

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

**Q3 Report  
April - June 2022**

**McGregor Preserve**

LCRA provided training to the Comanche Trail Community Association (CTCA) for the McGregor Good Neighbor Program. Training occurred at the CTCA Annual Meeting on April 12, 2022. LCRA issued/renewed twenty-seven (27) permits for those residents that attended the training and signed the “McGregor Good Neighbor Program Permit.” The permit allows residents to hike on the designated trails within the preserve following the permit conditions.

**Westcave Preserve Land Management Activities**

Staff and volunteer efforts continue to water and fertilize planted trees and gardens throughout the summer.

The summer 2022 prescribed burn was postponed and rescheduled for September. Staff is still maintaining fire lines along the Uplands.

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

Staff is still collecting data for Night Sky Quality readings. The application for Westcave to become a Dark Sky Park is nearly complete with only a few items missing including data.

Non-native plant removal was conducted in the canyon.

Game cameras were installed in the canyon, off trail, to detect the presence/absence of non-native animals. Eight Axis deer were detected.

An aerial feeding station was installed at Murphy’s Bird Blind.

Programs conducted at the preserve included three bird hikes.

Research consisted of the following:

- 1) Internal Golden-cheeked Warbler (GCWA) surveys involving sighting and resighting started in mid-March 2022. Three territories were identified at the preserve. A GCWA named “Pinky” (banded Red/Silver and Pink/Pink) has officially returned for a third year since banded in 2019. An additional male was banded this season. Three brown-headed cowbirds were dispatched on property.
- 2) Monthly water sampling was conducted to check water quality at Heinz Branch. Results were reported to LCRA.
- 3) Feeder Watch (Cornell Lab of Ornithology citizen science program) started in November 2021 and is ongoing. A core group of volunteers continues to conduct weekly surveys.
- 4) Weekly to biweekly nest checks were made by staff and interns as part of NestWatch (Cornell Lab of Ornithology Citizen Science Program).

- 5) Volunteers conducted bi-weekly Dragonfly watch as part of the Migratory Dragonfly Partnership Citizen Science Program.
- 6) Staff collected population data and trends with Harvester Ants on the preserve.