



the Leaflet



Give \$25 or more to BRIT through NorthTexasGivingDay.org on September 17 between 6 a.m. - midnight and your contribution will be multiplied by the North Texas Giving Day program! **Plus as a BRIT-Bonus, all donations will be matched, dollar for dollar, by the BRIT Board of Trustees, which makes your donation go even further!**

"When I heard that the bees were in trouble, the fact that they're disappearing and not coming back to the hive, which is a big issue, since a third of the food we eat comes from plants, I figured you couldn't tell the story of the bees without the story of the flowers and how they basically have evolved together for over 150 years." – Louie Schwartzberg

Get up and give so you can continue telling this story with BRIT! Visit NorthTexasGivingDay.org on Thursday, September 17 to donate to Botanical Research Institute of Texas or (BRIT). For additional information, please see the North Texas Giving Day [webpage](#).



Labor Day at the Market



Only two Farmers Markets left in the 2015 season! Please join us on Saturday, September 5 from 8 a.m. to noon for our special Labor Day edition of the BRIT Market. Bring your family and friends and enjoy music by Tim Platt and Everything that is Beautiful, learn about Camp Fire's fall camping event, enjoy a frozen treat from Popstar Popsicles or a snack from Funkytown Food Truck and shop for locally grown produce and unique artisanal food items from our fabulous vendors. You'll be happy you started your holiday weekend with us! Many thanks to our Farmers Market sponsor Lone Star Ag Credit. We couldn't do it without friends like you!

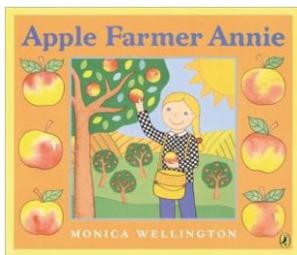
Love Your Landscaping with Natural Rainwater

BRIT and the City of Fort Worth are working hard to help homeowners lessen the effects of the drought by offering to area residents the Rainwater Solutions 50-gallon rain barrel for \$72.50 (retailed for \$149) and a 65-gallon compost bin, each comes with easy to assemble instructions. Rain barrels and compost bins can be purchased online and then picked up on Saturday, September 12, from 9 a.m. - 12 p.m. at the west-end of BRIT's parking lot at 1700 University Drive. Purchase your rain barrel for \$72.50 or compost bin for \$67.50 online, then pick up on Saturday, September 12 at BRIT. Sale ends September 7!



What's Happening with Bella at BRIT

Bloom with Bella the Begonia



September's Featured Book: Apple Farmer Annie, written and illustrated by Monica Wellington. Join Bella for an interactive read aloud and family friendly activities that provide fun explorations of art, nature, and science!

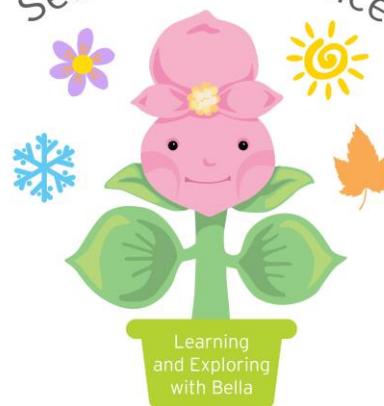
Bella's Story Time: Saturday, September 5 (10:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.) - Free

Bella's Book Club: Tuesday, September 1 (10:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.) - Free to BRIT Members/\$10 per nonmember family.

For more information, please contact [Kimberly Whitlock](#) at 817.546.1958.



Seasons of Stories, Seasons of Science



Bella Community Outreach

September launches the second year of the science and literacy preschool program, Bella's Seasons of Stories, Seasons of Science. Childcare providers, both public and private, are offered opportunities to grow both personally and professionally with this comprehensive outreach program. BRIT offers a rich resource to compliment preschool curriculum that meets the Texas Preschool Guidelines and strives to meet the North American Association of Environmental Education (NAAEE) Guidelines for Excellence in early childhood environmental education.

Gallery Night at BRIT, September 12 with Best of Texas Clay

BRIT is pleased to welcome Best of Texas Clay to the Madeline R. Samples Exhibit Hall for FWADA's 2015 Fall Gallery Night. Best of Texas Clay, produced by The Texas Pottery and Sculpture Guild, is the 3rd bi-annual exhibition featuring extraordinary clay works from across Texas! This year, in honor of BRIT, the exhibit will feature a botanic theme represented by sculptural and functional ceramic creations. Best of Texas Clay is juried by Daphne Roehr Hatcher. Texas Pottery & Sculpture Guild is an organization of three dimensional clay artists, from novice to professional, who offer the communities in which we live and work our talents, skills, and art.



Also joining us on September 12 will be The Fort Worth Art Collective who will bring their pop-up art gallery concept to BRIT for this Fall Gallery Night. FWAC combines raw space and raw talent, showcasing a list of invited local artists in a unique, temporary opportunity to enjoy a variety of innovative work.

Please join us on Saturday, September 12 from 6 p.m. - 8 p.m. for the opening of Best of Texas Clay. BRIT will be open on the 12 from 4 p.m. - 9 p.m. for the FWADA Fall Gallery Night. Admission is free.



Do You Love Nature? Would You Love to Share Your Knowledge?

Join the newest group of volunteers, the Exploration Guides, and plant seeds of wonder in students during one of BRIT's famous Student Experiences. Exploration Guides will join our Seed Starters as volunteers who are enthusiastic about the local area and open students' eyes to all that surrounds them. We need several more energetic volunteers to grow our successful education programs. These are great hands-on events and for a quality day we need 4 volunteers to assist our education team. Many of our education volunteers find these opportunities a fun way to connect plants to people and share knowledge of our sense of place. You don't need a deep awareness of botany or education to be a great volunteer; we will provide you with all the training you will need. You do need an interest in our mission and enjoy talking with young people. All Student Experiences will be held during the week and the time commitment is usually only 9 a.m.-1 p.m. to help young sprouts think like a scientist. Each day will be broken down by age group from Pre-K to high school. We will have a special training for Exploration Guides and Seed Starters on Wednesday, September 30 at 10 a.m. and we would love for you to attend and learn more. If you would like more information about volunteering, please contact [Julie Donovan](#), Director of Volunteers and Visitor Relations at 817.546.1846.



Region XI Teachers at BRIT

Teachers from the Region XI-Texas Regional Collaborative spent their last few days of summer vacation engaged in a project-based learning experience at BRIT. Forty teachers from area districts enjoyed a three day exploration guided by BRIT Education staff members Christina Middlebrook and Tracy Friday. The teachers received an added bonus when BRIT researchers Dr. Dwayne Estes and Dr. Sula Vanderplank dropped in to share information on their research projects and inspired teachers to greater heights. The collaborative will return to BRIT in December to share project ideas and continue to connect the BRIT mission to student-centered experiences.



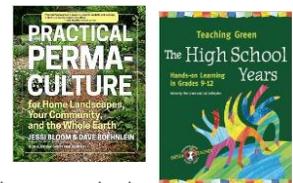
Attention! Command Agents Are Taking Charge

BRIT's Green Revolution is on track to have one of its most successful years ever. Helping to lead this surge are members from the platform's selected leaders of leaders the Command Agents of Change. Command Agents step up and lead during all Green Revolution events, helping staff and community leaders whenever called to duty.

Never missing a beat, they even lead a snowball fight with BRIT staff and research associates in the 100-degree temperature. In addition to peer leading Green Revolution Exploration Saturdays and community service events, Command Agents participate in ongoing leadership development to further their abilities as the environmental leaders of tomorrow, beginning with their retreat to Cleburne State Park over Labor Day weekend.

Library News

The mission of the BRIT Library is "to support the taxonomic research done by the botanists of BRIT and visiting botanical researchers and to support the varied programs sponsored and hosted by BRIT". One way we fulfill that mission is by cataloging and organizing the various research materials that come in to the Library from a variety of sources. During the summer of 2015 we have been cataloging new titles to be added to the main research collection, cataloging portions of the Burk Children's Collection and creating a new, more user friendly catalog for the BRIT art collection. These tasks could not be accomplished without the help of our library volunteers, Craig Elam, Diane Engell, Anne Hollingworth, Marylou Lindsey, and Tim Mason.



The BRIT library operates as a reference library and is open to the public by appointment from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesday through Friday. For more information, please visit our [webpage](#) or call [Laura Venhaus](#) at 817.332.4441, ext 259.

Some Good News for Biodiversity from the Meadows of the Sierra San Pedro Mártir



While biodiversity exploration continues to discover new life on earth, many plants and animals that were previously recorded have not been seen for decades, especially at remote locations. The Sierra San Pedro Mártir vole (*Microtus californicus huperuthrus*) was described by D.G. Elliot in 1903 from the high elevation meadows (~ 8,000 ft) of the highest mountain range in Baja California and last recorded in 1930 by Joseph Grinnell, the father of California Zoology. Despite periodic surveys in its last known locations, this vole had not been seen by scientists in 85 years. It was thought that perhaps intensive grazing had rendered this subspecies extinct. In July 2015, a binational survey team—including Dr. Eric Mellink (Centro de Investigación Científica y de Educación Superior de Ensenada), Dr. Alan Harper (Terra Peninsular AC), Scott Tremor (San Diego Natural History Museum), and Dr. Sula Vanderplank (the Botanical Research Institute of Texas)—rediscovered this species in a secluded meadow, about five miles from where it was last known to exist. The team hiked many hours through rugged wilderness, with live traps packed in on mules, to an area known to have excluded cattle for the last nine months. The vole was found in a wet meadow with a suite of grasses, sedges, and wet montane species where it had "runs" or low tunnels through the vegetation. The vole appears to be much more restricted than it was when it was first described, and continued monitoring should assess population size and distribution and the impacts of grazing. This discovery contributes to current interest in a species that has many rare and declining subspecies (including one that is federally endangered in the US).

While some species respond positively to cattle grazing, others are negatively impacted. The exclusion of cattle, combined with ample summer rainfall, allowed lush growth in the wet streams and adjacent forest edges. Historically heavy grazing in the Sierra San Pedro Mártir appears to have impacted many species in the meadows. For example, *Physaria peninsularis* (Brassicaceae) is a plant that had not been seen for many decades until a single individual was found and documented in 2012. In contrast to multiple years where the meadow was surveyed and this plant was not encountered, this year saw an abundance of this narrowly endemic species (not known from anywhere else in the world) in flower and fruit in the sandy areas around the meadows. Grazing management is a complex global issue; these meadows have been the prime habitat to which



cattle have been driven every summer for over a century. Despite fears of their loss from this planet, here we see the remarkable resilience of two species which live on in La Grulla and give us hope for the future of our biodiversity.



Rolling Plains Quail Research Ranch

On August 7, a small team of BRIT researchers visited The Rolling Plains Quail Research Ranch, a more than 4000 acre ranch in west Texas dedicated solely to quail research and conservation. Dr. Dale Rollins, the Director of the RPQRR, gave the researchers a tour of the ranch, explained what is considered desirable habitat for quail, and described some of the management techniques used to maintain the proper habitat. Bobwhite quail, blue or scaled quail, horned lizards, and several of the plant species with specific characteristics that quail prefer were noted throughout the ranch.

Luella Merrett Elementary Native Landscape

BRIT is working with the Fort Worth Storm Water Division and Fort Worth Nature Center and Refuge at Luella Merrett Elementary School to develop a purposeful native prairie landscape. The prairie has been incorporated into a dual purpose site at the school, meant to serve most of the year as a school yard for play and as the need arises, a storm water flood control site. This purposeful landscape contains native grasses and wildflowers that control water runoff, are drought tolerant, add visual interest, and provide an opportunity for education on native ecosystem components and services.



Meet BRIT's Newest Staff Members

Last month BRIT welcomed Heather Bass as a new Project Research Assistant to join the research team. Heather is a plant ecologist who is passionate about researching the native flora of Texas, interactions within native ecosystems, and the contributions that plants make to humans. Heather's past research focusing on strategies for the reclamation of native prairie plant communities in North Texas made her an excellent candidate to align with BRIT's mission. A graduate of University of Texas-Arlington with a Master's degree in Environmental and Earth Sciences and BS in Biology. Heather will be working on botanical based sustainability initiatives within agricultural and urban settings to promote the preservation of native ecosystems.



Miranda Madrid recently joined the BRIT team as an Herbarium Assistant. In May, Miranda graduated from the University of Notre Dame with a Bachelor of Science in Environmental Science and minor in Peace Studies. Her previous research positions at Notre Dame and Vermont and work at Notre Dame's Center for Social Concerns will make Miranda effective at engaging with volunteers, interns, and the public about the exciting projects in BRIT's Philecology Herbarium. As an original intern of Camp BRIT three years ago, Miranda is excited to be returning to BRIT and learning about the plants and duties of the Herbarium. Miranda plans to pursue a graduate degree in the coming years. Welcome to the team, Miranda!

Joseph Lippert is also one of the newest members of the BRIT Herbarium Team. His interests include plant taxonomy and ecosystem management and restoration, plus urban ecology and sustainable development. Joseph's past work experience includes Oak Savannah restoration in Tennessee and Kentucky, and native avian habitat conservation on the Texas coast for the Houston Audubon Society. Here at BRIT, Joseph is working to digitize the Vanderbilt Herbarium Collection as part of a project to scan all specimens held by Herbaria in the Southeastern United States. Welcome to the team, Joe!



Botanical Research Institute of Texas (BRIT)

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Open Tuesday to Friday from 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

First Saturday of the month from 8 a.m. - 1 p.m. (April-October)

Our Mission is to conserve our natural heritage by deepening our knowledge of the plant world and achieving public understanding of the value plants bring to life.

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Please send your email address to tcrole@brit.org if you'd prefer to receive this by email.