



Blue Thumb—In Pictures



March 2019

Envirothon Training!

This month, Blue Thumb taught a few school groups how to ID bugs and fish for the upcoming Oklahoma Envirothon! Envirothon teams will compete with each other in the areas of soils and land use, aquatic ecology, forestry and wildlife. Becky and Kim helped students identify aquatic bugs and fish and explained how these organisms provide information about water quality. Good luck to all those who participate!



Healthy Soil = Healthy Water

Cheryl and Soil Health Educator Blane Stacy were at the Tulsa Home and Garden Show this month with Blue Thumb volunteers and the Tulsa Conservation District! They learned about protecting soil and creating healthy yards in urban areas. Healthy soil is good for crop land, grazing land, our yards and our water. When soil stays in place, it is an invaluable resource; when it washed downhill, soil become sediment that chokes our waterways and carries other pollutants to our streams and rivers.



Bug Collections End with a Bang!

This month wrapped up our bug collection season. It was a bit of a struggle trying to get some of the samples due to the inclement weather and some heavy rainfall in certain parts of the state. But, as always, we managed to get it done! We found some great bugs at the end of the season, and our volunteers were ready to meet us in some of the coldest, and sometimes wettest, parts of the day to get their collections and QAs done, and all with great big smiles on their faces.



Left top: The West Cache Creek in Lawton had some huge stoneflies, which are the most pollution sensitive bugs found in a creek.



Top right: Rebecca and Candice help some volunteers do their collections on Black Bear Creek in Pawnee County.



Bottom left: Lorelei does her bug collection on Pecan Creek in Cherokee County.



Bottom right: A dragonfly and a damselfly are always interesting finds in a creek.

Education, Education, Education

Blue Thumb has so many tools to help teach the public about nonpoint source pollution. One of the most popular ones is the EnviroScape, which many of our volunteers check out to use themselves. This simple watershed model provides a great visual of how pollution gets into and effects our waterways, and is appropriate for all ages. This month, staff traveled all over the state to use it to educate elementary students, and we had several volunteers check out an EnviroScape and use it for their own education purposes!



Cheryl presented the EnviroScape to a group of 4th and 5th graders at Cashion Elementary School.



These kids did several Blue Thumb activities and learned about water conservation at Wes Watkins Technology Center in Wetumka.



Brenda Wilson and Emmalyne Merle borrowed the EnviroScape to educate over 70 people at Jenk's East Intermediate School's Family STEM night.