Twenty-eleven was the best year in BRIT’s 20-year history! We moved into a cutting-edge LEED platinum-rated building, which was an achievement of the first order, especially considering where we started. As the year concluded, we also witnessed a developing collective vision that is providing new direction for the programs at BRIT, particularly our research program. Change has been so rapid this year that it has often been difficult for us, let alone the public, to grasp the depth, breadth, and significance of our achievements. Most of our constituents are very busy folks and cannot assimilate all that is happening, and sound bites cannot convey the totality of the programmatic changes. The Brave New World we are in has been a challenge for staff, too. It is for this reason that the President and CEO of BRIT has tried to catalyze small group orientations with small numbers of board members.

The collective vision that is emerging will enrich both our research and education programs in ways that our staff and our Board would not have thought possible before our move, and certainly not at BRIT’s founding. What now appears inevitable was at best a dream in 1993, when there were three staff members in a 10,000-square-foot warehouse in downtown Fort Worth.

It is our intention to see that our staff’s carefully developed vision is understood and supported by the Board and by BRIT’s broader constituency. As a first step toward building Board understanding and support, we are proposing a Board retreat, which will serve as a bookend to the Board’s last retreat, held in March, 2010, that laid the groundwork for BRIT’s continuing fulfillment of its mission in our new home.

Harry Bartel, Chairman S.H. Sohmer, President and CEO
Education

From our May 2011 opening to December 2011, over 10,300 visitors enjoyed a wide variety of BRIT experiences through its camps, preschool programs, family-day activities, and more, while The BRIT SEED School served over 1,500 teachers and students.

A highlight of the year was the dedication of the BRIT Education wing in honor of Suzy Peacock and the Rainwater Charitable Foundation. Since that time, the wing has made possible a slate of new programs for teachers, children, and families. A key goal of the education program was to provide a place for family learning and, in the process, inspire a love for the outdoors and nature. A gift from the Fash Foundation allowed BRIT to provide learning opportunities for over 1,200 children and their families, at no cost.

Education’s Family Saturday programs attracted families who benefitted from an expo by the Tarrant Regional Water District and others; the North Texas Renewable Energy Group, who provided demonstrations; and Prairie Day, where they learned about native and invasive plant species.

Education’s Early Childhood Learning program is exemplified by Bella’s Story Time, an immensely popular activity where Education Specialist Pam Chamberlain entertains and educates with a stylized begonia hand-puppet. The program was offered, at no charge, to 470 young families in 2011. The latest development has been a bi-lingual story time, so that Spanish-speaking parents and children can hear the stories in both English and their first language, Spanish.
The BRIT SEED School, a new arm of the Education department, sprouted from an endowment gift from the Rainwater Charitable Foundation, given to grow a teacher education program that excels in place-based experiential education. The gift for this program, as well as funding for the education wing, was given by Mr. Richard Rainwater in honor of Suzy Peacock. The BRIT SEED School developed and facilitated 12 professional development workshops and four discussion groups this year inspiring more than 251 teachers to use the outdoors as a classroom.

Our facility was designed to have students exploring our campus inside and out, and it has served its purpose this year. In early spring, we collaborated with BRIT public programs to facilitate three days of learning with Imagination Celebration serving 264 students. With the arrival of our new education specialist in October, we began to offer day-long field trips. Within three months, we served over 467 students. Our field trip program is unique because it utilizes inquiry and place-based learning, providing opportunities for students to explore and connect with nature in an urban landscape.

The new Teacher Resource Center is a special place for educators to network with colleagues, prepare lessons, write curriculum, and utilize BRIT resources. The Val Wilkie collection of teacher resources provides over 587 books and field guides and 26 types of equipment for K-20 educators to check out, at no cost. In the eight months since our facility has been open, 16 educators have checked out resources and approximately 345 have used our center and classroom, including regular meetings of FWISD’s science content teachers.

Another goal achieved this year was to become more active in our local, regional, and state-wide communities. We applied to and were accepted to present workshops at CAST (a state-wide conference for Texas science teachers) and at the Trinity River Institute at the Trinity River Audubon Center. Between these two conferences, we served 124 Texas educators. We also participated in the Educator Evening in the Cultural District, which enabled us to reach out to 81 local K-12 teachers and pre-service teachers. The BRIT SEED School has also been a major player in the development of the Texas Children in Nature Network, both on the regional and state level. Additionally, The BRIT SEED School represents BRIT on the Texas Environmental Educators’ Advisory Committee in Austin, Texas.

It was a very productive first year in our new building.
Herbarium

Increasing the rate of documentation of remaining areas of high biodiversity, as well as increasing the Institute’s ability to accept orphaned collections, are important objectives fulfilling BRIT’s mission of conserving our natural heritage.

For the herbarium, 2011 was an unusual year, as it was moved to the new BRIT building in February, was closed to visitors until late May, and was closed to transactions until July. This would be expected to decrease the number of visitors and transactions, but of course, the publicity surrounding the new facility greatly increased both of these. Volunteer numbers soared in 2011, and herbarium volunteers mounted more than 10,000 specimens (up from around 7,000 in 2010). Overall, acquisitions were nearly double the previous year (14,415 in 2011 versus 7,267 in 2010). Transactions in all the following categories were higher than the previous year: gifts and exchanges received and sent, loan transactions received, and loan transactions sent—this also includes higher numbers of international and student loan requests. We are so pleased that our new facilities allow us to provide better service to researchers and students around the world, and we look forward to even higher numbers in 2012.

- During 2011, BRIT received and processed 30 loan requests, sending out 1,685 specimens to 24 institutions.
- Researchers at BRIT, including visiting researchers, received 1,165 specimens as loans from other herbaria.
- BRIT received 8,442 specimens as gifts and exchanges from individuals, botanical institutions, and university herbaria worldwide.
- Gifts and exchanges sent from BRIT to other institutions totaled 2,471 specimens.
- In 2011, 10,317 specimens were mounted and filed at BRIT. With 4,098 additional mounted gifts and exchange, 14,415 specimens were accessioned into the BRIT collections.
- One hundred and nine wonderful volunteers worked 4,760 hours in the herbarium and mounted more than 10,000 specimens.
- Over 6,721 people toured the herbarium.
- Approximately 22 researchers visited the BRIT-SMU-VDB Collections in 2011.
- Over 300 inquiries from researchers and the general public were answered by BRIT Herbarium staff on the topics of plant information, herbarium information, plant identifications, and other botanical issues.

### Herbarium Braille

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Herbarium</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BRIT-SMU VDB Total</td>
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<tr>
<td>ACQUISITIONS</td>
<td>14,415</td>
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<td>Specimens Mounted</td>
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<td>Specimens</td>
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<td>To student investigators</td>
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<tr>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Increasing the rate of documentation of remaining areas of high biodiversity, as well as increasing the Institute’s ability to accept orphaned collections, are important objectives fulfilling BRIT’s mission of conserving our natural heritage.
Development

Stepping through the looking glass summarizes our experience in 2011. We gained new perspectives on the familiar and ventured into new areas.

Flora™ the gift store at BRIT
The area of retail tops the list in stepping into new ventures. Flora the gift store at BRIT, strives to feature sustainable products, along with traditional gift items. It featured several popular and unique products during our first year.

Previously unemployed men and women in rural KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa, create handmade jewelry to support their families, while creating pride in their work and hope for their communities. Long known for their skills amongst Zulu and Xhosa clans, Thanda Zulu beaders now earn, on average, seven times the national minimum wage. All profits go to support HIV/AIDS orphans through after-school programs, empowering them to create long-term changes with a focus on entrepreneurship, poverty alleviation, and HIV/AIDS prevention.

Encato Jewels jewelry is a fair trade company that produces handmade jewelry in Columbia from high-quality tagua nuts that come from medium-size palm trees in the tropical forests of Columbia, Ecuador, and Peru. The workers are paid fairly and respected, using a sustainable and eco-friendly source to create a better future for themselves.

Spencer Peterman Bowls are created in the United States from already-fallen or felled trees. By turning the wood on a lathe, this artisan creates strikingly unique and functional items.

Events
Second only to the gift store for new ventures is rental of BRIT’s facility to the public for business meetings, weddings, conferences, and even a 50th wedding anniversary.

The familiar BRIT events like the International Award of Excellence in Conservation and Fête du Vin gain heightened importance as BRIT’s platinum LEED building made tangible the organization’s commitment to conservation and
sustainability. John Cain Carter, cattle rancher, pragmatic entrepreneur, visionary leader, and founder of Aliança da Terra, a Brazilian rainforest conservation organization, received the 2011 International Award of Excellence in Conservation in front of an audience of 400 BRIT advocates.

Fête also had a wonderful turnout, and BRIT saw tremendous growth with this event. Parducci Winery of California received the 2011 International Award of Excellence in Sustainable Winegrowing. Tim Thornhill owner of Parducci was present to accept.

Membership
Membership in 2011 saw huge growth, from 316 to 1,115. The membership push began with our public opening in May where a membership table greeted the near 4,000 people who attended. Throughout the year, we followed with a creative, branded membership campaign and members-only events. We even leveraged our new social media presence to reach new audiences and gain members.

Marketing
In 2011, Marketing put into action plans made during 2010. The brand initiated in 2010 infused all things BRIT and gained solidarity in 2011.
Across BRIT programs, Basic Research is being conducted at four regional levels:

1. Local: Boots on the Ground,
2. State: Sustainability,
3. National: Knowledge Creation and Distribution, and

Local: Boots on the Ground
• In 2011, 17 Research Associates joined the BRIT staff to increase our technical expertise. Each is working on various projects either with BRIT staff or on personal research.
• New genetic research equipment was purchased allowing extraction of genetic material from plant samples and proper preservation of these samples. New tools purchased included a minus-twenty-degree freezer, spectrophotometer, and tissue disruptor—all essentials in genetic research.
• The BRIT staff was challenged to develop and conduct research that would benefit the local area. Interdepartmental project teams rose to the challenge in the fall of 2011 and began to work on three research areas: Texas flora diversity, urban grasslands, and botanical education.
• Brooke Byerley and Jason Best led a team that worked with Southwest Museum Services from Houston, Texas, to create a permanent exhibit about BRIT’s living roof. The centerpiece of the exhibit is an interactive, digital touch table. The table allows users to access a pictorial field guide to the plants on the roof, as well as view and manipulate a live video feed of the roof.

National: Knowledge Creation and Distribution
• Through a meeting held in November, Pat Harrison, Keri Barfield, and Will McClatchey worked with participants of the Open Science Network (OSN) to create an ethnobiological Vision and Change statement (based on the AAAS report Vision and Change in Undergraduate Biology Education: A Call to Action) and recommendations for both ethnobiological literacy and ethnobiological curricula at the college level.
• McClatchey, Barfield, and Dave Reedy planned and prepared for the Conservation Ethnobiology Field School on Kauai Island, Hawaii, which will be taught in February 2012. This program provides key educational enhancements to students who are planning to conduct ethnobiological field research.

International: Biodiversity Hotspot Exploration
• Reedy conducted field work in Moorea, French Polynesia, on the ethnobotanical uses of Typhaceae (cattails) and adaptations of invasive species. Reedy also conducted field work in Tahiti, French Polynesia, on rebirth and revitalization of kava (Piper methysticum) in Tahitian culture as part of a larger “Biogeography of Piperaceae in Oceania” project.
• In Peru, vanilla plants were propagated at field sites in Cusco and in the BRIT-Peru greenhouse at La Molina University in Lima, Peru. Once rooted, the clones were transplanted into experimental plantations in the departments of Cusco and Junin, Peru.
• McClatchey and Reedy conducted field research on cider orchard biocomplexity in Canada and several New England states. Their research also took them to Germany, Austria, Switzerland, and France, where they interviewed about 30 orchardists mostly in the Normandy and Brittany regions. They also spent time at the USDA Research Station in Geneva, New York, collecting over 150 specimens of Malus (apple). This duo has begun building a library of genetic materials by collecting over 100 samples of Malus for DNA extraction. Additionally, they collected over
100 pieces of grafting material of *Malus* to duplicate the U.S. National Apple Collection, at the species level, in the Fort Worth area.

- The BRIT-Peru team continued to collaborate with wildlife biologists from the San Diego Zoo to inventory and monitor biodiversity at research sites in southeastern Peru. Plants, vegetation formations, and faunal communities were documented. The team captured photographs of a variety of mammals that were monitored by motion sensor camera traps in the region.

### Outreach and Scientific Publications

- Members of the Research department gave over 20 presentations to various organizations and institutions. At several scientific conferences, the staff presented results from current research projects. These included the Botanical Society of America, Society for Economic Botany, and Ecological Society of America.

- Funding received in 2011 included funds supporting an Improvements to Biological Research Collections grant from the National Science Foundation and support from the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund in partnership with the Caribbean Wildlife Alliance to collect and identify all the species of plants that grow in Hellshire Hills, Jamaica.

- Members of the Research department submitted 11 scientific publications to be published regarding current research projects.


Press

The Journal of the Botanical Research Institute of Texas is BRIT’s semi-annual, peer-reviewed scientific publication. It is published and distributed to nearly 900 subscribers worldwide.

Volume 5, number 1 was published in August 2011 with 396 pages; volume 5, number 2 was published in December 2011 with 504 pages. The combined 900 pages comprised 93 articles contributed by 209 authors. Some 110 new plant names and new combinations were published in 2011.

Six new BRIT Press books were published for 2011.

Distribution of Grasses in Texas, by Robert B. Shaw, Barron S. Rector, and Amanda M. Dube, was published March 2011.

A Systematic Vademecum to the Vascular Plants of Puerto Rico, by Franklin S. Axelrod, was published April 2011.

The Beauty of Houseplants, by Tom Gough and David Longman, was published in May 2011. This book is somewhat of a departure from most BRIT Press publications, being written for the layperson. It illustrates over 70 houseplants with a detailed guide to their individual care and includes how to put right what goes wrong.

An Agreeable Landscape: Historical Botany and Plant Biodiversity of a Sonoran Desert Bottomland, 1855-1920, by Kathryn Mauz, was published in June 2011.

The Annotated Checklist of the Vascular Plants of Alabama, by Robert Kral and others was published in August 2011. The first author, Dr. Robert Kral, is a BRIT research associate.

The Mosses of Madre de Dios, Peru, by Piers Majestyk and John P. Janovec, was published in September 2011. The second author, John Janovec, is a former BRIT staff member.

Community Outreach
In an effort to raise community awareness of BRIT and to expand the knowledge and understanding of the plant world, Barney Lipscomb, the Leonhardt Chair of Texas Botany, conducted group tours and spoke to numerous organizations, school groups, plant enthusiast groups, and identified plants. In 2011, he presented 30 public lectures to 1,432 school children and adults. This included lectures on poisonous plants and forensic botany to such groups as the Texas Science Teachers Association; Sul Ross State University Biology Department; Texas A&M University, Forensic Entomology course; the Allergy Fellows at UT Southwestern Medical Center; and UT Southwestern Clinical Toxicology Grand Rounds.

Grants and revenue generating projects associated with Press related activities generated $85,393, including the sale of over 1,100 BRIT Press books.

External funding sources supporting BRIT Press publications in 2011 included the Renewable Resources Extension Act; Texas AgriLife Research and Extension Service, the Institute of Renewable Natural Resources (Texas A&M); Center for Applied Tropical Ecology and Conservation of the University of Puerto Rico–Río Piedras; The National Science Foundation; The Alabama State Lands Division of the Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources; The Inge Foundation; Carroll Collins; Mr. & Mrs. Weston K. Mauz; and contributing authors and subscribers (individuals and institutions).
Biodiversity Informatics (BDI)

Since before its inception in 2009, the Biodiversity Informatics team has been developing revolutionary technologies to enhance and support research activities at BRIT. These include the Atrium® Biodiversity Information System and the Apiary Project, together intended to increase access to, and use of, digitized biological collections.

Apiary
In 2011, the Biodiversity Informatics team completed the Apiary Project. Apiary is a web-based digital workflow that streamlines the extraction of label and annotation data from herbarium specimens. This web-based interface allows quick and accurate extraction of textual data from digital specimen images with the assistance of computer processes such as optical character recognition (OCR), reducing reliance on traditional, tedious manual transcription. Apiary was developed through a collaborative effort between BRIT staff and the University of North Texas’s Texas Center for Digital Knowledge (TxCDK). The TxCDK team was composed of University of North Texas (UNT) students and research assistants and was led by Director Dr. Bill Moen. The project was funded through a National Leadership Grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS).

On August 31, the final report for the Apiary Project was submitted to IMLS by Bill Moen of UNT, Jason Best, and Amanda Neill. On September 1, we officially released Apiary version 1.0 as an open-source project available to the botanical community for use at other institutions and for further enhancement by the biodiversity informatics community. Since the completion of version 1.0, Apiary has been the primary tool used for digitization of the Texas specimens at BRIT through the internship programs sponsored by chapters of the Native Plant Society of Texas.

Atrium
A new image server was implemented for all Atrium instances in 2011. The new image server allows for full resolution specimen images to be accessible through Atrium both through a web interface that allows for panning and zooming of the images, as well as in high resolution format suitable for print publication through Atrium digital flora, field guides, and other means.

The Global Biodiversity Information Facility (GBIF) Integrated Publishing Toolkit (IPT) was installed for initial configuration and evaluation for global dissemination of Atrium data. The IPT is the latest technology created by GBIF, which replaces the DiGIR technology previously utilized for specimen data aggregation.

GIS and Data Analysis
In 2011, BRIT’s Geographic Information Systems (GIS) infrastructure was expanded with the addition of a new workstation that has the computing power and storage necessary for visualizing and analyzing large and complex geospatial datasets. Additionally, a suite of GIS server technology was installed and configured to facilitate collaboration and sharing of GIS data. A new technical library was also developed to provide easy access to a wide range of GIS and data analysis books and other resources.
Digitization Workflow
Improvements were made to the specimen digitization workflow, including the integration of Apiary into the workflow process. Portions of the digitization workflow were automated to ensure accurate and consistent management of digital specimen images. The workflow improvements that were made also provide for more reliable storage, curation, dissemination, and preservation of the digital assets created at BRIT.

BRIT Guide to Texas Range and Pasture Plants
BDI worked with the Herbarium, Press, and Education to develop a mobile phone application to aid in the identification of key range and pasture plants of Texas. This application focuses on the plants that are studied by students who compete in the range and pasture plant identification competition that is held every year at the Fort Worth Stock Show and Rodeo. This application includes images and information on about 129 species and a quiz to help students improve their plant identification skills. The application was publicly announced during the 2012 stock show in January and is available for both iOS (iPhone and iPad) and Android devices.

Infrastructure
In collaboration with the BRIT Herbarium, BDI deployed a cloud computing cluster that substantially expands the storage capacity for our digitization efforts and provides the computing infrastructure needed to deploy the djatoka image server, which is being used for both Atrium and Apiary projects. The cluster provides the framework that allows for the expansion of storage and computing needs as digitization and informatics projects at BRIT continue to grow.

Products and Outreach
• The Biodiversity Informatics team completed the Apiary project: a two-year project in collaboration with the University of North Texas funded by the Institute of Museum and Library Services.
• Biodiversity Informatics, in collaboration with multiple departments at BRIT, released its first mobile phone application, BRIT Guide to Texas Range and Pasture Plants.
• Attendance at the Science Software Innovation Institute workshop also sponsored by the US National Science Foundation in Chicago, IL.
• Attendance at the Texas-Oklahoma Regional Consortium of Herbaria (TORCH) Digitization Workshop to present Apiary and a prototype scanning station for herbaria: Jason Best and Amanda Neill.
• Presentation of the Apiary workflow at the Society for Preservation of Natural History Collections (SPNHC) annual meeting in San Francisco: Jason Best.
• Presentation of Atrium to the staff of United Way Fort Worth during their retreat hosted at BRIT: Tiana Rehman and Jason Best.
• Presentation of Atrium, Apiary, and the BRIT specimen digitization process to computer science students from Trinity Valley School.
• Participation in Science Saturdays at BRIT by demonstrating Atrium, Apiary, and the specimen digitization process: various staff.
• Attendence at the Taxonomic Databases Working Group annual meeting in New Orleans, Louisiana: Jason Best, Amanda Neill, and Tiana Rehman. At this meeting, Best demonstrated the Apiary project with Neill.
• An Improvements to Biological Research Collections grant from NSF was awarded to Amanda Neill (BRIT) and Wayne Elsens (University of Oklahoma) to support a three-day meeting, discussing the discovery, selection, and best practices for digitizing herbaria. Numerous individuals from the Texas-Oklahoma region gathered in Junction, Texas, representing several regional consortia and herbaria.
In 2011, over 6,000 hours were donated to BRIT by 381 volunteers. Volunteers were found participating in every aspect of BRIT’s operations, from mounting plants in the herbarium to pulling Johnson grass on the prairie. An amazing group of people from diverse backgrounds take BRIT’s mission to heart as part of a personal quest. BRIT is fortunate to have a large group of dedicated and intelligent volunteers who make BRIT a better place. Below you’ll find the volunteers who gave 100 or more hours in 2011.

Martha Mullens . . . 344
Kay Yount . . . . 327
Troy Mullens . . . . 318
Darrell Brandon . . 264
Paula Billman . . . 232
Joann Karges . . . 227
Peggy Erb . . . . 209
Helen Jeude . . . . 174
John Erwin . . . . 167
Karen Burkett . . . 136
Barbara Koerble . . 135
John Stanley . . . 133
Starr Krottinger . . 131
Vicki Moore . . . . 130
Richard Lankow . . 128
Regina Dunn . . . . 127
Vivia Daniels . . . 116
Rebecca Danvers . . 113
Valerie Taber . . . . 105
Laura Negus . . . . 105
Richard Dunn . . . 104
Patricia DeWoody . . 103
Winifred Bottom . . 103
Jana Talbott . . . . 102

Thanks To All Our 2011 Volunteers!
Library

Community Outreach
During 2011, the librarian presented eight programs or tours to 380 students and adults. Among our visitors were high school students, college students, the interested public, garden club members, and science teachers.

Library Catalog
Bibliographic records for all cataloged material in the Botanical Library are now available through the Cultural District Library Consortium web page. This web page is supported by Texas Christian University and reflects the holdings of all the museums in the District.

Volunteer Support
We are supported by a dedicated core of volunteers. Craig Elam is assisting with managing space in the stacks and putting the books into one logical sequence. Joann Karges is helping catalog our newly acquired books. Kay Stansbery and Laura Negrus are assisting with our retrospective classification project. Penny McCook has been assisting with special projects.

Those who review books for the Journal of the Botanical Research Institute of Texas are also assisting the library, because as their review is published in the Journal of the Botanical Research Institute of Texas the book reviewed is added to the library’s collection.
BUILDING A FUTURE AND PRESERVING THE PAST

Our ongoing success. Thank you.

Anonymous donors who, at their
request, wish to remain anonymous.

Mr. and Mrs. David Davis from Little Bear Aggregate
Bates Container, Inc.
Bates Container, Inc.

David Davis from Little Bear Aggregate
Bates Container, Inc.
Bates Container, Inc.