BRIT’s Award of Excellence in Conservation Gala honors those who have become role models for environmental stewardship. This prestigious award has recognized the contributions of such luminaries as:

**John Graves**, Texas author and nature writer (2004);

**David Bramwell**, director, Jardín Botánico Canario “Viera y Clavijo,” Canary Islands (2003);

**Sam Cooke**, business executive, philanthropist, and one of the foremost conservationists/environmentalists in Hawaii (2002);

**Juan Carlos Navarro**, mayor of Panama City, Panama, and founder of the Association for the Conservation of Nature (ANCON) (2001);

**Texas Parks & Wildlife** represented by then Director Andrew Sansom, then Chairman Lee Bass, and Chairman Emeritus Perry Bass (2000);

**Jane Goodall**, renowned for her work with chimpanzees (1999);

**Sir Ghillian Prance**, formerly the director of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew (1998);

**Lady Bird Johnson**, whose untiring efforts promoted beauty and environmental responsibility throughout America (1997);

**José María Figueres**, then president of Costa Rica, who promoted sustainable development and led the way in preserving the rainforests in his country (1996); and

**Richard Evans Shultes**, renowned plant explorer, and **Cyrus Longworth Lundell**, honored posthumously for his efforts to preserve the remaining remnant of the blackland prairie (1995).

BRIT’s annual event is one of the most important ways for increasing public awareness of the Institute’s mission and programs. Through support of the event, corporations, foundations, and individuals help make possible our programs in education, collections, publications, and research. In 2004, the award gala netted close to $180,000 and provided funds used for paying staff salaries, utility bills, and rent.

I hope you will be a part of the 11th annual International Award of Excellence Gala on 6 April 2005 when we honor **Winthrop Paul Rockefeller**, lieutenant governor of Arkansas. Make a positive impact on present and future generations and join BRIT in creating a better environment by conserving our botanical heritage.

**Wednesday, 6 April 2005**

**Grand Ballroom,**

**Renaissance Worthington Hotel**

**Fort Worth, Texas**

**ISSUE HIGHLIGHTS**

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The Honorable Winthrop Paul Rockefeller, lieutenant governor of Arkansas, has been chosen to receive BRIT’s 2005 International Award of Excellence in Conservation. Through his support of TCU’s Ranch Management Program; commitment to responsible, sustainable agricultural practices at Winrock Farms; and active participation in numerous organizations, he makes a significant impact in conservation.

TCU RANCH MANAGEMENT PROGRAM
A graduate of the Ranch Management Program, Lt. Governor Rockefeller supports the program in various ways. He made a challenge grant in 1988 of more than one million dollars to construct and maintain a building specifically designed for the program if alumni and friends could raise $2.1 million in endowment within three years. The result was that 632 loyal alumni and friends more than met the challenge in less than the allotted time. The program now has more than 1,250 graduates from 40 states and 23 nations. A random sampling showed that 257 of them were managing more than six million acres of native rangeland, tame pasture, and cropland, not only applying sound ecological and economic principles in resource management for themselves and their families, but also serving as community leaders and good examples for others.

WINROCK FARMS
Winrock Farms has become a model for responsible, sustainable agriculture. Irrigation water is recycled through a tail water system, and a reservoir stores surface water rather than using groundwater. No-till planting, in which crops are planted into the harvested crop rather than in newly tilled soil, reduces soil erosion and enhances the moisture retention abilities of the soil. Livestock graze in rotating pastures so that unused pastures retain moisture and suffer less erosion. Winrock Farms also developed a forestry program where pine timber and hardwoods are planted on highly erodible land. Rice fields are flooded after harvest to create a winter waterfowl habitat.

OTHER ORGANIZATIONS
Lt. Governor Rockefeller is founding chair of the Billfish Foundation, the leading organization dedicated to the conservation of billfish (marlin, sailfish, spearfish, and swordfish) and the primary source of billfish research in the world. He is active in the British Virgin Islands National Parks Trust and has served on the national boards of The Nature Conservancy and Ducks Unlimited, which presented him with the Bert McKeek award.
During October and November 2004, the Andes to Amazon Botany Program team conducted expeditions into remote regions of the Amazonian lowlands of Madre de Dios, Peru. Using computer mapping technology, they calculated that there are at least 300 individual wetlands in this region, forming a total area of 30,000 hectares (100,000 acres). During the expedition the team walked more than 200 kilometers (124 miles) through the palm swamp and bog wetlands of the Madre de Dios River basin to inventory plant diversity, vegetation ecology, and habitat types. The team discovered more than 300 plant species growing in the wetlands, forming a rich mosaic of communities and habitats, from open carnivorous plant bogs and large fern-dominated grasslands, to dense flooded forests dominated by the Aguaje palm (*Mauritia flexuosa* – Arecaceae).

Funding for this and other projects of the Andes to Amazon Botany Program is provided by the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation, the Beneficia Foundation, and the World Wildlife Fund. Amazon Conservation Association, Asociación para la Conservación de la Cuenca Amazónica, the staff of the Los Amigos Biological Station and Conservation Area, and Professor Asunción Cano and students of the San Marcos Herbarium in Lima, Peru, provided logistical support and services. INRENA, the Peruvian Ministry of Natural Resources, is a supporter of the project, providing permission for botanical research and collection in the Andes-Amazon region of Peru.

**Field Report: An Expedition to the vast Palm Wetlands of Madre de Dios, Peru**

*John Janovec and Fernando Cornejo process and study plant specimens in preparation for the major botanical component of the wetland inventory.* (Photo by Mathias Tobler)

*Mathias Tobler uses a sophisticated Trimble field computer and Geographic Positioning System (GPS) combination to collect, process, and store data and to track movement and data collection points across the long wetland transects.* (Photo by AABP)
Andes to Amazon Botany Program Receives Award from the Stanley Smith Horticulture Trust of California

John Janovec, BRIT research botanist and head of the Andes to Amazon Botany Program, and Amanda Neill, BRIT collections manager, in collaboration with John Langevin, Fort Worth Botanic Garden, have been awarded a $15,000 grant from the Stanley Smith Horticulture Trust of San Francisco, California. Established to promote research and teaching in any branch of horticulture, the Trust's mission includes the creation, development, and maintenance of botanical gardens; the promotion of the cultivation and wide dissemination of plants with value to mankind; and assistance in the publication of books or other works related to the science of horticulture.

The Andes to Amazon Botany team will use the support provided by the Stanley Smith Horticulture Trust to document potential ornamental plant species of the Andes-Amazon region of southeastern Peru. The work will be carried out in conjunction with ongoing botanical exploration in the departments of Cuzco and Madre de Dios of southeastern Peru. Selected plant species discovered during botanical exploration will be grown and studied in nursery and garden settings at a site in the Andes and another in the Amazon. A project plant sale and plant giveaway at local schools will be sponsored, and a scientific publication about the results of the project will be produced.

BRIT IN PERU • 16 – 22 June 2005 • Machu Picchu Extension, 20 – 23 June

Join BRIT in this rare opportunity to meet dedicated scientists working at Los Amigos Research Station in southeastern Peru, an area surrounded by exceptional diversity of plant and animal species. Monkeys, tapirs, jaguars, macaws, and an extraordinary list of other bird families inhabit this pristine tropical forest.

In the vibrant city of Lima, visit the museums and universities partnering with BRIT through the Institute’s newly established satellite office in Peru. Offering excellent restaurants and shopping, the Miraflores district of the city is near the premier JW Marriott Hotel, which overlooks the Pacific Ocean.

Machu Picchu Extension: Breath-taking Incan ruins of Machu Picchu are only a few hours train ride from Cuzco, a modern yet magical city rooted in Quichian Indian traditions and located high in the Andes mountains. The Monistario Hotel, a five-star accommodation, is a short walk to the heart of the city where colonial cathedrals stand on the stone foundations of Incan temples and palaces.

For additional information, contact Cleve Lancaster at clancaster@brit.org or (817) 332-4441 ext. 12.

The trip is limited to 10 participants.

*Approximately 25% of your cost is a tax-deductible donation to BRIT.
Celebrate spring at the Fort Worth Botanic Garden with a visit to the tropical butterfly exhibit, which will include the rare and exotic Birdwing butterflies. Educational opportunities featuring live butterflies in the conservatory along with the Pollination Partnership exhibit will be available to schools and families throughout the month of March.

Education programs in conjunction with Butterflies in the Garden will help students learn how butterflies see.

**VITAL LINK**

Four seventh grade students from Rosemont Middle School served as Vital Link program interns at BRIT during the week of 15-19 November. Vital Link interns Monica Arriaga, Jeffery Baker, Stephanie Bera, and Fidencio Carranza, under guidance of Vital Link teacher supervisor Johnnie Polk, helped with projects in the education and publications programs and in the herbarium and library at BRIT.

Barney Lipscomb shows Vital Link students how BRIT botanists use microscopes and plant material to help solve crimes.

**T.M. BARKLEY PLANT SCIENCE AND ECOLOGY SEMINAR SERIES**

The academic seminars promote collegial sharing of current advances and research and are open to university faculty, students, and the science community at large. Seminars are held at 4:30 p.m. in the Winton Scott Building, Room 415, Texas Christian University. Parking information for TCU is available on the BRIT Web site at http://www.brit.org/Education/NTPSES.htm.

**Spring 2005**

10 February – Bruce Benz, Ph.D., Texas Wesleyan University
“Maize Evolution Among the Maya of Chiapas, Mexico”

24 March – Glenn Kroh, Ph.D., Texas Christian University
“The Natural History of the Monahan’s Dune Fields, West Texas”

14 April – Guy Nesom, Ph.D., Botanical Research Institute of Texas
“Evolution and Classification of Asteraceae: Overview of Current Tensions”
Legacy is a majestic sounding word that may refer to something as grand as priceless jewels or as simple as the leaf of a plant carefully preserved for centuries. A legacy of botanical knowledge resides at BRIT, where collections are created by scholars, scientists, and others who recognize the significance of documenting the plants on which we all depend.

Anyone has the potential to create a legacy that will benefit future generations. Individuals at BRIT have decided to create their own botanical legacy by providing a gift through their estates.

Ray and Marci Mercado are members of the Shinners Society, BRIT's bequest organization. When asked about their decision to include BRIT in their wills, Marci explains, “You don’t have to be a millionaire to make an important difference in the world.”

To find out more about the Shinners Society, contact Cleve Lancaster at (817) 332-4441 ext. 12 or clancaster@brit.org.

Sixth Annual Shinners Society Dinner

BRIT trustees, special guests, and staff attended the sixth annual Shinners Society Dinner, held at River Crest Country Club in October, to honor members of BRIT's planned giving society. BRIT Chairman Tim McKinney, host for the evening’s event, recognized Society members and thanked them for their commitment to BRIT's mission and for their confidence in the future of the organization as expressed by the inclusion of the Botanical Research Institute of Texas in their estate plans.

Members recognized at the dinner included Mary Barkley, Marci and Ray Mercado, Bob O'Kennon, Iona and Denny Richardson, Judith and Tim Sear, Sara and Sy Sohmer, Sue and George Sumner, and Janie Thannisch. Members William R. Burk, Marie Louise Cole, Ruth Andersson May, Jane Romine, and Vernon J. Wesby were unable to attend. As a permanent tribute to members of the Shinners Society, a plaque engraved with each name is prominently displayed in the reception area at BRIT.

Remarks by Mary Barkley and by Barney Lipscomb on behalf of Vernon Wesby explained their heartfelt commitment and support of BRIT. Speaking to the group about Building the Botanical Research Institute of Texas, Sy Sohmer, director and president of BRIT, outlined the organization’s history and plans for future growth.

In Memory
Vernon L. Wesby
1910–2004

Vernon Wesby and his wife, Marie, moved to Texas after retiring from careers in the Chicago area. Vern, a nature photographer, and Marie, an artist, set out together to document and celebrate the beautiful Texas flora. Vern’s friendship with BRIT goes back to the early 1980s when he and Marie visited Dr. Wm. F. Mahler and Barney Lipscomb at Southern Methodist University in Dallas, seeking guidance in preparing for publication of a collection of Marie’s paintings of Texas plants. After Marie’s death, Vern published Treasury of Texas Flora: The Botanical Watercolors of Marie C. Wesby, co-authored by Susan M. Sander. He donated all of Marie’s watercolor paintings, along with other art pieces, and a copy of her book to BRIT. In 2002, he presented to the BRIT library The Wesby Collection of Newfoundland Wildflower Watercolor Sketch Books and Newfoundland Wildflower Color Slides.

As part of the program at the annual Shinners Society dinner held in October, Vern was asked to share remarks about his interest in BRIT and his decision to include the Institute in his will. Although ill health prevented him from attending, he asked that the following comments be read: “I have always believed in BRIT and BRIT's mission. I’ve never forgotten that first meeting more than 20 years ago at the SMU Herbarium. Please know I wanted to be there with you to celebrate and share with others my belief in the work of this organization.”
Donations 1 September – 30 November 2004

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Mr. and Mrs. John Young
Gift to the Library

Knowing the importance of caring for valuable printed material, BRIT volunteer and former TCU librarian Joann Karges generously donated funds to pay for binding scientific journals in BRIT’s library. Binding the journals greatly increases shelf life, prevents loss of issues, and ensures that the journals will be preserved for use by today’s researchers as well as those in the future.

BRIT Archives Available Online

While all roads may not lead to BRIT, the World Wide Web can do just that! Recently, a University of Leeds (United Kingdom) student visiting BRIT’s online catalog found information important to his research about Pandanaceae. Based on these findings, the student plans a visit to BRIT to examine the material.

The Botanical Research Institute of Texas currently has archival finding guides available online. These guides include a narrative about the archives and a brief biographic essay as well as a detailed listing of what is included in each series (e.g., correspondence, field notes) and a listing of the folders in each container in the series. Having these valuable materials online and readily accessible to researchers around the world contributes to BRIT’s ranking as a top botanical research library. Currently working toward completion of the finding guide for the Benjamin Stone Archives, volunteer archivist Ruth Ginsberg provides invaluable assistance in sorting, filing, and cataloging materials.

Joann Karges
Teachers are invited to attend spring workshops filled with everything from rocks to bugs to plants in the grocery store! Leaders will guide participants through background information and activities exploring concepts and practice skills listed in the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). BRIT education staff provide a relaxed and supportive setting, including a meal/snack, for workshops held after school or on weekends. All workshops include curriculum, Continuing Professional Education (CPE) credit, and 15% off BRIT education books and curricula. Registration information is available at http://www.brit.org/Education/WorkSpInfo.htm.

To register, contact Kathy Scott at (817) 332-4441 ext. 37 or kscott@brit.org.
School Program Docents Needed

Through programs at BRIT and in school classrooms, over 2,300 students in pre-kindergarten through fifth grade practiced the skills of a scientist and explored the herbarium during fall 2004. BRIT is preparing for a spring semester packed with school programs designed to help students become more excited about science and nature. Additional volunteers are needed to help ensure quality experiences for a larger number of participants.

Docents lead hands-on science activities with students at BRIT and guide groups through nature trails and activities at the Fort Worth Botanic Garden. Although training is provided, experience working with children is helpful. Docents volunteer two to eight hours a week, Wednesday through Friday, depending on the program schedule. If interested in becoming a volunteer, please contact Kathy Scott at 817-332-4441, ext. 37.

Native Prairies and Wildflowers Weekend

19 January
Noon – 1:00 p.m.
BRIT Learning Center
“Use of High Technology in Biodiversity Exploration” with Mathias Tobler
Ph.D. student, Texas A&M University (TAMU) Spatial Science Laboratory Botanical Research Institute of Texas, Andes to Amazon Botany Program
Mathias will present information about the use of technology in biodiversity exploration, highlighting technology and tools being developed, tested, and applied through the Andes to Amazon Botany Program and with other projects where he has worked. This will include an introduction and demonstration of the project’s Geographic Information System (GIS), high-resolution aerial and satellite images of the study region, handheld field databases and Geographic Positioning Systems (GPS), and the technology used to track tapirs and other mammals that move across the landscape.

23 February
Noon – 1:00 p.m.
BRIT Learning Center
“The Botany of Brewing” with Robert George
Editorial assistant, Flora of East Texas
Robert will speak on the origin of barley and hops and the history of the brew, with information about the process of malting barley and the addition of hops for its antiseptic purposes.

23 March
Noon – 1:00 p.m.
Garden Center, Fort Worth Botanic Garden
“Butterflies in the Garden” with Joann Karges
Lepidopterist and BRIT volunteer
Joann will introduce the species of butterflies that are flying in the spring butterfly exhibit at the Fort Worth Botanic Garden. One of the featured species will be the Birdwing butterfly (Prorides Helena), which will be flown in North Texas for the first time.

20 April
Noon – 1:00 p.m.
BRIT Learning Center
“A Field Report from the Andes to Amazon Botany Program: Botanical Exploration in the Andes-Amazon Region of SE Peru” with John Janovec
BRIT research botanist and head of the Andes to Amazon Botany Program
John will present information about ongoing botanical exploration in the Andes-Amazon region of SE Peru, giving highlights from several major expeditions.

4 May
Noon – 1:00 p.m.
BRIT Learning Center
“A Field Report from the Andes to Amazon Botany Program: Exploring the Diversity of Fungi (including Mushrooms) in the Peruvian Amazon” with Romina Gazis
M.S. student, Texas Christian University Botanical Research Institute of Texas, Andes to Amazon Botany Program
Romina will present an overview of her research, which is focused on the diversity of mushrooms and other fungi in the Andes-Amazon region of SE Peru. She will highlight the amazing diversity of fungal species she has discovered during field work in the Peruvian Amazon and discuss interactions among fungus, insect, and plant species.
This series of lectures focuses on the plants used by peoples of the Pacific and parts of the New World Tropics for the treatment of human diseases and the maintenance of human health. Experts in their fields, the speakers will present educational lectures on topics of particular interest to anyone who has personally experienced or has had family members who have suffered from ill health. Due to the generous support of sponsors, BRIT is able to provide the Distinguished Lecturer Series as a free public service.

**2005 SPRING SERIES**

**3 FEBRUARY**

Paul Alan Cox, Executive Director, National Tropical Botanical Garden; Kauai, Hawaii

*Ethnobotanical Insights into Neurological Disease*

Hear about ethnobotanical findings relevant to neurological diseases as Dr. Cox reveals the hypothesis that the devastating disease of the Chamorro people of Guam, which combines aspects of ALS (Lou Gehrig’s Disease), Alzheimer’s Disease, and Parkinson’s Disease, is caused by a plant neurotoxin that accumulates in flying foxes that are consumed by the Chamorros as part of traditional feasts.

**3 MARCH**

Glenn Wightman, Ethnobiology Project, Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Environment; Australia

*The Use of Plants for Medicine in the Dreamtime: Australian Aboriginal Traditional Medicinal Plant Use*

Dr. Wightman has since 1982 recorded traditional biological knowledge through conservation research in north Australia. Hear what he has learned about the plant and animal knowledge of northern Aboriginal languages in an area currently under extreme threat due to the relatively recent settlement history and elderly status of knowledge custodians.

**7 APRIL**

Michael Balick, Head, Institute of Economic Botany, The New York Botanical Garden; Bronx, New York

*Exploring Ancient Wisdom and Traditional Healing in Micronesia*

Dr. Balick has done research in remote regions of the tropics where he works with indigenous cultures to document their plant knowledge, understand the environmental effects of their traditional management systems, and help develop sustainable utilization systems for the region—while ensuring that benefits from such work are always shared with local communities. He will speak about his work in Micronesia with the local conservation community on a project to preserve biodiversity, traditional knowledge, and ancient healing practices.

**5 MAY**

Brent Berlin, Department of Anthropology, The University of Georgia; Athens, Georgia

*Use of Medicinal Plants Among the Maya in the Chiapas Highland*

Dr. Berlin has worked among the Tzeltal and Tzotzil Maya of the Highland of Chiapas, Mexico, since 1960 on a project on drug discovery, medical ethnobiology, botanical inventory, conservation, and sustained economic development among the Highland Maya. One of the goals is to determine the efficacy of the most important plant species used in Maya herbal medicine, as well as the pharmacologically most promising species from the total flora of Highland Chiapas.
As part of a research effort by the Botanical Research Institute of Texas and the Austin College Center for Environmental Studies, the first of two volumes of the *Illustrated Flora of East Texas* is nearing completion. This is the first fully illustrated flora for this area of vastly diverse ecosystems and extreme biological richness. Research includes study of plants in an area covering 87 counties and encompassing 60,000 square miles, an area roughly the size of the state of Georgia, and home to approximately two-thirds of all the plants found in Texas.

Volume I covers a total of 1,060 species of native and naturalized ferns and similar plants, gymnosperms, and monocotyledons (grasses, sedges, etc.) known to occur in East Texas. Line drawing illustrations are provided for all species, county distribution maps for almost all species, and a color section with nearly 200 photographs, making this the most fully illustrated flora for any area of the southeastern United States. Maps and extensive introductory materials on the vegetation, geology, soils, climate, presettlement and early settlement conditions, and Texas botanical history make the book useful to a wide audience. A number of appendices on topics such as botanically related Internet addresses, conservation organizations, endemic species, nomenclature, species of conservation concern, suggested native ornamentals, and commercially important timber trees are provided. The taxonomic treatments include family and generic synopses, keys and descriptions, derivations of scientific names, characters helpful in family recognition in the field, notes on toxic/poisonous and useful plants, and references to supporting literature that includes over 3,500 references.

For more information, contact Barney Lipscomb, head, BRIT Press, or Abra Alexander, program assistant: Phone: 817-332-4441; FAX: 817-332-4112; E-mail: sida@brit.org; www: http://www.brit.org/sida/sbm/

**Meet the Authors of the Illustrated Flora of East Texas**

**George Diggs**, Ph.D., is a faculty member in the biology department and Center for Environmental Studies at Austin College in Sherman, Texas, and a research associate at BRIT. His research interests include the flora of Texas, neotropical floristics, and systematics of the Ericaceae. He has done field work in Africa, Australia, Central and South America, Mexico, Canada, and the U.S. George frequently takes groups of undergraduate students on tropical natural history field courses to Latin America and Africa to raise awareness of current ecological problems, including the accelerating destruction of tropical forests, and to increase understanding of tropical ecosystems.

**Barney Lipscomb**, M.S., is head of BRIT Press and editor of *Sida, Contributions to Botany* and *Sida, Botanical Miscellany*. His research specialties include the flora of Texas and the genus *Cyperus* (Cyperacea). He has done field work in various parts of the U.S. as well as Mexico and Central America. As holder of the Dorothea L. Leonhardt Chair of Texas Botany, Barney conducts group tours and presents botanical information in an effort to expand the knowledge and understanding of the plant world and to increase awareness of BRIT’s mission. He gives talks to numerous civic organizations, school groups, plant enthusiasts, and others.

**Monique Reed**, M.S., is the herbarium botanist in the biology department at Texas A&M University where she coordinates undergraduate laboratories in flowering plant taxonomy and economic botany and serves as a botanical information resource for the general public. Monique earned her B.S. in ornamental horticulture at Texas A&M and received a master’s degree in botany in 1997 for her *Manual of the Dicot Flora of Brazos and Surrounding Counties*.

**Robert (Bob) O’Kennon** is a research associate at BRIT and has served on its board of trustees since its inception in 1987, presently serving as vice chairman. He serves on the boards of directors of several other organizations involved in landscape ecology and conservation, including the Natural Area Preservation Association (NAPA), the Native Prairie Association of Texas (NPAT), the Fort Worth Nature Center, and the Useful Wild Plants of Texas Project. Bob has discovered or described more than twenty new plant species. Retired since 2002, Bob was a pilot for American Airlines.
Abra Alexander joined the BRIT staff in October as editorial assistant to Barney Lipscomb, BRIT Press. A native to Oklahoma, Abra has lived in the Fort Worth area for several years. Before becoming a member of the staff, Abra was a BRIT volunteer, answering phone calls, greeting visitors, and assisting with sales in the gift shop.

Shellie Davis began working at BRIT in September as a volunteer with the Flora of North America project and in October became editorial assistant/clerk to work with the Compositae editorial team. A native of Greenville, Texas, Shellie is a student at The University of Texas at Arlington.

In Memory
Raymond John
Taylor, Jr.
1930–2004

Dr. John Taylor taught biology at Southeastern Oklahoma State University (SOSU) in Durant, Oklahoma, for 25 years. His collection of plant specimens was the basis of the herbarium at SOSU. During his years of teaching and research, he discovered several new species of plants, and two were named in his honor. From 1995-1999, John and his wife, Dr. Connie Taylor, donated approximately 65,000 plant specimens of their own collections to BRIT, including specimens from Oklahoma, Texas, and the southeastern United States as well as from far-off localities such as Costa Rica. An important addition to BRIT, their collection increases the herbarium’s strength in plants of the southern United States.

BRIT WELCOMES NEW STAFF

Anita Baker
Janice Beavers
Greta Beckler
Elaine Bell
Jerry Bitnar
Robbin Brodsky
Karen Burkett
Marie Louise Cole
Mary Dewald
Sher Dunaway
Jane Dunkelberg
Carol Eggert
Julie Florence
Valerie Freund
Romona Goehman
Linda Dawn Hancock
Bill Harris
Shirley Helmick
Jolene Hetrick
Anne Hollingworth
Jimi Holt
Phillip Hoverstadt
James Johnson
Renea Karl
Susan Kingerer
Fritz Kingerer
Blake Kupping
Barbara Lind
Perpha Liogier
Kathryn Lowe
Jerry Lowe
Lee Luckydoo-Drees
Allison Marks
Jane McConal
Penny McCook
Asha McElfish
Nelda McElfish
Kathleen McKinney
Amy Trauth Nare
Tamra Novak

Sandra Plane
Megan Prosko
Casey Pyles
Doug Richards
Cynthia Riley
Jim Rivers
Ann Shrader
Joan Shriber
Emie Stewart
Linda Stuard
Donna Turner
Blas Villaarreal
Antonio Wicker
Paula Wilbanks
Pam Williams
Dian Williams
Lola Wilmart
Kay Yount

BRIT STAFF ASSIST IN CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION

Assistant Criminal District Attorney Mitchell Poe (Tarrant County Criminal District Attorney’s office) and forensic staff from the office of the Chief Medical Examiner and Forensic Laboratories in Fort Worth visited BRIT in October for assistance in identifying botanical evidence collected from a crime scene. BRIT staff Barney Lipscomb, Amanda Neill, and Tiana Franklin identified plant material that included anthers from Dallas grass (Paspalum dilatatum), leaf material from Bermuda grass (Cynodon dactylon), and a spikelet (flowering part) from Crab Grass (Digitaria sp.). Identification of microscopic plant material found on the suspect’s clothing when police arrested him helped link him to the crime and provided valuable assistance in the investigation.

2004 Delzie Demaree Travel Award

Orlando Alvarez-Fuentes was awarded the 16th Annual Delzie Demaree Travel Award at the 51st Annual Systematics Symposium, held at the Missouri Botanical Garden 8–10 October 2004. Mr. Alvarez-Fuentes, a student at Michigan State University, is researching the systematics and biogeography of Thyelypteris subgenus Amauropelta (ferns) in Latin America.

For information about the award, contact Barney Lipscomb, BRIT, 509 Pecan Street, Fort Worth, TX 76102-4060, U.S.A.; 817.332.7432; or barney@brit.org.

VOLUNTEERS IN THE HERBARIUM

Volunteers contribute substantially to the daily work in the herbarium by mounting, sorting, and filing specimens as well as handling projects such as conversion of old genus folders to acid-free replacements. These volunteers work a combined average total of 61 hours a week. Two vital sources of volunteers are the Dallas-Fort Worth Master Gardener and Master Naturalist programs. In the last year, 56 BRIT herbarium volunteers worked approximately 3,181 hours – equal to more than 1.5 full-time employees.

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Phillip Hoverstadt
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Allison Marks
Jane McConal
Penny McCook
Asha McElfish
Nelda McElfish
Kathleen McKinney
Amy Trauth Nare
Tamra Novak

Sandra Plane
Megan Prosko
Casey Pyles
Doug Richards
Cynthia Riley
Jim Rivers
Ann Shrader
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Antonio Wicker
Paula Wilbanks
Pam Williams
Dian Williams
Lola Wilmart
Kay Yount
BRIT in the Community

1 SEPTEMBER – 30 NOVEMBER 2004

BRIT staff members participate in science enrichment and public service activities, attend professional conferences, and present programs and tours to school groups, civic clubs, and other organizations.

Lectures, Presentations, and Tours

John Janovec presented Botanical Research and Education in Southeastern Peru: The Andes to Amazon Botany Program at BRIT to faculty, students, and community members at Stephen F. Austin University in Nacogdoches, Texas, in September. Amber Keller and Emily McConnell taught classes to groups involved in the Fort Worth after-school staff training at O.D. Wyatt High School. Amber presented a session on aquatic plants at the City of Grand Prairie’s Trinity River Awareness Day and Tips and Interpretive Techniques for Teaching Children about Nature at the Cross Timbers Master Naturalists meeting at the Fort Worth Botanic Garden. Emily and Amber represented BRIT’s education program during a museum educators evening, an event hosted by the Fort Worth Museum of Science and History to provide teachers with the opportunity to learn about programs and services offered by museums in Fort Worth’s Cultural District. Kathy Scott and Emily attended the Texas Association of Environmental Educators Conference held at Camp Carter in Fort Worth in October. As part of the workshop, Emily and Kathy gave a tour of the BRIT herbarium and presented activities from BRIT’s education program; Gary Jennings gave a tour of the BRIT library. During November, Amber presented Traveling Seeds to fourth graders at TCU’s School of Education Mini-University, sponsored by the Institute of Mathematics, Science and Technology Education.

Professional Seminars, Conferences, and Appointments

Pat Harrison, Amber Keller, Emily McConnell, and Kathy Scott were participants and facilitators during the REAL People Conference held for teams of principals, teachers, and parents from schools that will be receiving funding for creating outdoor learning environments on their campuses. With support from Rainwater Charitable Funds, Amber and Marcia Formby, principal at Western Hills Primary in Fort Worth, attended the San Francisco Green School Grounds Conference, learning about ways the San Francisco Green Schoolyard Alliance is helping schools in that area create and sustain vibrant outdoor learning environments. Barney Lipscomb attended the Missouri Botanical Garden Annual Systematics Symposium in October and presented the Delzie Dernaree Travel Award, given annually at this meeting. John Janovec was appointed as a member of the committee of Dyana de la Rosa, graduate student from Peru attending Stephen F. Austin University. Sy Sohmer attended the Sixth Flora Malesiana Symposium in Los Baños, Philippines, and presented a paper on his work with Psychotria of the Philippines.

Leonhardt Chair of Texas Botany

To expand the knowledge and understanding of the plant world and to increase awareness of the mission of the Botanical Research Institute of Texas, Barney Lipscomb, Leonhardt Chair of Texas Botany, conducts group tours and presents botanical information to numerous organizations, school groups, plant enthusiasts, and others. From September through November, Barney presented:

- The Use of Animal-Dispersed Seeds in Forensic Botany - National Law Enforcement Refreshers’ course for Game Wardens; West Side Kiwanis Club, Fort Worth
- Basics of Collecting Vascular Plant Specimens and Plant Identification - Native Plant Society of Texas, Columbus
- A Botanist’s Eye: Redoute and the Art of Floral Illustration — St. Louis Art Museum in association with the exhibit, The Illustrated Garden
- Forensic Botany - BRIT Professional Development Workshop for Teachers
- Murderous Plants: Poisonous Herbs in our World – Mad Hatters of the Red Hat Society, Arlington; Edgemere Retirement Community
- Discovering Texas’ Botanical Heritage: Past, Present, Future – WildScapes Workshop, Native Plant Society of Texas, Houston; North Fort Worth Woman’s Club
- A Natural World of Plants: Living in a World of Plants: Plants of North Central Texas — Denton County Master Naturalists
- Botanical Research Institute of Texas and Texas Flora Projects – Texas Plant Conservation 2004 Conference, Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center
- Career Day: Who wants to be a Botanist? – Western Hills Elementary School (Fort Worth ISD); Sagamore Hill Elementary School (Fort Worth ISD)
- How Plants Get Their Names – Native Plant Society of Texas, Collin County
- Update on East Texas Flora – Texas Native Plant Society Annual Meeting, Longview
Happy New Year!
from BRIT