



# BCP PARTNER EDUCATION SUMMARY

FY 2023 Third Quarter (April– June) & Fourth Quarter (July- September)

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

## 3rd Quarter: Outreach & Education (All Partners)

Activity	Location	Events	Youth*	Adults*	Volunteer Hours
Guided Hikes	Onsite	233	1974	3531	318
Programs / Presentations	Offsite	12	113	564	0
	Onsite	17	248	494	3
Visiting Group/Educators	Onsite	16	33	198	0
Land Stewardship	Onsite	124	53	596	2015.75
Ecological Monitoring	Onsite	123	29	164	1219.50
Administration	Onsite	2	0	2	5
Training	Onsite	1	1	3	0
Campouts	Onsite	3	59	32	0
<b>April-June Total</b>		<b>531</b>	<b>2510</b>	<b>5584</b>	<b>3561.25</b>

Monetary value of volunteer work (\$31.80/hour): \$113,247.75

\*Numbers indicate total participation during events not unique individuals

## SELF-GUIDED PUBLIC ACCESS (Estimated Annual Visitation)

*These numbers are not included in the Outreach & Education chart above. They represent a sample of BCP areas with public access – we hope to include more complete visitation numbers in future reports.*

Hamilton Pool: 30,000+

Wild Basin Wilderness Preserve: 8,906

Baker Sanctuary: 558



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## 4th Quarter: Outreach & Education (All Partners)

Activity	Location	Events	Youth*	Adults*	Volunteer Hours
Guided Hikes	Onsite	183	630	3269	142.5
Programs / Presentations	Offsite	7	355	855	12
	Onsite	3	5	61	0
Visiting Group/Educators	Onsite	10	0	86	0
Land Stewardship	Onsite	107	25	536	1258.50
Ecological Monitoring	Onsite	28	0	43	94.50
Administration	Onsite	1	0	3	6
Training	Onsite	1	0	4	24
<b>July-September Total</b>		<b>340</b>	<b>1015</b>	<b>4857</b>	<b>1537.5</b>

Monetary value of volunteer work (\$31.80/hour): \$48,892.50

\*Numbers indicate total participation during events not unique individuals

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## CITY OF AUSTIN



- 70 Golden-cheeked Warbler resighting volunteers dedicated more than 1,200 hours to monitoring endangered warblers on Travis County and City of Austin BCP properties this nesting season (March – May).
- Volunteers continued forest restoration projects at Vireo Preserve, maintaining a plant nursery of over 1,000 natives, and watering plantings through the summer months. They built rock rundowns to reduce erosion and used branches from storm damage to build berms on contour. Logs were inoculated with Reishi and Turkey tail mycelium to encourage decomposition.
- Jim O'Donnell and volunteers continued restoration work in the mile of berms and swales that have been planted with over 2,000 trees at JJ&T. Hundreds of natives were watered to survive the harsh summer months while becoming established. Volunteers used a variety of techniques to slow, spread, and sink water on the landscape.
- Thirteen volunteers contributed over 50 hours alongside Wildlands staff to help survey one of the rare plant species of the preserve, *Streptanthus bracteatus*. These surveys took us off trail on steep, rocky terrain in Mt. Bonnell and Barton Creek Greenbelt.



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## BAKER SANCTUARY (TRAVIS AUDUBON)



- A total of eight guided hikes were undertaken by Boy Scouts, wayward souls from Illinois, and industrious Sierra Club members. While only half the Sanctuary is currently open due to a massive amount of ice storm damage, the hikers universally expressed their wonder and amazement of the Texas Hill Country and its colorful denizens.
- In addition to the hikes, the annual Baker Nature Day was a success with its nature-based crafts, guided hikes in search of the ever elusive Golden-cheeked Warbler, and the wildly popular, and slightly menacing, Raptor Show (pictured left).
- Many thanks to Bryce Gilley (Troop 234), Hayden Snow (Troop 271), and Ben Hubert (Troop 70), whose combined Eagle Scout prowess yielded an additional four trail benches and a sign kiosk for the Sanctuary (pictured right)!
- Last but certainly not least, the entire 4<sup>th</sup> grade class of C.C. Mason Elementary (LISD) was regaled with what some claim to be the finest PowerPoint ever crafted on the ecology of the Texas Hill Country.



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## TRAVIS COUNTY



- In April, Travis County BCP joined forces with Balcones Canyonlands Master Naturalists to conduct an immersive exploration of moths on the Snowden Tract, over 25 folks gathered to learn about moths under the nighttime sky (pictured left).
- Our ongoing efforts to combat invasive vinca, aka common periwinkle, and Johnson grass received a significant boost as we collaborated with various groups, including ASEZ WAO, a non-profit global volunteer organization working with young adults. In a significant turnout, 66 volunteers dedicated their time to eradicating invasive vinca and Johnson grass while gaining insights into the BCP, our mission, and endangered species (pictured right).
- Amid scorching temperatures in July, we celebrated Latino Conservation Week in partnership with Latino Outdoors and the Hispanic Access Foundation, further advancing our efforts of removing invasive vinca. This momentum continued with a partnership with Queer Friends ATX for Pride on the Preserve, featuring an educational nature hike and the removal of vinca.



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## WESTCAVE PRESERVE



- This summer Westcave partnered again with one of our collaborative organizations, El Ranchito. This is a unique nature-immersion week-long camp provides “youth, who may not otherwise have access, opportunities to form strong bonds with nature and one another in community. Over the course of 5 camp sessions, Westcave educators hiked down 85 campers and 41 camp counselors to our magical natural spring-fed dripping spring waterfall. Campers ranged in age from 4th to 9th grade and were immersed in the sounds of nature and the drastic ecological changes that occur when entering our sheltered canyon. Before hiking back, campers were allowed a minute of reflection to listen to the soothing sounds of the waterfall.
- Additionally, Paul Vickery, Education Coordinator at Wild Basin, and Meagan Whitehouse, Education Manager at Westcave, collaborated to teach archery to 33 youth in 8-9th grade and 16 camp counselors in two camp sessions. The campers learned the importance of setting themselves up for success that moves beyond getting an arrow down range to hit their target. It takes many steps to be successful at archery and everything else in one’s life. Often, it takes a community to achieve one’s goals.



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## WILD BASIN



- Spring Artist In Residence, Leila Ali, started her residency on March 1st. She did botanical illustrations and photography with a focus on “everyday plants” (See picture of silk tassel drawing with color pencil). She provided a children’s workshop and an adult workshop using watercolors. Her final reception was in late May. The Fall Artist in Residence is Thomas Cook. His residency started Sept. 7th with a focus on landscape sketching and oil painting.
- During the months of June and July every Wednesday at 8:30am a free guided hike was provided to the general public. Reservations were required and attendance varied per week.
- The monthly in person speaker and social event began in February 2023 and allows the public to participate in a relaxed atmosphere learning opportunity. Video recording of the speaker can be found on the Wild Basin Creative Research Center YouTube channel. Topics include Texas backyard wildlife, the origins for the BCP, Bat Gardens and Beyond and more.
- Working with a group of volunteers and an SEU intern, interpretive pavers were created and installed to create a pathway through the sensory garden on the southern side of the Creative Research Center (See above photo of volunteers with intern). The pavers feature a combination of animal tracks and plant pressings common at the preserve.
- Monthly volunteer events have been running with a focus on recovery from Winter Storm Mara that hit in early February. Volunteers have been helping staff to clear staged brush from the side of the trails or haul larger debris to staging areas to be chipped later in the year. All vegetative debris will be used in trail restoration projects.



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## The Nature Conservancy



- Boy Scouts of America Pack 70, Pack 91, and Troop 72 joined us for campouts.
- Guided hikes were given for Johnson City ISD, Elite Summer Camp and Beer Made By Walking groups.





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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.