

City of Austin's BCCP Activities
Quarter 3 Update: 1 April – 30 June 2019

BCCP Administration	
Infrastructure Projects	Fourteen Infrastructure Habitat Assessment Applications were processed, and Determination Letters were issued from April - June 2019.
Land Acquisition /Management Agreements	AW BCP is currently negotiating a management agreement with Texas Cave Management Association for management of two BCP permit caves. Also drafting management agreements with PARD maintenance operations and LBJ Wildflower Center. BCP is continuing to work toward acquisition of Carol Lee Preserve, working through fence planning with TxDOT and site owners.
Reports and Events	Staff submitted final edits to Southwestern Naturalist for note documenting GCWA nest predation by Blue Jays.
	Staff attended an introductory meeting with the new Austin city manager and showed him a GCWA on a walk around the Reicher Ranch grounds.
	Staff gave a series of in-depth presentations about aspects of the Preserve for the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at the University of Texas.
	Colin Strickland and Drew Thompson gave cave presentations at the National Speleological Society Convention.
Personnel	Megan Kreuger with BCP community outreach in June, and will work on creating web outreach.
	Tyler Lacina joined CoA WCD Ranger staff on May 27; part of his duties will be to patrol CoA BCP boundaries.
Administrative	None
Rare and Endangered Resources Management	
Golden-cheeked Warbler (GCWA) and Black-capped Vireo (BCVI)	Golden-cheeked Warbler Delisting – The February 7, 2019 court ruling that upheld USFWS's decision on the 90-day finding (so the GCWA remains on the endangered species list) has been appealed; USFWS filed an answering brief on June 21, 2019.
	Conducted Black-capped Vireo and Golden-cheeked Warbler surveys.
	In collaboration with Texas A&M University, collected DNA samples to assess genetic structure of GCWA populations across its breeding range.
Jollyville Plateau Salamander	BCP continues to locate and conduct flow measurement, aquatic life surveys, and water-quality sampling of springs across the BCP on a periodic basis in hopes of locating new salamander locations.
	Assisted Travis County BCP and WPD with JPS surveys.
Karst invertebrates/ karst work	The Blowing Sink Research Management Area containing one of the largest BCCP permit caves was renamed William H Russell Karst Preserve in honor of esteemed cave explorer who passed away March 21, 2019. A City Council proclamation gave directives relating to establishment of the preserve and promoting cave restoration city wide.
	Conducted cave faunal surveys and cave cricket exit counts (ongoing).
	Continued Collaboration Cave excavation at BCNWR.

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Bracted Twistflower	Conducted Bracted Twistflower surveys in April and May. 2019 showed record numbers of plants, as was expected based on a 2018 analysis and internal report which showed correlation between fall/winter rain and high numbers of plants the following spring.
Plant and Animal Control	
Mammals	38 hogs were removed by contractors and City staff this quarter.
Red-imported fire ants and Tawny crazy ants	Boiled RIFA mounds around permit cave entrances.
	Tawny crazy ants continue to be monitored per established protocol from Section 6 grant.
Soft ticks/ Relapsing Fever	AW BCP staff continue to monitor caves in the Austin area for soft ticks to improve public safety and study means for discouraging their habitation of caves. AW BCP staff continue to work with Texas State University, Baylor College of Medicine, Austin Health Department, and Center for Disease Control to study factors influencing habitat preference of soft ticks in the Austin area.
	AW BCP staff continue to monitor Bullet Cave on the Barton Creek greenbelt and Live Oak Cave in the Village of Western Oaks Karst Preserve and Watershed Management Area to make certain that the warning signs and gate (on live oak cave) are still in place. A chain with warning signs was placed in the entrance crawl of Bullet Cave.
Invasive Plants	BCP staff and volunteers are continuing efforts to remove non-native plants on COA BCP tracts. An exotic plant mapping and removal contract was awarded to Zarria Environmental. The contract was awarded through a forestry grant from the Office of Development.
Land Stewardship	
Habitat Restoration	Staff and volunteers continue to implement demonstration projects at the Vireo Preserve to promote water retention, slope stabilization, soil restoration, and regeneration of native plants on degraded areas that are currently not habitat for either the GCWA or BCVI. Since Vireo Preserve supports many of the habitat types observed throughout the BCP, lessons learned from restoration work at this site are applicable to other areas within the BCP. Staff are also now expanding these efforts to other BCP preserves.
Fencing	The gate to the fence surrounding Goat Cave was cut on June 12 th . BCP staff patched the hole immediately and checked for damage to the cave.
	Staff continued to coordinate with Parks & Recreation Dept. rangers to address vandalism to fences around dual-managed properties.
Wildfire Preparedness	No current projects during bird season. Planning for fall projects.
Law Enforcement	
Trespass and Criminal Mischief	Staff again found signs of trespass on the southern Cortaña tract; Rangers began investigating. A gate whose chain had been cut repeatedly remains cabled shut to prevent further vandalism and trespass.

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Outreach/Volunteers

See BCP Partners Education Summary April – June 2019.