

# Balcones Canyonlands Preserve

Travis County, Texas



The Balcones Canyonlands Preserve (BCP) is one of the nation's largest urban preserves, covering about 50 square miles in western Travis County. It was created to protect irreplaceable endangered species habitat while supporting the growing Central Texas economy. A historic 1996 agreement between the US Fish & Wildlife Service and local government allowed most of the endangered species habitat in western Travis County to be developed in exchange for creating the 33,000+ acre BCP.

Decades later, the preserve's forest-covered hills continue to help as only nature can—by cleaning the water and air, providing habitat for wildlife, helping prevent floods and giving us all a refuge away from the hustle and bustle. So get to know this amazing urban preserve system right here in the heart of it all. Learn about public trails, guided hikes, volunteer opportunities, and more inside.



*The golden-cheeked warbler is one of the endangered species the BCP was created to protect. It's the only bird that nests exclusively in Texas, so every one is a native Texan.*



## Wildlife Abounds

Juniper-oak woodlands, underground caves, and spring-fed streams support an amazing range of wildlife on the Balcones Canyonlands Preserve, from rare songbirds to ringtail cats. Central Texas is known for its biodiversity - the variety of life found here. Plants and animals from the north, south, east, and west all come together in this region, and many Central Texas species are found nowhere else on earth.

The BCP was created to protect eight endangered species whose habitat has been impacted by development. By protecting the most vulnerable species—the first ones to become endangered or threatened—we can help maintain the entire ecosystem.

For more information about the wildlife on the preserve, visit [traviscountytexas.gov/tnr/nr/bcp/species](https://traviscountytexas.gov/tnr/nr/bcp/species).





## Nature is Calling

Beyond the public trails (see map), the best way to explore the preserve is by joining a guided hike or volunteering. There are lots of ways to get involved. Check out our calendar of events across the BCP from Travis County, the City of Austin, Wild Basin Wilderness Preserve, Travis Audubon Society, and Westcave Preserve. Please be aware that many areas of the preserve are not regularly open to the public, so check before you visit.

Another way to get to know the preserve is by volunteering. Our amazing team of volunteers helps with invasive plant removal, trail maintenance, native plant gardening, biological surveys, guided hikes, cleanups, and much more. We would love you to join us! Come on your own, with your family, or as part of a corporate group.

To get started, visit [traviscountytexas.gov/tnr/nr/bcp/hikes-vol](https://traviscountytexas.gov/tnr/nr/bcp/hikes-vol).





## More Ways to Help

The BCP and other greenspaces help keep our region healthy and are part of what makes Central Texas special. But with all of today's challenges, from climate change to invasive species, they need all the help they can get.

Fortunately, there are lots of ways you can help our wild neighbors thrive. Whether planting a native pollinator garden or being fire-safe, everyone can make a positive impact.

Learn more from [traviscountytexas.gov/tnr/nr/bcp/neighbors](https://traviscountytexas.gov/tnr/nr/bcp/neighbors) or check out recordings of our Wild Neighbors Speaker Series at [traviscountytexas.gov/tnr/nr/videos](https://traviscountytexas.gov/tnr/nr/videos).



# Balcones Canyonlands Preserve Partners

The Balcones Canyonlands Preserve (BCP) was created through a community-led process and continues to be managed by a diverse group of partners. About 80% of the preserve system is managed by Travis County or the City of Austin. The other 20% is managed by public and private entities, including:

- The Nature Conservancy
- Lower Colorado River Authority
- Travis Audubon Society
- Concordia University Texas
- St. Edward's University
- Westcave Preserve
- City of Sunset Valley
- Private Landowners

The Travis County Natural Resources Program manages the County's preserve lands. For more information, visit our website at [traviscountytexas.gov/tnr/nr](http://traviscountytexas.gov/tnr/nr).



## Connect with Us!



*PHOTOS: Heather Valey (hummingbird, Ashe junipers, dragonfly), Kristen Gold (frog), Julia Land (flowers, fox), Julie Murray (cactus), Stephen Sinclair (roadrunner), Todd Bayless (cave), Russell Hughes (drone shot), Melody Lytle (golden-cheeked warbler), U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (ringtail cat), Jim & Lynn Weber (butterfly), Johanna Arendt (hands), Kaitlin Lopez (flowers), Tom Hausler (black-capped vireo)*

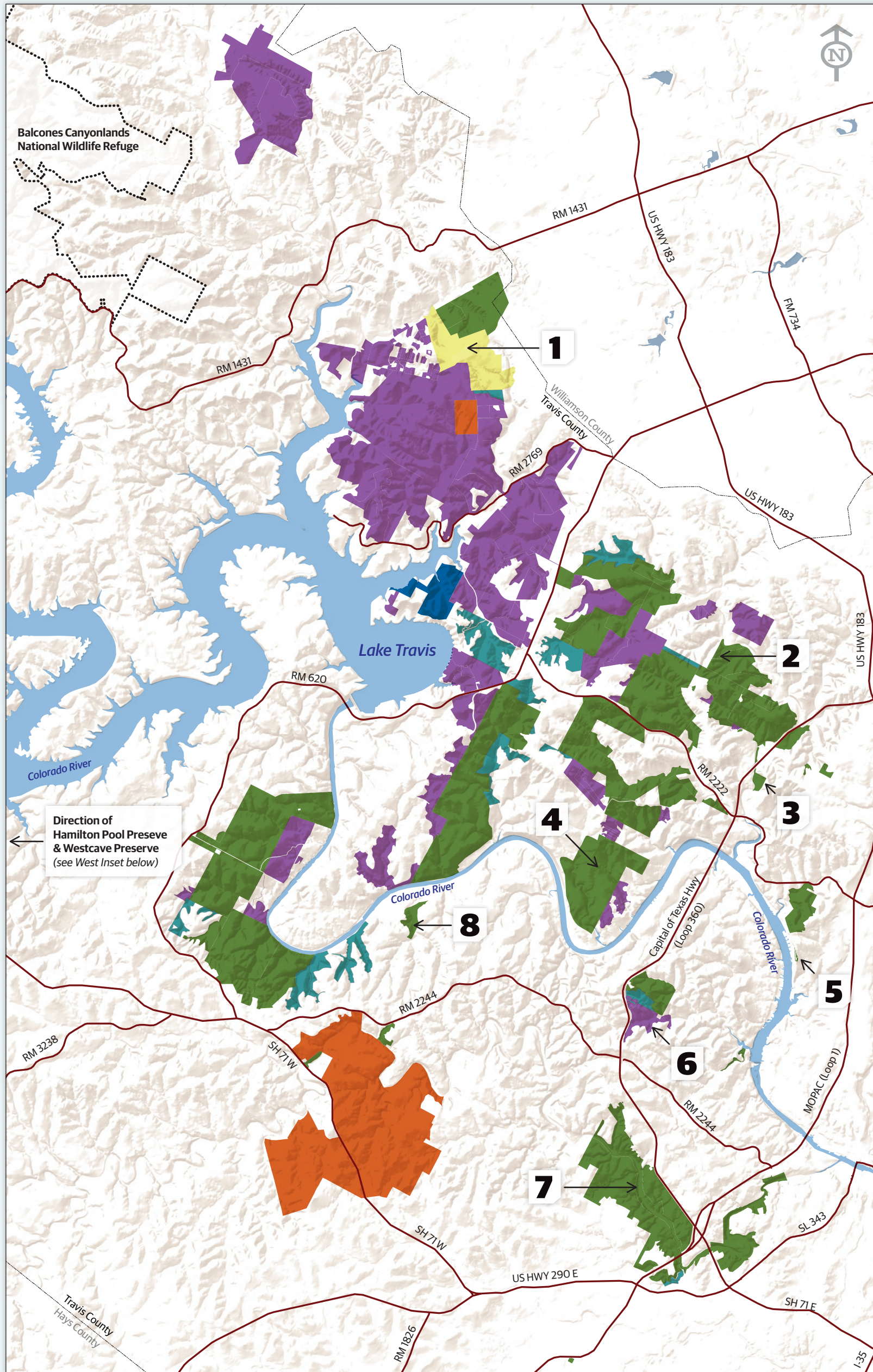


*The mature juniper-oak woodlands of the BCP are essential to the endangered golden-cheeked warbler and many other species.*

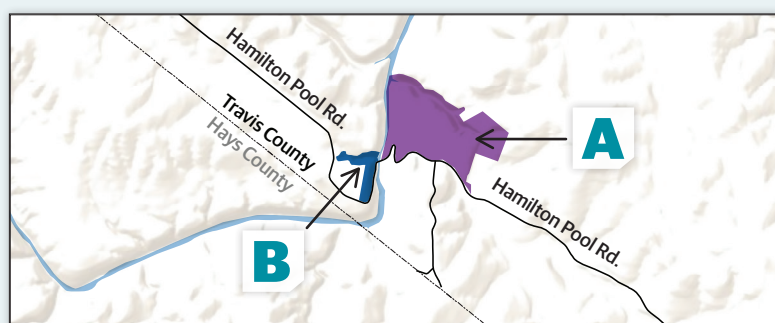
## Visiting the BCP Preserve

There are a number of ways to visit the preserve—check out some popular destinations on the map below. Much of the preserve does not have public access, but you can visit some special spots by joining guided hikes or volunteering.

Find your next BCP adventure at [traviscountytx.gov/bcpevents](http://traviscountytx.gov/bcpevents).



### West Inset (not to scale)



### Land Manager

- ▲ Travis County
- ▲ Lower Colorado River Authority
- ▲ Private Land Manager
- ▲ City of Austin
- ▲ Travis Audobon Society
- ▲ The Nature Conservancy

This map is for informational purposes and may not have been prepared for or be suitable for legal, engineering, or surveying purposes. It does not represent an on-the-ground survey and represents only the approximate relative location of property boundaries. Travis County has produced this product for reference purposes only and offers no warranties for the product's accuracy or completeness.

## Public Access

Hours are subject to change. Some locations require reservations and/or entry fees.



**A**  
**Hamilton Pool Preserve**  
24300 Hamilton Pool Road, Round Mountain, TX  
Open daily from 9am - 12:30pm and 2:00pm - 5:30pm



**B**  
**Westcave Preserve**  
24814 Hamilton Pool Road, Round Mountain, TX  
Open from Wednesday thru Sunday, 10:00am - 3:00pm



**1**  
**Travis Audubon's Baker Sanctuary**  
12219 Lime Creek Road, Leander, TX  
Open to Travis Audubon Society members and their guests



**2**  
**St. Edwards Park**  
7301 Spicewood Springs Road, Austin, TX  
Open daily from 5:00am - 10:00pm



**3**  
**Bull Creek District Park & Greenbelt**  
6701 Lakewood Drive, Austin, TX  
Open daily from 5:00am - 10:00pm



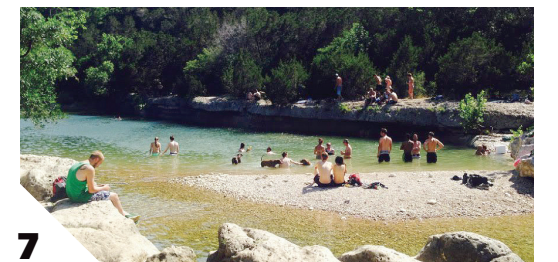
**4**  
**Emma Long Park**  
1600 City Park Road, Austin, TX  
Open daily from 7:00am - 10:00pm



**5**  
**Mount Bonnell Park**  
3800 Mt Bonnell Drive, Austin, TX  
Open daily from 5:00am - 10:00pm



**6**  
**Wild Basin Wilderness Preserve**  
805 N Capital of TX Hwy, Austin, TX  
Open daily from sunrise to sunset



**7**  
**Barton Creek Greenbelt**  
Multiple entrances in south Austin  
Open daily from 5:00am - 10:00pm



**8**  
**Commons Ford Park**  
614 N Commons Ford Road, Austin, TX  
Open daily from 5:00am - 10:00pm

Learn more at [traviscountytx.gov/tnr/nr/bcp](http://traviscountytx.gov/tnr/nr/bcp)

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PHOTOS: Heather Valey (Hamilton Pool Preserve), Westcave Preserve (Westcave grotto), Christopher Murray (Baker Sanctuary), Austin Parks Foundation (St. Edward's Park, Bull Creek District Park, Barton Creek Greenbelt, Commons Ford Park), Johanna Arendt (Emma Long Park), Wild Basin Wilderness Preserve (Wild Basin)

