

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

**Q1 Report
October – December 2021**

McGregor Preserve

LCRA continues to work with the Comanche Trail Community Association (CTCA) to provide training for the McGregor Good Neighbor Program. The CTCA is in the process of electing a new president, which has delayed training. Once residents interested in hiking the trails are trained, LCRA can issue new and renewed permits.

Westcave Preserve Land Management Activities

A neighbor of the preserve donated several native trees, shrubs and perennials for a new butterfly garden and walkway at the entrance of Leif Bird Blind. Staff cleared and prepared the areas to install the garden. Three volunteer workdays were held to move soil and plant gardens.

Staff met with Travis County Parks and Hill Country Alliance to discuss and start the process of making Westcave a Dark Sky Night Park.

A Summer 2022 burn is in the planning stages with Travis County Parks, who has agreed to lead the burn. Staff is maintaining fire lines and harvesting native grass seeds for dispersal after the burn.

A Texas Barberry vegetation survey was completed. Surveys are meant to monitor the health and growth of this endemic plant and are conducted every four years.

Preserve maintenance is on-going and includes trail inspections, trail work, bird blind maintenance, boundary inspections, boundary maintenance, and butterfly garden upkeep

Programs conducted included a plant walk, six bird hikes, and a full moon hike.

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 Hammett's Crossing. Results were reported to LCRA.
3. Feeder Watch (Cornell Lab of Ornithology citizen science program) started in November 2021 and consists of a core group of volunteers conducting ongoing, bi-weekly bird surveys.