native wildlife masks (see above right). Family Fun Day attracted around 150 visitors over three hours.



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WESTCAVE PRESERVE



- In late February and early March, Westcave hosted the Girls Outside program (pictured above left), which partners with 10 AISD schools: two high schools, two middle schools and five elementary schools. Girls Outside teaches students about watersheds using the Pedernales River, helps them experience nature in new ways, and builds mentor/mentee relationships, exposing these young women to outdoor career options. 191 students attended and all of them were transported in Westcave's Roadrunner Outdoor Adventure Bus.
- Above to the right is a photo of the much-anticipated new bird blind under construction.
- Youth workdays were held, which involved Lake Travis Middle School and Dripping Springs High School students working on non-native Malta star-thistle removal.
- A weather station was recently installed in the uplands section of Westcave Preserve by Barton Springs Edwards Aquifer Conservation District and donated by Travis County. The station will constantly measure air temperature, rainfall, relative humidity, soil moisture, wind direction and speed, solar radiation, and barometric pressure. For current weather visit:
<https://dashboard.hobolink.com/public/6567/Westcave%20Preserve-03-29-2019%0021:56:20#/>



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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.