RUFFNER MOUNTAIN

EST. 1977

PINSON, ALABAMA

TURKEY CREEK

PRESERVED SINCE 2008

2023 Annual Report

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TURKEY CREEK
• PRESERVED SINCE 2008 •

THANK YOU FOR BEING HERE WITH US

Mission - To care for Ruffner Mountain and Turkey Creek as sanctuaries for our neighbors, native plants, and animals.

By joining forces in 2023, we increased our organization's scope to welcome more than **150,000** visitors to the preserves each year to hike and bike more than **20 miles of trails** and play in the creek, protecting **1,693** acres of land.

15 Featured News Publications

21 Alabama Animal Ambassadors

195 Volunteers & 8 Interns

3,840 Education Program Participants

1,653 Members

MAPS BIRD BANDING

A first of its kind in Alabama, our partnership with Alabama Audubon and Alabama Department of Natural Resources led to a summer-long MAPS (Monitoring Avian Productivity Survivorship) research study. With sites across North America, the study is designed to provide long-term data on bird populations and breeding. At Ruffner Mountain, we will use this data to improve habitat quality for birds and other wildlife. We banded **122 individual birds** of **25 different species**.

CONSERVATION

Our native habitat in Alabama is unique and delicate. We must work together to protect it. Our conservation efforts care for the people, plants, and animals that make up the special natural ecosystem in our county.

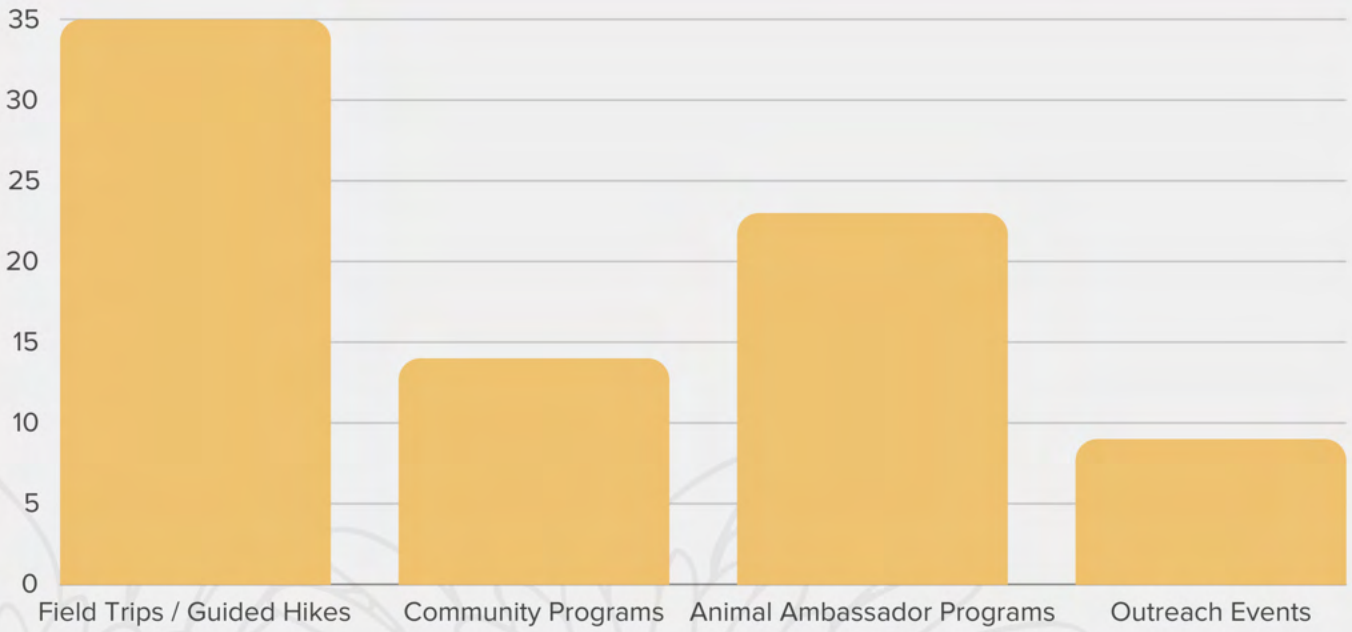
NATIVE PLANTS

We grew **220 species** of native plants at the Turkey Creek and Ruffner nurseries, distributing over **5,000** plants to individuals, businesses, and nonprofit organizations.

POLLUTION SOLUTIONS

Working with the Friends of Turkey Creek and Alabama Water Watch, we regularly test and publish the water quality of Turkey Creek. Testing helps us ensure the water is clean for visitors and protects vital habitat for endangered darters and the threatened flattened musk turtle.

Selected Conservation Collaborations: Alabama Riverkeepers, Alabama Audubon, Cawaco RC&D, U.S. Fish and Wildlife, Alabama Dept. of Natural Resources



EDUCATION

By working with each other, we can learn to take better care of our world. This year we said “yes” to anyone who asked, and as a result found more people and groups who care about our natural world than ever before. Environmental education intersects with art, health, and science, and we reach people of all ages through outreach to schools, programs at Ruffner Mountain and Turkey Creek, community events, internships, and partnerships with community organizations.

SELECTED EDUCATION COLLABORATIONS

Housing Authority of Birmingham, Breakthrough Birmingham, Legacy Partners in Environmental Education, Environmental Education Association of Alabama, Jeff. Co. Health Department, Studio by the Tracks, Red Dirt Residency, Fresh Water Land Trust, University of Alabama at Birmingham, Birmingham Southern College, & the Friends of Turkey Creek.

Housing Authority of Birmingham District Campers on Turtle Rock

SAFETY

An updated alarm system for the Nature Center, camera installation, and staff training for visitor emergencies.

NEW INFASTRUCTURE

A new parking lot and automatic gate at Turkey Creek help manage the flow of visitors to the preserve. Updated trailhead kiosks, picnic tables, and water fountains at Ruffner Mountain welcome visitor use.

MAINTENANCE

Regular tasks like tree removal, trail inspections, invasive plant management, fence and deck repairs, mechanical tool repair, trash removal, and nursery maintenance keep the spaces in working order for everyone.

SAFETY, MAINTENANCE, AND LAND MANAGEMENT

Updates to infrastructure and trail maintenance are essential to our work. Well-cared for greenspaces make visitors feel safe and welcome at our parks, helping us to connect people to nature, whether for the first time or the thousandth.

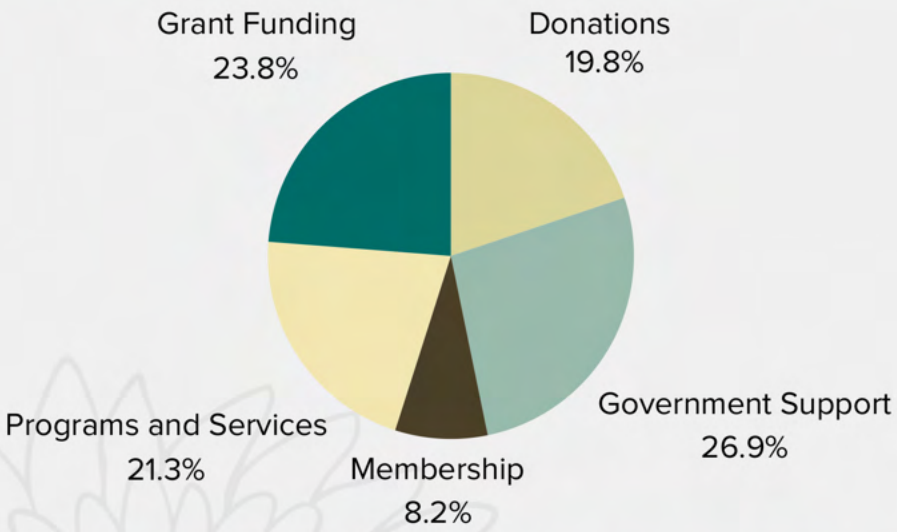
Selected Projects:

- **Land acquisition of the 81st St. South lot with the old cistern**
- **Nature Center deck repairs**
- **Site Assessment of East Side Park**
- **Landscaping at Turkey Creek education pavilion**

2023 BOARD MEMBERS

Hunter Walls, Chair
Melva Tate, Vice Chair
Amy Dowdey, Secretary
Chris Devine
Tom Forsee
Christy Hollingsworth
Kaylon Mikula
John Milledge
Amy Rauworth
Nathaniel Rutledge
Frederic Smith
Jessica A. Findley Valentin

2023 REVENUE CATEGORIES



Source: Ruffner Mountain Nature Coalition's actual, unaudited financial statements for the twelve months January through December 2023.

A NEW ERA FOR GREENSPACE

With House Bill 336, we created the Jefferson County Greenways Commission, a state agency that will support Red Mountain Park, Ruffner Mountain Nature Preserve, and Turkey Creek Nature Preserve through operations and maintenance. With this new organizational structure, our county finally has a structure for sustainable cooperative management of its large acreage greenspaces.

Thank you to our many partners in education, conservation, and land management. Whether you're a donor, a public servant, a community partner, or a visitor, we're thankful for you.
It takes a coalition of people to care for our greenspaces.