



Blue Thumb—In Pictures

January 2018



Volunteer Spotlight!



Blue Thumb could not possibly achieve its goals and continued success without the dedication, enthusiasm and passion of our volunteers. Volunteer Susan Smith from Norman attended our training at Oklahoma City University in 2017 and now monitors Tributary to Bishop Creek. She says, “Usually after I clean the creek or pick up litter in the park, I come back home and write about my experience on my Facebook page. This is the main way that I educate people about Blue Thumb and spread awareness about water quality .” Read more about her story and what volunteering for Blue Thumb means to her, in her own words, by visiting our Facebook page: www.facebook.com/BlueThumbOK

New Blue Thumb Volunteers Begin Monitoring

After nine Blue Thumb volunteer trainings in 2017, we have a number of new volunteers now monitoring sites around the state, or about to begin monitoring very soon. Back in December, Candice was in Bartlesville, getting new volunteer Lisa Overall (below left) started on Turkey Creek. Lisa had attended a training back in September in Stillwater and we are excited to have her on this site that hasn't been monitored before. We're also excited to have David Moyer (below right) now monitoring a creek, after he attended another training back in September in Ada. David is our new monitor on Hog Creek near Choctaw, where he was out in below freezing air temperatures to visit his creek in mid-January.



First Training of 2018 and A New Training Format



Blue Thumb's first volunteer training of 2018 will be held in Norman on the weekend of January 27th and 28th. This will be an exciting training as we try an entirely new format. The first day of training will be a day-long introduction to Blue Thumb, volunteer opportunities within the program, and educational activities volunteers can use to educate in their communities. Day two will be another full day, focused on creek monitoring and providing in-depth instruction on all monitoring procedures and tests. This change is designed to allow volunteers to really focus on their interests and passions, whether it's educating, monitoring or something else. Hopefully, volunteers will enjoy the new format as much as the volunteers in this photo from last year's Oklahoma City training.

A Frigid Start to Winter Bug Collections

Now that the calendar has hit January, it's time to begin our winter bug collections, which run from January 1st to March 15th. Spending time at the creek in the cold is inevitable and unavoidable, and a few recent bug collections have found our staff and volunteers braving some very low temperatures. Kim and her mom (below left) were at Crutch Creek at I-40 in Del city, doing their monitoring and bug collection in temperatures just above freezing. In Tahlequah, Rob met volunteer Jahna Hill (below right) for a bug collection and quality assurance session at Town Branch Creek. While the thermometer was reading air temperature in the single digits, the "real feel" temperature on Jahna's weather app was 0 degrees. The cold even managed to make the kick net freeze solid (center).

