



BCP PARTNER EDUCATION SUMMARY

FY 2021 First Quarter: October 1 – December 31, 2020

City of Austin, Travis County, The Nature Conservancy, Westcave Preserve, Wild Basin Preserve, and Travis Audubon's Baker Sanctuary

1st Quarter: Outreach & Education (All Partners)

Activity	Location	Events	Youth*	Adults*	Volunteer Hours
Guided Hikes	Onsite	218	212	1459	48
Programs / Presentations	Offsite	8	350	330	
	Onsite	8	300	28	14
Land Stewardship	Onsite	119	0	64	633.5
Ecological Monitoring	Onsite	17	0	13	66
Training	Offsite	5	0	214	
October-December Total		375	862	2,108	761.5

Monetary value of volunteer work (\$25.10/hour): \$19,113.65

*Numbers indicate total participation during events not unique individuals

SELF-GUIDED PUBLIC ACCESS

Many of the publicly accessible areas of the preserve closed in March to help prevent the spread of COVID-19. These included Hamilton Pool Preserve and Wild Basin Wilderness Preserve. Both locations have re-opened for self-guided hiking with limited capacity, hours, and extended COVID safety protocols. Swimming continues to be closed at Hamilton Pool.



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CITY OF AUSTIN

BALCONES CANYONLANDS PRESERVE
FOREST RESTORATION TRAINING SERIES

OCTOBER 5 - INTRO & HISTORICAL ECOLOGY
OCTOBER 19 - WOODY PLANTS
NOVEMBER 2 - TREE PLANTING
NOVEMBER 16 - NON-NATIVE TREE ID & REMOVAL
DECEMBER 7 - REHYDRATION OF THE LANDSCAPE
JANUARY 11 - SOIL BIOLOGY & GEOLOGY
JANUARY 25 - INCORPORATING MUSHROOMS INTO RESTORATION

Join our e-newsletter to receive details and registration links in advance of each webinar at [Austintexas.gov/WildlandEvents](https://www.austintexas.gov/WildlandEvents)

AUSTIN WATER UTILITY THE NATURE CONSERVANCY BALCONES CANYONLANDS PRESERVE

- This season was marked by adaptability from volunteers and staff. We began with masked, distanced workdays of ten people, then five. Then we switched to having volunteers work only with others from their household following health authorities' recommendations.
- And yet, newfound interest in the Preserve emerged as the Forest Restoration and City/County Wild Neighbors webinar audiences grew. Even from home, we're sharing best practices and building a community of volunteers to join us in enhancing and restoring functional ecosystems from the ground up. <https://bit.ly/bcpForestRestoration>
- We also introduced the Women of the Wildlands series – a collection of interviews and posts that illustrate how women have contributed to securing habitat, determined how aquifer flow conditions affect the life cycle of salamanders, and helped shape policy and management for the protection of species. This season saw interviews with biologist Laurel Moulton (above right), local geologist Sylvia Pope, and a feature on the Wild Basin founders.



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BAKER SANCTUARY (TRAVIS AUDUBON)



- With regard to education and outreach, nothing very interesting occurred this quarter at Baker Sanctuary, thanks to the global pandemic. However, a Zoom presentation was given to three LISD 4th grade classes, composed of approximately 350 very lucky students and their teachers.

The presentation covered central Texas ecology with an emphasis on the Golden-cheeked Warbler. Many good questions were fielded after the presentation, including which bird was my favorite, and, for those who are wondering, it is the American Robin. Who can resist that sassy bird?



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TRAVIS COUNTY



- The Wild Neighbors monthly webinar series continued this quarter in partnership with the City of Austin. Guest speakers discussed Dark Skies, Backyard Habitat, and Backyard Birds, and answered many attendees' questions. Recordings of the talks are available on the County BCP and City Wildlands Facebook pages, YouTube, and the Travis County website (<https://www.traviscountytx.gov/tnr/nr/videos>).
- In October and November, small groups of volunteers helped remove invasive vinca from a restoration area on the Bunten tract (pictured).
- While the majority of our volunteer activities continued to be suspended this quarter to help reduce the spread of COVID-19, we continued to work with a handful of volunteers helping with essential activities including patrol and Snowden garden maintenance. All volunteers worked outside and practiced social distancing and masking protocols.



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WILD BASIN



- Wild Basin programs for fall included Science Live! at Wild Basin, a live science webcast program for middle grades as well as a virtual science and literacy program series for early elementary grades, called Reading in the Wild in partnership with Austin ISD. All programs are free and available online on demand to all schools and families at this time.
- Land stewardship activities included trail maintenance on Thursday workdays, trail patrol, signage, invasive plant removal on Saturdays, trash cleanup, and a perimeter survey.
- Ecological monitoring included plant surveys, acoustic monitoring, and photo surveys.



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WESTCAVE PRESERVE



- Westcave continues to operate in a limited capacity, offering private-hike experiences to our members and small-group, socially distanced hikes to the general public.
- In October, Westcave's "Howl-oween Hikes" gave members and guests a chance to night hike in our Uplands during one of the two full moons (Harvest and Hunter).
- November brought a native grass workshop and hikes with "Birdability" (dedicated to improving opportunities for mobility impaired persons to get out and bird) and Travis Audubon's "Introduction to Birding" field-experience to Westcave Preserve.
- In December, Westcave managed its zone in the annual Christmas Bird Count, adding several new tracts to this year's CBC.



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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.