



BCP PARTNER EDUCATION SUMMARY

FY 2021 Second Quarter: January 1 – March 31, 2021

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

2nd Quarter: Outreach & Education (All Partners)

Activity	Location	Events	Youth*	Adults*	Volunteer Hours
Guided Hikes	Onsite	221	515	1709	19.75
Programs / Presentations	Offsite	10	101	277	
	Onsite	4		13	5
Land Stewardship	Onsite	92	35	116	666.5
Ecological Monitoring	Onsite	46	0	68	387
Training	Offsite	2	0	158	
January-March Total		375	651	2,341	1,078.25

Monetary value of volunteer work (\$25.10/hour): \$27,064.08

*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



- In January, we completed our virtual BCP Forest Restoration training series. 210 people joined us across 7 webinars to learn about the BCP and forest restoration concepts, including tree identification and care, invasive species removal, soil biology, and mycology. A few webinar attendees who had not volunteered on the BCP before have already come out to practice what they learned as volunteers on the Vireo Preserve. Episodes can be viewed on the Austin Water Wildland Conservation YouTube channel.
- Golden-cheeked Warbler resighting volunteers were eager to return to survey warblers this spring after an interrupted season in 2020. 65 volunteers are helping biologists monitor warbler populations across City and County BCP properties from March 21-May 25 (photo above by volunteer Lori Malloy).
- We've continued to engage people through our social media channels. We featured a new series called "Plant This, Not That" to share native alternatives to popular invasive landscape plants, and returned with our #WarblerWednesday series to share information and raise awareness about Golden-cheeked Warblers.



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BAKER SANCTUARY (TRAVIS AUDUBON)

Baker Sanctuary hosted two Eagle Scout projects over the last several months. The first was led by Nicholas Wang who installed two trail benches with the help of Troop 70.

The second was led by Carter Corley who erected a Chimney Swift Tower with the help of Troop 202 (pictured right). Many thanks to the Boy Scouts and their willingness to perform heavy labor in masks!



Beginning on March 17, volunteers began to brave the ice-storm ravaged North Valley to survey for the ever elusive Golden-cheeked Warbler. This will be the first season this area has been formally surveyed utilizing color-banded individuals. Survey efforts will continue on a weekly basis through mid-June.

Finally, a total of four Zoom presentations were given to the students of St. Michael's Catholic Academy, St. Edward's University, Ann Richard's School, as well as the membership of Travis Audubon. Presentations covered the natural history of the Golden-cheeked Warbler, habitat management, non-native invasive plants, and the Blair Woods Sanctuary.



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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 the Natural History of Armadillos and Animal Tracks & Signs with 193 attendees. Recordings of the talk are available on the County BCP and City Wildlands Facebook pages, YouTube, and the Travis County website (<https://www.traviscountytexas.gov/tnr/nr/videos>).
- In February and March, volunteers spent numerous hours maintaining outreach trails around the preserve after the winter storms and removing invasive vinca (pictured left).
- Ames Nicolas built for building a new 8 ft chimney swift tower at the Snowden Tract for his Eagle Scout project (pictured right). It was a great success and we look forward to the swifts' return.
- Finally, we gave three virtual BCP 101 Presentations to area high schools. A total of 71 students from Jarrell, Stoney Point, and Hendrickson High Schools participated.



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WILD BASIN



- Preserve stewardship volunteers rallied in late February to clean up many downed limbs and trees after the unprecedented snow and ice (pictured right). Other activities included trail maintenance on Thursday workdays, trail patrol, signage repair, invasive plant removal on Saturdays, trash cleanup, and a perimeter survey.
- Wild Basin programs for early spring include 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.
- Student interns worked on a plant survey project this semester (pictured left). Other ecological monitoring included continuing research projects with photo points and acoustic monitoring.



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WESTCAVE PRESERVE



Westcave, like so many others, weathered the snow-apocalypse of February in stride. The preserve was closed for many days in a row due to icy roads and very hazardous conditions. Once staff was able to brave the roads they were treated to unreal icicles and 'cave-cicles' like none have ever seen. Some icicles were well over 30 feet long.





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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.