



Blue Thumb—In Pictures



September 2019

Volunteer Spotlight!

This month we would like to recognize Ted Daniels for doing a tremendous job as a Blue Thumb volunteer! Ted first came aboard Blue Thumb when he was working as a naturalist at Robbers Cave State Park. Mr. Daniels has continued his involvement with Blue Thumb in his current role teaching at Kinta High School. His high school science students help out with education events and monthly monitoring at Beaver Creek and Sans Bois Creek. Mr. Daniels also has his students help write data reports for the creeks they monitor. Recently, he and his students gave a presentation at the Oklahoma Clean Lakes and Watersheds Association Conference. They also staffed a water quality station at Pittsburg County Conservation District's spring Natural Resource Day. Thanks for all the hard and wonderful work you and your students do, Ted! Keep up the excellent work!



Wrapping up the Field Work

Staff members were extremely busy this past month as they tried to squeeze out the last few days of field work. Bug collections for the summer ended September 15, and with recent rains it was a challenge to get everything done. After a large rain event we have to wait until the creek returns to base flow and remains at base flow for 7-10 days before doing a bug collection. This gives the bugs time to recolonize the creek (they get swept downstream during high flows).

This can be difficult to work around if we get another large rain storm within those 7-10 days and have to start the waiting period all over again. At least our volunteers are understanding and flexible! Fish collections also wrapped up this month; over the summer, Blue Thumb performed 19 from July 1 through September 15 in the Central Great Plains Ecoregion.



Left: Students from OCU participate in a bug collection on Mustang Creek in Yukon; middle: Volunteers perform their quarterly QA; right: City of Lawton volunteers help out on their fish collection on East Cache Creek.

Not-So-Mini Workshops!

Blue Thumb is constantly changing and developing new ways to make sure volunteers get the support and materials they need to spread the message about protecting water resources. In an effort to support volunteer education efforts, Cheryl has started hosting Mini Education Workshops. During these short workshops, volunteers learn how to use education materials effectively. These small, 2-hour sessions have been held in coordination with the Smithsonian Water/Ways exhibit traveling around the state between now and April 2020. Keep your eye out for a Mini-Workshop near you!



Left: The Mini-Workshop in Ada was a huge hit as ECU got ready to host Water/Ways and help Blue Thumb spread the word about water.



Right: Students in Bob Coffey's Environmental Science class attend a Mini-Workshop to help Blue Thumb at a Natural Resource Day.

Education, Education, Education

This month heralded the return to school for kids, which means an opportunity to resume our work with students of all ages. Whether Boy Scouts, middle schoolers, college kids, or anyone in between, we will find a way to educate the younger generation about the importance of local streams.



Cheryl uses the EnviroScape to teach Guthrie Boy Scouts and Friends about nonpoint source pollution.



Cheryl met Ottawa County Conservation District Grant Victor at the Fair, where they talked about conservation of water and soil and why it's important.



Candice gives the kids in Ottawa County a hands-on experience in the creek at the Lost Creek Festival, sponsored by the Eastern Shawnee tribe.