

# Balcones Canyonlands Preserve

## About the BCP & What You Should Know

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### What is the Balcones Canyonlands Preserve?

The Balcones Canyonlands Preserve (BCP) is a system of preserves spanning over 32,000 acres and serves as a protective umbrella for two migratory songbird species, six cave-dwelling invertebrate species, and 27 other species. The BCP is permitted by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFW) and the permit is held by the City of Austin and Travis County. Various other organizations also play a role in owning and managing lands dedicated to the BCP. **Through the safeguarding of these vulnerable species, the BCP ensures the preservation of the entire ecosystem.** Beyond being essential habitat for endangered species, these lands also support numerous native plants and animals, contributing to enhanced air and water quality.

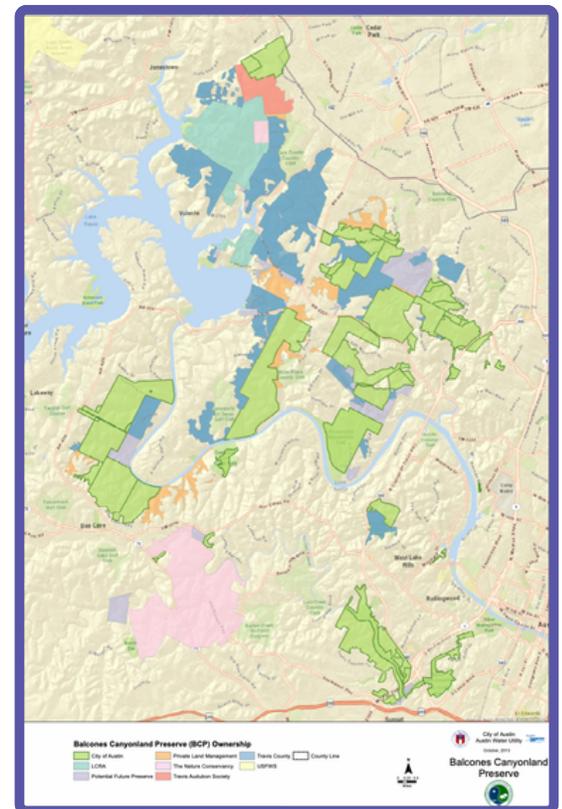
### Where is the BCP?

The BCP is **not a singular expanse but rather a comprehensive system of preserves encompassing more than 32,000 acres in western Travis County.** The Habitat Conservation Plan protected 30% of the best closed-canopy woodland habitat for endangered species in exchange for development on up to 70% of the remaining habitat. Multiple partners manage the Balcones Canyonlands Preserve. The two largest land managers are the City of Austin and Travis County, who together manage 80% of the preserve.

### Species & Wildlife

The BCP is home to a host of species and wildlife. Larger natural areas protect diverse species, create vital wildlife corridors, and shield sensitive species.. **The BCP's focus on preserving large tracts of land also safeguards terrain, supporting rare invertebrates and maintaining crucial ecological functions,** including clean water sources for humans. Species in the BCP include:

- Golden-Cheeked Warbler (Endangered)
- Tooth Cave Pseudoscorpion
- Tooth Cave Spider
- Tooth Cave Ground Beetle
- Kretschmar Cave Mold Beetle
- Bee Creek Cave Harvestman
- Bone Cave Harvestman
- Black Capped Vireo



[More Info on the  
BCP's Species](#)

Questions? Email [advocacy@abor.com](mailto:advocacy@abor.com)

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### Get Involved!

There are many ways to get involved with the BCP and learn more about these unique, beautiful spaces. Sign up for guided hikes and volunteer opportunities with Austin Water Wildland Conservation at [austintexas.gov/wildlandevents](http://austintexas.gov/wildlandevents). Find opportunities to get involved across the BCP through the [BCP Partner Events Calendar](#).

### Parks

If you're interested in hiking, more than [3,500 acres](#) of the preserve are regularly open to the public. Plan a trip to [Hamilton Pool](#), [Wild Basin Preserve](#), the [Barton Creek Greenbelt](#), [Emma Long Park](#), [Commons Ford Park](#), [St. Edwards Park](#), [Mount Bonnell Park](#), or [Westcave Preserve](#).

### What if I Live Next to the BCP?

- Keep in mind, **it is illegal to dump any materials on the preserve**, including cut branches and yard trimmings. It often presents a hazard to wildlife and can increase the risk of wildfire. If you see anyone dumping on the preserve, please report it to a [patrol officer](#).
- A permit is required to disturb or remove endangered species' habitat any time of year. **No one, not even permit-holders, can disturb the birds' habitat during nesting season** (March 1 to August 31). For help determining whether you may have endangered species on your property, and to learn about obtaining a permit and mitigation options, see Development in Endangered Species Habitat.
- The best way to protect your home from wildfire is to create defensible space, including "hardening" your home by sealing openings, screening vents, and cleaning gutters. Learn more about creating defensible space from the Central Texas-specific [Ready, Set, Go!](#) The Travis County Fire Marshal's site will also tell you if a burn ban is in effect and provide tips for safe outdoor cooking and work such as welding, cutting, and grinding.

### BCP Wild Neighbors Speaker Series

Wild Neighbors is a speaker series organized by Travis County Natural Resources and the City of Austin Wildlands Division that features wildlife experts who help us understand our wild neighbors.

### Resources



[Guided Hikes & Volunteering](#)



[City of Austin - BCP Info](#)



[Austin Water Wildland Preservation](#)



[Wild Neighbors Series](#)



[Travis County - BCP Info](#)

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