



# BCP PARTNER EDUCATION SUMMARY

FY 2020 First Quarter: October 1 – December 31, 2019

City of Austin, Travis County, The Nature Conservancy, Westcave Preserve, Wild Basin Preserve  
Travis Audubon's Baker Sanctuary & Concordia University Texas

## 1st Quarter: Outreach & Education (All Partners)

Activity	Location	Events	Youth	Adults	Volunteer Hours
Guided Hikes	Onsite	163	453	2,151	253.5
Programs / Presentations	Onsite	55	1,127	315	8
	Offsite	12	390	719	31
Land Stewardship	Onsite	110	50	477	1,859
Ecological Monitoring	Onsite	49		163	244
Visiting Groups / Educators	Onsite	28		402	2
Campouts	Onsite	3	45	34	
Training	Onsite	3		65	
<b>Oct-Dec Total</b>		<b>423</b>	<b>2,065</b>	<b>4,326</b>	<b>2,397.5</b>

Monetary value of volunteer work (\$25.10/hour): \$60,177.25

## 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): 100,000+

Wild Basin (St. Edward's Univ. & Travis County): 37,727

Baker Sanctuary (Travis Audubon): 724

Westcave (LCRA): 6,500+



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## 1st Quarter Highlights

### CITY OF AUSTIN



- The City Of Austin's Vireo Preserve is being transformed into a rainwater retaining landscape of berms and bioswales. This quarter, volunteers spent over 600 hours on the preserve improving the health, viability, and diversity of its ecosystems, borrowing techniques and designs from permaculture, forest gardening, natural farming, as well as traditional land management methods. Since the installation of the bioswales, volunteers have planted 144 trees.
- In November, we recognized the impact of our City of Austin volunteers at our annual Volunteer Appreciation Event (pictured above). We celebrated the dozens of knowledgeable and dedicated people who lead our hikes, steward our lands, and promote the message of the Balcones Canyonlands Preserve. Guest speaker Bill Wren from McDonald Observatory gave a compelling keynote speech on dark skies and conservation. A great way to end a productive year!



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## BAKER SANCTUARY (TRAVIS AUDUBON)



- Ryan Poulsen, with support from Troop 271, began construction on a new trailhead kiosk for his Eagle Scout project. When completed in January, the kiosk will feature several trail and informative signs as well as a sign-in station for visiting hikers. More remarkably, somehow they managed to hit only one rock while digging the six post holes. Beginner's luck?
- The Baker steward visited Deer Creek and Westside elementary schools (Leander ISD) to regale the fourth grade classes on the natural wonders to be found on the Edward's Plateau. The students learned about the Golden-cheeked Warbler, Jollyville Plateau Salamander, non-native invasive plants, how to identify native birds by song, karst food webs, and even the decidedly un-charismatic endangered karst invertebrates.
- Once again the Baker Sanctuary volunteer squad took to the woods to disentangle old barbed wire fencing from the interior of the southern preserve. The good news is no one contracted tetanus; the bad news is there are many more miles of fencing lurking deep in the forest.



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## TRAVIS COUNTY



- County BCP staff and partners led ten guided hikes this fall, including one with the local chapter of Outdoor Afro (pictured above) on the BCP tract at Concordia University Texas. The hike was led by Concordia's Director of Environmental Stewardship Zach Stark and Travis County Natural Resources Community Liaison Johanna Arendt.
- The Native Plant Society taught their second day-long workshop at Snowden about landscaping for birds, which was attended by 29 people from around the state.
- A senior high school class from Jarrell High School visited the preserve to volunteer removing invasive plants, go on an educational nature hike, and learn about the preserve. After their morning with Travis County BCP staff, they meet up with City of Austin BCP staff for a cave tour before heading back to their high school in Jarrell.



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## WILD BASIN WILDERNESS PRESERVE



- Wild Basin continued with the wildlife camera projects through the fall: a perimeter study and a trail study. Both of these projects have provided valuable information about the wildlife within the preserve and how they utilize these areas. Two fall plant surveys were conducted by botanist Carol Todzia, as well as an e-bird survey led by Terri Siegenthaler and Alan Seils.
- In October, Wild Basin hosted a combination educator's and facilitator's workshop for the nationally-recognized environmental education program, Project Learning Tree (pictured above). Wild Basin partnered with staff from the Texas Forest Service, Sam Houston State University, and the City of Austin to host this training at Wild Basin.
- Wild Basin hosted Star Walk events led by REI, as well as a Full Moon Yoga Hike. In November, the fall Artist in Residence led a nature art workshop where participants created cyanotype nature prints.
- Wild Basin involved new groups in land stewardship with new Public Stewardship work days and St. Edward's University work days. These groups as well as the long-standing Thursday volunteer Land Steward group and student interns continued trail trimming and maintenance, fire wise trimming, trail counters, trash removal, trail patrol, garden maintenance, and invasive removal.



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## WESTCAVE PRESERVE



- Westcave hosted the second annual Thankful for Nature Days (T4ND) during the week of Thanksgiving (pictured above). Canyon tours, archery, crafts, and a golden turkey hunt were included in the festivities. Staff provided coverage for activities and at the welcome desk so additional tours were able to be provided.
- In December the holiday party honored our volunteers who donated 2,107 hours of their time in 2019.



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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.