

DRUID ENVIRONMENTAL
DE Job No. 251

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# Wild Basin Wilderness Preserve, Spring 2001, Golden-cheeked Warbler (*Dendroica Chrysoparia*) Survey

Prepared for:

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May 2001

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# Wild Basin Preserve, Golden-cheeked Warbler (*Dendroica chrysoparia*) Survey, 2001

## INTRODUCTION

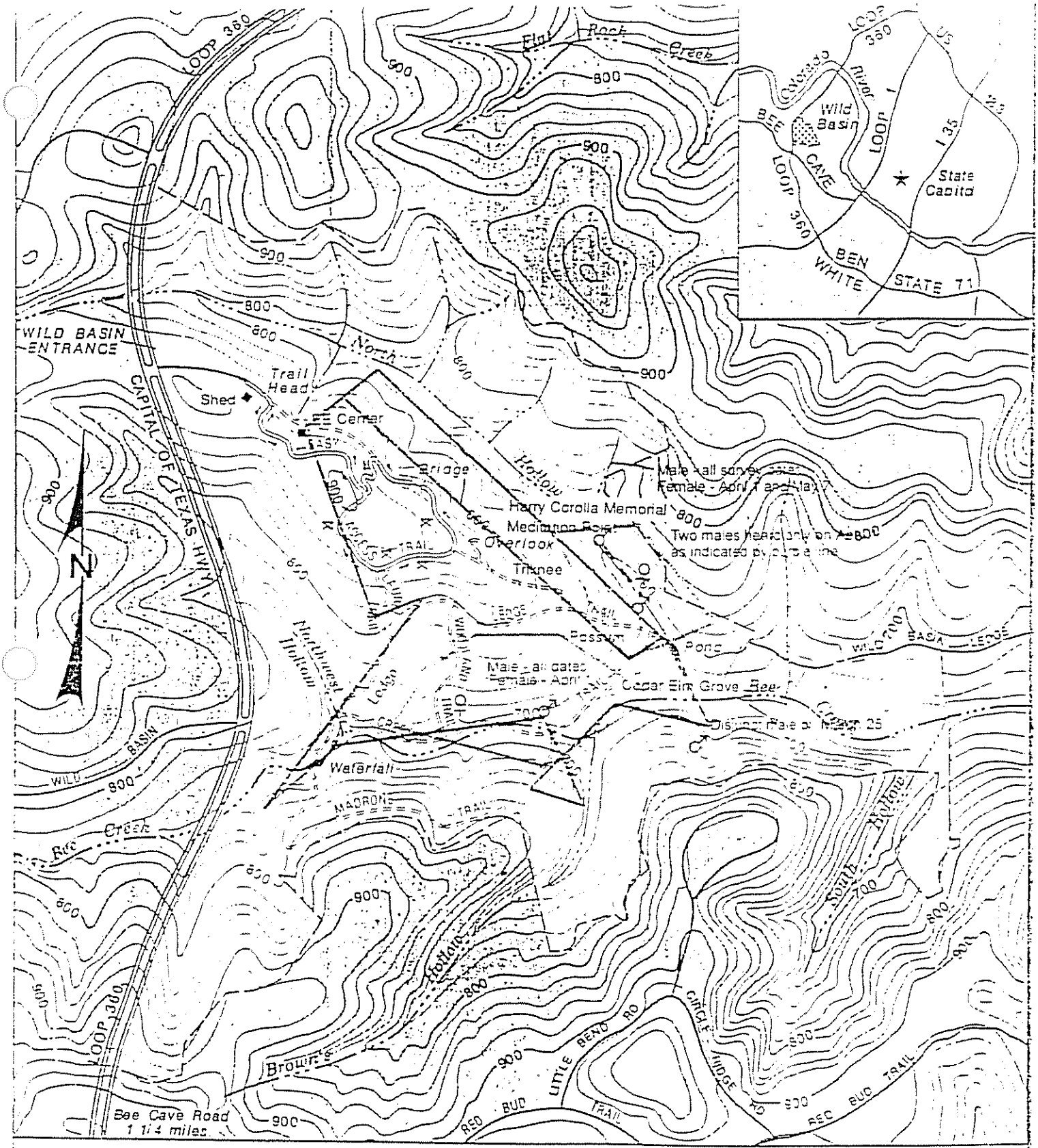
This report presents the results of a Golden-cheeked Warbler (gcw) (*Dendroica chrysoparia*) survey conducted by Druid Environmental (DE) at the Wild Basin Wilderness Preserve, Austin, Travis County, Texas during the spring of 2001. The site is located northeast of the intersection of Loop 360, Capital of Texas Highway and Bee Caves Road, and west of the The City of Westlake Hills (insert, upper right of figure). Map data for gcw occurrences, survey routes and presumed male territories are indicated on the figure. Gcws are represented by ♂ and ♀ symbols indicating the sex of individuals observed. Survey routes are indicated in green. The approximate territories of males (vicinities where males were observed on all six survey dates) are plotted in red. An occurrence of two males heard simultaneously is indicated by an attached purple line. Sighting dates on the figure are in blue text.

## METHODS

The site was visited by DE on 20 March, 25 March, 1 April, 8 April, 15 April and 7 May, 2001. Paul Turner performed all surveys. All surveys were conducted at a minimum of five day intervals with the principal accessing both the northern or southern halves of the site on the stated dates. Survey time averaged about 5+ hours per visit on six survey dates. A total of 30+ field hours were expended. Survey routes usually followed existing trails which generally provide full auditory coverage of the site, except along North Creek. Numerous short excursions not indicated by the trails on the figure, or by the DE route line were also made. Notes taken, including plant and bird species lists, are on file at DE.

## RESULTS

The Wild Basin Wilderness Preserve is approximately 237 acres in extent. Closed canopy juniper-oak woodland was found along Bee Creek and Brown's Hollow. Closed canopy woodland also occurs on the eastern third of North Hollow, but to the west within North Hollow, was restricted to relatively narrow bands of trees in the main creek drainage and up slope along tributary ravines. Upland areas of the site also support gcw habitat, especially south facing slopes above Bee Creek which were generally dominated by Ashe juniper (*Juniperus ashei*) with occasional patches of deciduous trees. North and south facing slopes above the North Hollow, except along treed ravines, were marginal for the gcw. These were savannah-like with scattered, low stature (less than 15 feet height) Ashe juniper, live oak (*Quercus virginiana*) and evergreen sumac (*Rhus virens*) as the most conspicuous woody species. The woody species were interspersed in a grassland matrix dominated by seep muhly (*Muhlenbergia reverchonii*), little bluestem (*Schizachyrium scoparium*) and tall grama (*Bouteloua pectinata*).



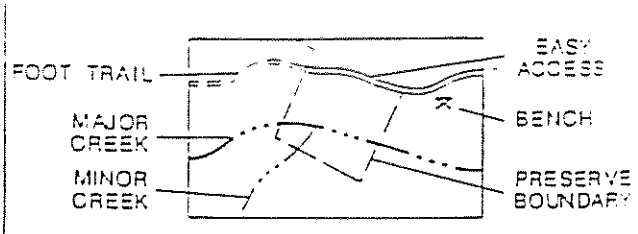

# Wild Basin Wilderness Preserve

Contours every 20'

1000 0 1000 FEET

THE COMMITTEE FOR WILD BASIN WILDERNESS

Cartography by D. McLouth 1989 Update by Bargsley Map Prod.



Predominantly Ashe juniper dominated slopes adjacent to the Capitol of Texas Highway and the upper reaches of Ashe juniper dominated slopes facing north, above Bee Creek, apparently do not support nesting gcws. Adjacent development and highway noise may have rendered these areas unsuitable.

Much of the site was structurally suitable for post-nesting gcw habitation and a gcw sighting was potentially possible anywhere on the site. However, nesting habitat appears to be limited to the northwest and southwest corners of the site.

**Gcws were identified at the site as follows (see figure ):**

**approximate southern half of the site - the Ledge Trail and to the south**

A singing male gcw was consistently found between the intersection of Bee Creek and South Hollow, west to the Woodland Trail and slightly beyond. This male occupied an observed area to the north, up slope to the Ledge Trail and west, east and north facing slopes along Brown's Hollow. A female gcw was noted in this vicinity on 1 April.

**approximate northern half of the site - the Ledge Trail and to the north**

A singing male gcw was identified within the area identified on the figure during every survey date. On the 1 April survey date two males singing simultaneously were noted as indicated on the figure. However, the simultaneous occurrence of two males gcws in near proximity was not replicated on any other survey date. During the 1 April and 7 May surveys, a female gcw was found as indicated on the figure.

**Principal's weather data:**

March 20

start-end
Time - 7:30 - 11:30 am
Temp - 39-61 F
Wind sp. and dir. - NW 10, N 5
Cloud cover - None - None

March 26

Time - 7:30 am - 12:30 pm
Temp - 48-58 F
Wind sp. and dir. -N 10, N 10
Cloud cover - 100% - 100%

April 1

start-end

Time - 8:15- 1 pm
Temp - 70-78 F
Wind dir. and sp. - S 15, S 15
Cloud cover - 70% clouds, clear

April 15

start-end
Time - 7:30 am -12:00 pm
Temp - 69-80 F
Wind dir. and sp. - None - S 9
Cloud cover - 80% low clouds, 20% low clouds

May 7

start-end
Time - 9:00 am - 1:00 pm
Temp - 67-79 F
Wind dir. and sp. - None - Se 6
Cloud cover - None None

## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Male gews were consistently located at two disjunct locations at Wild Basin during the 2001 nesting season. These locations were northwest of the pond along North Creek, and between Brown's Hollow and the Woodland Trail along Bee Creek. Female gews were noted on 1 April for both these locations, and again on 7 May for the North Creek location.

A simultaneous identification of two male gews occurred only once during the survey period. On 1 April, two males were heard along North Creek. On 25 March, a non-recurrent sighting of a gew male occurred southeast of the Elm Grove on slopes above Bee Creek, and partially off the Wild Basin property.

Field observations for 2001 at Wild Basin presume the presence of two mated pairs of gews, and perhaps one or two additional males frequenting the site during parts of the nesting season.