



Blue Thumb in Pictures

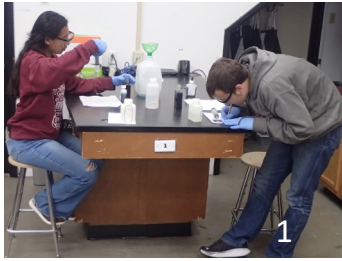
April 2023



Groundwater also Needs a Helping Hand!

Blue Thumb supported the Harper County Conservation District on March 22 and the Oklahoma County Conservation District on March 25 to hold groundwater screenings. Both students and adults showed up to check in samples, run tests, operate the groundwater model and keep the testing equipment clean. Forty-seven samples were tested in Buffalo and thirty-seven were tested in Spencer.

Tests run included pH, alkalinity, chloride, nitrate, and sulphate. Coliform bacteria should be tested at least annually, and more information is available on this through the Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality. Conservation Districts that want to offer a groundwater screening can contact Blue Thumb's Kim Shaw at kim.shaw@conservation.ok.gov.



- 1) Buffalo High School students test the pH of well water.
- 2) A total of 12 Buffalo students helped to test water. These two are testing chloride.
- 3) Small volunteer Mason was an education helper with the groundwater model in Oklahoma County.
- 4) OkCCD board member Phil Campbell was himself a volunteer!
- 5) Kim Shaw begins the day in Oklahoma County with safety instructions.

These tiny rock structures are the wee homes of wee caddisflies living in Battle Branch.



Ice trays make perfect sorting containers for similar life forms.



Ozark Streams Assessed

Blue Thumb joined forces with the Illinois River Watershed Partnership to do a "quick" bioassessment of two tributaries to the Illinois River on 4/12/23. The streams are Battle Branch and Flint Creek.

The assessment used aquatic benthic macroinvertebrates, collected at the moment, to judge stream health. Picture to the right is Justin and Leif (IRWP) and Candice Miller with Blue Thumb.



Oklahoma Clean Lakes and Watersheds

The Oklahoma Clean Lakes and Watersheds annual conference was held in Stillwater for the first time since the Pandemic on April 4 & 5, 2023. Pictured far right is Kurtis Koll, volunteer monitor on Wolf Creek in Lawton. At least four additional volunteers presented information.

Several young OSU student volunteers assisted in staffing the Blue Thumb 30 years exhibit!



Blue Thumb 30th Anniversary exhibit

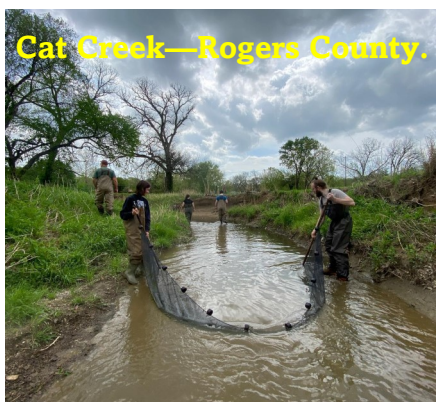
Blue Thumb is at all the cool places!

Rebecca Bond spoke at the Oklahoma County CD (and other partners) water conservation workshop at Scissortail Park on 4/8/2023. Rebecca said “Water and soil are two strands of one cord. Where soils are not healthy, streams and rivers are impacted.”



Cat Creek—Rogers County.

The Rogers County Conservation District has now welcomed Tiane (purple) as their first certified yard in the “Yard by Yard Community Resiliency Project! Also in photo is Cheryl Cheadle and Robert Gibbs. Robert is the education specialist for the Rogers County CD.



Cat Creek—Rogers County.



Partnership with the Tulsa Garden Center!

Two big events in April in which Blue Thumb partnered with the Tulsa Garden Center are SpringFest, April 7 & 8, and illegal dump removal at the Tulsa Dream Center on April 3.

Up to 200 hundred people learned about efforts in the Crow Creek Watershed at SpringFest, and nearly 250 tires were taken to recycling after they had polluted the woodland by Flat Rock Creek for many years.



BEFORE: one of several sites cleaned of litter and old tires near Flat Rock Creek.



AFTER: This is just one of several areas cleaned. Most areas had dozens of tires to remove.

Rogers State University students (Claremore) dived into Cat Creek to study the creatures who live there with Blue Thumb staff.

The data generated by Blue Thumb volunteers is an important “picture in time” that can track a stream improving, becoming degraded, or holding its own.