



the Leaflet

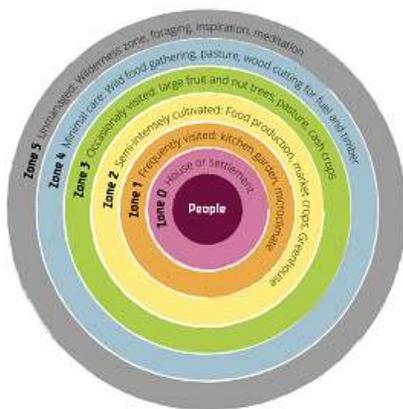


Our mission is to conserve our natural heritage by deepening our knowledge of the plant world and achieving public understanding of the value plants bring to life.



Permaculture - This year, resolve to take a creative and proactive approach to your garden!

Join BRIT in 2017 for our new workshop series “Permaculture 101” with certified permaculture designers Kim Martin and Laurie Bostic of Barking Cat Farm and learn how to work smarter not harder. Whether you want to grow some of your own food or just get a greater return on the time you spend in the garden, this series is for you. Martin and Bostic will walk us through the basics of Permaculture, or the practice of using thoughtful observation to learn how to work with your land and employ techniques that mimic natural systems.



The four workshops that make up this series are:

- Introduction to Permaculture for Home Gardeners (2/4/2017)
- Introduction to Vegetable Gardening (3/4/2017)
- Raised Beds and Irrigation (4/1/2017)
- Building a Herb Spiral (5/6/2017)

For more information about these classes, please contact Laura Venhaus at 817.546.1844.

BRIT Brown Bags Return for their 13th Year!

For the past 13 years, BRIT has played host to the Brown Bag series which is designed to create community-wide conversation about a diverse range of important and rapidly developing topics. We've brought in speakers from around the world who have discussed topics ranging from cows with GPS to ethnobotanical research in Belize. BRIT Brown Bags give scientists and speakers a forum for sharing the most current information about their areas of expertise and allow the public to interact with leading members of the local, national, and international scientific community. In 2017 we will be welcoming speakers from the Fort Worth Zoo, Tarleton State University, and The

Fort Worth Nature Center in addition to speakers from BRIT. And, in honor of BRIT's 30th Anniversary, our own Barney Lipscomb will present "A 30 Year Celebration of the Botanical Research Institute of Texas" on October 3rd. All events are free and open to the public and take place in the BRIT Commons from noon – 1 p.m. on the first Tuesday of the month. For more information, please contact Laura Venhaus at 817.546.1844.

TxDOT Will Use Maps Created by BRIT and Tarleton State University to Find and Protect Rare Plants Along Texas Highways

BRIT®, Tarleton State University, and the Texas Department of Transportation are teaming together to document rare plant species that may potentially exist within TxDOT rights-of-way in 23 counties in the Waco and Austin districts of Central Texas.



Through a TxDOT grant, Tarleton and BRIT will research and build habitat maps for 57 of the 81 Edwards Plateau rare plant species. The work includes identifying, documenting and mapping areas where these rare species most likely occur. TxDOT will use these maps to improve the department's ability to protect the rare species, which grow along Texas highways.

BRIT's role includes examining specimens of these rare plants on file in BRIT's herbarium, noting species "habitat" and the geographical locations where the plants were found. Researchers also will study the plants' environmental requirements including ecological associations, or what other plant species or communities these plants are known to coexist with, to better understand plant habitat needs and preferences.

The project is part of the successful collaboration between BRIT and Tarleton State set forth in the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed by the organizations in January of this year promoting common interests in education, research and service to the public.

As BRIT botanist, Kim Taylor explains, "This important work highlights BRIT's botanical research capabilities and shows the value of the Institute's million-plant specimen herbarium."



BRIT and the Fort Worth Nature Center Launch TERM

What, you may ask, is TERM? TERM (Techniques for Ecological Research and Management) is a joint education outreach program of the Fort Worth Nature Center and the Botanical Research Institute of Texas, which provides interested students and educators with opportunities for hands-on experience in the fields of plant and wildlife science, conservation, sustainability, and ecology through carefully designed field experiences, workshops, classes, and investigations. TERM events will take place on the first Saturday of each month, February – July and September – November from 1 p.m. – 3 p.m. on the BRIT campus and on the campus of the Fort Worth Nature Center on the third Saturday of the month. For more information, please contact Laura Venhaus at 817.546.1844.

- February 4 – Field Notebooks, Data Collection, and iNaturalist
- March 4 – Plant ID, the BRIT Herbarium, and the BRIT Library
- April 1 – Green Tree Frog Citizen Science Project
- May 6 – Know Your Natives: Spring Wildflowers

More to follow!

Collaborative Research in China

Peter Fritsch spent two months in China (October 15 to December 15) to conduct collaborative research with colleagues at the Kunming Institute of Botany in Yunnan Province, China. The funding for this research came from the Chinese Academy of Sciences President's International Fellowship Initiative for visiting scholars, a highly competitive program for qualified international scientists to conduct research collaboration in China. Dr. Fritsch worked on various projects while in China, including a 10-day field expedition to northeastern Yunnan and Guizhou provinces to search for wintergreen plants (*Gaultheria*--pictured is *G.*



leucocarpa) to study genetic variation across populations (an extract from these plants is widely used as a topical pain reliever in regions where it grows naturally). Other activities involved identifying all the wintergreen and many storax (*Styrax*) collections housed at the KIB herbarium (ca. 1500 specimens in total); conducting data analysis for six manuscripts that will eventually be published in scientific journals; establishing a specimen exchange program with the head of the KIB bryology (moss) collections between the herbaria of BRIT and KIB; developing plans for a major grant proposal to the National Science Foundation and Chinese government agencies on blueberry (*Vaccinium*) research; and a short trip to Guangxi University in Nanning to visit with a colleague to develop joint plans for a large grant proposal to NSF on Philippines biodiversity research.



Journal of the Botanical Research Institute of Texas (JBRIT) 10(2) is Published

BRIT Press published Volume 10, Number 2, of the *Journal of the Botanical Research Institute of Texas* (JBRIT) on 14 Dec 2016. The 262-page issue contains 19 scientific papers with two new genera, 11 new species, and one new subspecies plus many new names of plants. Articles include: two new species of hedge-nettles (*Stachys*, Mint family) from Alabama; a new species of *Echinocereus* (Cactaceae) from southwestern Utah and northwestern Arizona; and two new fossil flowers from Baltic amber and mid-Tertiary Dominican amber described by Oregon State University scientists. This issue is available in the BRIT library, through subscription, and **online**.



Volunteer University

We invite all volunteers to attend Volunteer University – It's way easier than college and you don't have to worry about credits!

Volunteer University is a new collaborative effort that gathers volunteers of the Fort Worth Botanic Garden and BRIT once a month to learn about plants from every viewpoint. Classes alternate between both locations and will include two field trips. The first class, "Residential Landscape Gardening 101," will be Monday, January 9, from 2 p.m. – 3 p.m. at the Lecture Hall in the Moncrief Garden Center. There, Steve Huddleston, Horticultural Director of the Fort Worth Botanic Garden, will guide you through easy, practical steps to get you ready for the spring season. Our own Greg Gunn, Facilities Manager, will be speaking at the second class, titled "LEED 101," Monday, February 13, from 10 a.m. – 11 a.m. at BRIT's Classroom. Registration is required.

[Register here](#) for January's class and [here](#) for [February's class](#). For more information, please contact Julie Donovan at 817.546.1846.

Bella's Season of Stories, Seasons of Science



Bella the Begonia™ is taking off the months of December and January, not for a long winter's nap, but to prepare for spring! Mark your calendars and tell your friends who have preschool age children and/or grandchildren that Bella's Book and Nature Club and First Saturday Story Time resume in February. Bella and participating families will celebrate trees with Diane Muldrow's sweet book *We Planted a Tree*. Then, beginning in March, the spring books and activities will celebrate renewal, wonderful wildflowers, and those precious pollinators!



Bella, Books, and Botany: Beyond BRIT and in the Community!

Bella, Books, and Botany is made possible by the generosity of donors and friends of BRIT. We are proud to be making a difference in the lives of children and their families beyond the walls of BRIT. Check out the video that features BRIT staff Cheryl Potemkin and the great teachers and children participating in this year's outreach programs.

BRIT Education – Exploration17

Happy New Year!

2016 was an amazing year for BRIT education and should be considered the year of collaboration. Collaboration16 led to new student and teacher experiences that involved organizations like Texas Instruments, Texas Wildlife Association, Region XI Education Service Center, Tarleton State University, and the Fort Worth Stock Show & Rodeo. This year will be Exploration17. We hope to lead the way for a year of growth by exploring new ideas and partnerships. We hope you're a part of Exploration17!

Join us in our Educational Journey by Volunteering

BRIT Education can always use savvy volunteers to assist us in program preparation, technology support, and digital connections. Please contact Kimberly Whitlock if you are interested in learning more about the educational programs we will be offering this spring and summer.

Home on the BRIT Prairie

BRIT and the Fort Worth Stock Show & Rodeo are teaming up for the 2nd straight year to host the Wildlife Contest for 4-H and FFA students. Last year's contest brought over 60 area students to BRIT, with contestants ranging from 3rd graders to high school seniors. The focus of the competition will be wildlife habitat management, identification, and knowledge of plants, animals, and abiotic factors that play a role in the environment. The contest will be held on January 16th beginning at 9:00 a.m.

Plant Identification Contest at BRIT

This year The Fort Worth Stock Show & Rodeo agreed that BRIT would be the perfect place to host the Range and Pasture Plant identification contest in 2017. BRIT is excited to be the new host of one of the longest running competitions in the Fort Worth Stock Show & Rodeo's history. This contest will be held on January 21st with both a junior and senior division. Be sure to check back next month in February's leaflet to see who the winners of both competitions were!

Spring Teacher Tuesdays at BRIT – The STEM in Conservation Series

The 2017 Teacher Tuesday series will kick off with the topic: Design Thinking in Water Conservation. Wes Tait, an Environmental Engineer who focuses on designing strategies, will prepare teachers for the future challenges of water conservation and droughts, as well as changing the mindsets of all generations to be more sustainable with this valuable substance. Teachers will discuss the question, “how can we impact the future of water conservation?”



Nurture Your Legacy

Include BRIT in your estate planning and be remembered as someone who helped:

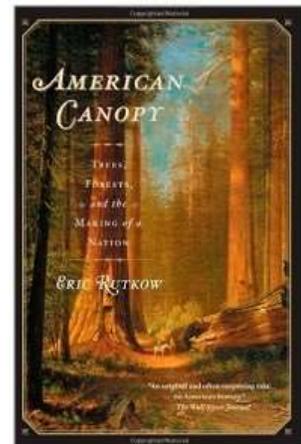
- Nurture the learning of thousands of children to discover the wonders of our natural heritage.
- Inspire and support educators in connecting learners to nature.
- Encourage ranchers and other landowners to protect thousands of acres of habitat for game animals, acres which are often full of unique local plants, many of which are useful and/or medicinal, too.
- Improve the ecological integrity of the Fort Worth urban ecosystem by empowering residents to make informed decisions about their impact on local resources.

To learn more about how you can advance the Botanical Research Institute of Texas' work through your estate planning, please call 817.332.9657 or email Cleve Lancaster at clancaster@brit.org.

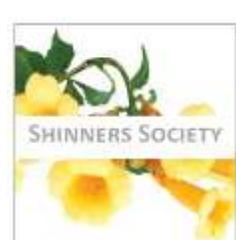
A Year of Reading with BRIT

The BRIT Reads Book Club had a great first year, and we're looking forward to a wonderful year of reading and conversation in 2017. Please join us on the third Monday of the month from noon – 1 p.m. and join the discussion! We read classic and new works related to botany, horticulture, natural history, and scientific exploration. For more information, please visit our [website](#) or email [Laura](#).

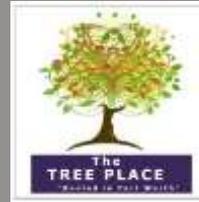
- No January Meeting
- Feb 20 - *American Canopy* – Eric Rutkow
- March 20 - *Second Nature: a gardener's education* – Michael Pollan
- April 17 - *The Invention of Nature: Alexander von Humboldt's New World* – Andrea Wulf
- May 15 - *Land of Grass and Sky* – Mary Taylor Young
- June 19 - *Empire of the Summer Moon* – S. C. Gwynne
- July 17 - *The Botany of Desire* – Michael Pollan
- No August Meeting
- Sept 18 - *The Species Seekers* – Richard Conniff
- Oct 16 - *The Founding Gardeners* – Andrea Wulf
- Nov 20 - *Inventology* – Pagan Kennedy
- No December Meeting



Membership is Just One Way to Support the Work at BRIT



Thank You to Our Reciprocal Membership Partners



Bring your BRIT membership card for special store discounts!

JANUARY

16th - Wildlife Competition

21st - Plant ID Competition

Every Thursday - BRIT tours at 1:30 p.m.

FEBRUARY

1st - Bella Book & Nature Club

4th - Bella's Story Time; Introduction to Permaculture for Home Gardeners; Plant ID; 10:30 Tour

7th - Bella Book & Nature Club; Brown Bag

13th - Volunteer University

20th - BRIT Reads Book Club

22nd - Soil Book Event - Cancelled

21st - Teacher Tuesday

Every Thursday - BRIT tours at 1:30 p.m.

Additional information can be found at brit.org.

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