

**Lower Colorado River Authority (LCRA) Balcones Canyonlands Preserve (BCP)
Updates for McGregor and Westcave Preserves**

**Q3 Report
April - June 2021**

McGregor Preserve

LCRA's McGregor Good Neighbor Program permits expired on May 12, 2021. These permits allow trained residents of the neighboring Comanche Trail Community Association (CTCA) to hike the preserve on designated trails. In April 2021, LCRA updated the language of the required permits and reached out to the CTCA about training. Unfortunately, CTCA was not ready to meet in May as requested. However, LCRA is continuing to work with CTCA to find a date by late summer/early fall to offer the training and issue new permits.

Westcave Preserve Land Management Activities

In 2019, Westcave collaborated with Travis County Natural Resources to conduct the first cave faunal survey since the late 1960's. During the survey certain specimens were collected for identification. In April 2021, the endangered, Bee Creek Cave Harvestman (*Texella reddelli*) was identified from the 2019 collection. A second cave faunal survey was conducted in June of 2021. Westcave erected barricades to lessen the impacts from public tours near the cave. Future protection plans include habitat restoration, research, and monitoring.

Two workdays were held during this quarter. Volunteers weeded butterfly gardens, worked on trails, and trimmed vegetation in parking lot areas.

Preserve maintenance is on-going and includes trail inspections, trail work, bird blind maintenance, boundary inspections, and boundary maintenance.

Research consisted of the following:

1. Ongoing, monthly Pond (Dragonfly) Watch (Xerxes Society-Citizen Scientist program) surveys were conducted by a core group of volunteers.
2. Monthly water sampling was conducted to check water quality at the Grotto and at Hammetts Crossing. Results were reported to LCRA.
3. FeederWatch (Cornell Lab of Ornithology citizen science program) began in November 2020 and consists of bi-weekly bird surveys conducted by a core group of volunteers.
4. Nestwatch (Cornell Lab of Ornithology, Citizen science program) weekly surveys conducted by staff conservation employees began in March and ended in late June.
5. Frogwatch (Association of Zoos & Aquariums) which began in April, consists of weekly, ongoing surveys conducted by staff conservation employees and willing volunteers.
6. Golden-cheeked Warbler (GCWA) surveys concluded on June 15. One male GCWA was banded and two banded males from previous seasons returned. Three territories were identified and two of the territories had successful fledglings.
7. Cave faunal surveys were conducted in collaboration with Travis County Natural Resources as mentioned above.

Westcave held multiple programs during this quarter consisting of two plant walks, two bird hikes, and one photography workshop.