



Blue Thumb—In Pictures

September 2018



It's a Festival!

Cheryl Cheadle hit the ground running and started out the month by attending the Choctaw Tribe's Annual Festival in Tuskahoma and spread information about Blue Thumb. A week later, she was in Wyandotte working with the Eastern Shawnee Tribe at their Lost Creek Festival.



(Left): Cheryl speaks with potential new BT Volunteers. (Right): Cheryl uses the Eviroscope to teach kids about non-point source pollution



Monarchs on the Mountain

At the Turkey Creek Mountain Urban Wilderness Monarchs on the Mountain Festival in Tulsa, Blue Thumb's Cheryl Cheadle and Jean Lemmon were joined by Oklahoma Conservation Commission's Judith Wilkins to talk with the public about taking care of Monarch butterflies and other pollinators. Cheryl was adamant about recruiting new Blue Thumb volunteers, while Jean took the opportunity to educate about the Crow Creek Watershed. Judith helped with the Friends of Blue Thumb exhibit, and all three were happy with the assistance of Blue Thumb volunteers Susan Henning and school teacher, Jennifer Kelly.



More Volunteers Join the Family

Blue Thumb hosted another training this month, this time in Tahlequah. Jahna Hill from Tahlequah Stormwater Program gave a short presentation to explain her involvement in both, and how Blue Thumb benefits the program. Blue Thumb showed them some of the tools they can use and what is available for them to check out. New volunteers went out to a local creek to do some seining and a bug kick, and then received their Project WET certificates and their t-shirts, finally ready to volunteer!



Bye Bye, Bugs

Bug collection season officially ended on September 15. It was a mad rush the first two weeks of the month to try to get all the collections finished. Normally, Blue Thumb staff can spread out the collections over the season (which is from July 1-September 15), but this year, the rains put a damper in most of the plans. When it rains as much as it did this season, Blue Thumb has to wait 7-10 days in order to do a bug collection, for the bugs to re-establish themselves. But this year, it rained so much that most of the collections had to wait until the last few weeks. Some sites weren't able to be done at all.



Several high school students helped do a bug collection at Adam's Creek in Broken Arrow



Turkey Creek in Bartlesville had just enough flow. The volunteers kept their good spirits through the rain!



A hellgrammite gets caught in the kick net! These fellows are indicators of pretty decent water!



QA is an important part of Blue Thumb. It ensures that the volunteers are collecting viable data

Education, Education, Education

This month, Blue Thumb was happy to help out with the Oklahoma Association of Conservation Districts with their Leadership Conference in Tahlequah. They spent a couple of days learning about conservation from Cherokee Nation, the Oklahoma Conservation Commission, including the Water Quality Division. Blue Thumb showed them how to kick for bugs and explained why bugs were an important part of biological collections to help keep our creeks and streams healthy.



Some leaders learn how to pull a seine along the Illinois River. They ended up finding some great fish, including a Central Stoneroller, some minnows, and even a Madtom.



Becky and Cheryl show the leaders what they kicked up when they performed a bug collection. The bugs were great, with a stonefly being the best invert. Other bugs included several mayflies, caddis flies, and some huge hellgrammites.



Leaders listen intently to Brooks and Greg from Oklahoma Conservation Commission Water Quality as they give more in depth information about fishing and electroshocking. Executive Director Trey Lam was an avid participant.