



the Leaflet



International Award of Excellence in Conservation

Join us December 9 at 6:30 p.m. at the Worthington Hotel Downtown Fort Worth as we honor Dr. S.H. Sohmer. This prestigious event was established and flourished under the leadership of Dr. Sohmer. It is now time to honor Sy, a deserving individual who has spent his career building an organization dedicated to biodiversity conservation. This year's event will celebrate the legacy of Sy's leadership, as well as a lifetime of his research, conservation work, and fundraising for organizations with which he has been associated over his impressive career. It will celebrate the vision for BRIT and reignite the passion and commitment for continuing this important work for future generations.



To reserve these coveted individual seats or corporate/private tables, please email or call [Jessica Geider](#) at 817.332.2748.

A 54-Year Celebration

The *Journal of the Botanical Research Institute of Texas (JBRIT)* is celebrating its 54th year of continuous publication. It all started when Lloyd H. Shinnery—a member of the Southern Methodist University (SMU) faculty and a prolific botanical researcher and writer who wanted to edit his work and the work of others—founded and published the first two issues of *Sida, Contributions to Botany* on November 23, 1962. He named the journal for a genus (*Sida*) of yellow-flowered plants of the mallow or cotton family (Malvaceae), distributed throughout the world and especially common in Texas. Shinnery served as editor and publisher until his death in 1971 after which William F. Mahler, professor of botany at SMU, inherited the journal and continued to edit and privately publish it. Barney Lipscomb became assistant editor in 1977 and full editor in 1982. Mahler, then-director emeritus of BRIT, transferred the privately published journal to BRIT in 1993.

SIDA CONTRIBUTIONS TO BOTANY

VOLUME 1 NUMBER 1 NOVEMBER 1962

CONTENTS

Evolution of the Gray's and Small's manual ranges	1
Annual <i>Sisyrinchium</i> (Iridaceae) in the United States	32
Chromosome numbers of <i>Sisyrinchium</i> (Iridaceae) in the eastern United States	43
New names in <i>Arenaria</i> (Caryophyllaceae)	49
<i>Drosera</i> (Droseraceae) in the Southeastern United States: an interim report	53
Key to Southeastern glabrous-styled <i>Tephrosia</i> (Leguminosae)	60

Dr. Keller Donates Watercolor Plates

Dr. Harold Keller donated nine folio watercolor plates featuring myxomycete fruiting bodies used in the publication, "Myxomycetes of Ohio: Their Systematics, Biology and Use in Teaching," published by Ohio Biological Survey Bulletin in 1999. These beautiful illustrations were featured in the BRIT Research Exhibit, August 2015.



Estes Preaches Protection of the Pennyroyal Prairie

Dr. Dwayne Estes, BRIT Botanical Explorer, will present a one-hour webinar for the Oak Woodlands and Forests Fire Consortium sponsored by the University of Missouri-Columbia on Tuesday, December 15, 2015, from 1 p.m. – 2 p.m. CST. Dwayne's presentation is entitled "The Pennyroyal Plain Prairie: A vision for restoring a forgotten ecosystem." He will talk about ongoing efforts he is leading to document, conserve, and restore the Pennyroyal Prairie of Tennessee and Kentucky, which covered some 3.7 million acres as recently as 1800. Today, more than 99.9% of the prairie has been lost. Dwayne is building a network of restoration projects and a team of volunteers, students, collaborators, and stakeholders to help in this effort.



Barney Lipscomb Honored for 40 Years of Service

Mr. Barney Lipscomb was honored at the November annual meeting of the BRIT Board of Directors with an award recognizing 40 years of Distinguished Service for BRIT. Barney began his association with the collections in 1975 at Southern Methodist University working as a herbarium botanist and has since then co-authored 3 books and 30 scientific articles in his role as Head of the BRIT Press and editor of *JBRIT*. In addition, he is a popular speaker with both the science community and the general public with his talks on poisonous plants, forensic botany, and natural history art. Join our

staff in saluting Barney for a job well done!

BRIT Botanists Awarded Grant to Study Rare Plants

BRIT botanists were just awarded a grant to study four rare species in North Central Texas: turnip-root scurfpea (*Pediomelum cyphocalyx*), Reverchon's scurfpea (*Pediomelum reverchonii*), Engelmann's bladderpod (*Physaria engelmannii*), and Hall's bulrush (*Shoenoplectiella hallii*). Understanding the habitats and distributions of these rare species is the first step in promoting their conservation. The project is funded by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Conservation License Plate Fund. Buy your license plate today to help support conservation in Texas!



BRIT Contingent Gives Good Show at National Conference

Dr. Dwayne Estes, BRIT Botanical Explorer, is working to increase BRIT's visibility and reach into the eastern U.S. In November Estes and his team of graduate students and collaborators gave nine presentations at the national Natural Areas Conference (NAC) in Little Rock, Arkansas. BRIT was represented by more presenters than any other institution. Dwayne's team presented three talks on their exploration of Southeastern river canyons, where they just wrapped up four projects documenting the flora and vegetation of four separate Appalachian river systems. In addition, BRIT research associates Theo Witsell and Wes Knapp presented a combined five papers on their work in Arkansas and Maryland, respectively. Theo's three talks included one talk as part of the plenary session, which highlighted Arkansas biodiversity and a talk on the Grasslands of Arkansas project. Wes presented on his newly created digital [Maryland Plant Atlas project](#). Dwayne presented individually on the Natural History and Vegetation of Tennessee Project, a multi-year effort with the goal of describing all of Tennessee's plant community types, their status, and individual conservation needs. Afterward, the BRIT team was joined by a half-dozen other botanists and conservationists on a 3-day botanical foray across Arkansas to see old-growth woodlands and savannas, remnant virgin prairies, and conservation in action. All in all, it was a very productive week for BRIT. As a result of the connections made at the NAC, Dwayne was invited to Pennsylvania and Missouri to present in 2016 where he will continue to spread BRIT's message of the importance of botany to conservation of the natural resources of the eastern U.S.



A Brand New Wintergreen (Plant, not Gum)

Peter Fritsch and his Chinese colleagues published an exciting new species discovery in October: *Gaultheria gonggashanensis*, in the wintergreen genus of the heath family (Ericaceae). The species is named for its unique home on the slopes of spectacular Mt. Gongga in western Sichuan Province, China. Peter and his colleagues knew of the existence of this species from two herbarium specimens collected in 1941 and 1980 by Chinese botanists, but no one, including them, clearly understood that these specimens represented an undescribed species because the specimens were only in fruit, whereas flowers were needed for positive identification. So in September of 2011, Peter and his colleagues traveled to Mt. Gongga, the place where they suspected that the plant was originally collected, to see if they could find specimens of the plants in flower.

Fall Teach Tank at BRIT

The Fall Teach Tank series, held on the first Saturday of each month, was focused on providing teachers with the environmental field skills needed to enhance outdoor investigations for their students. BRIT research and education members Dr. Brooke Best, Tiana Rehman, and Tracy Friday provided engaging activities and discussions that encouraged teachers to expand their classrooms to the outdoors and empower students to think like scientists and view their surroundings in a different way.

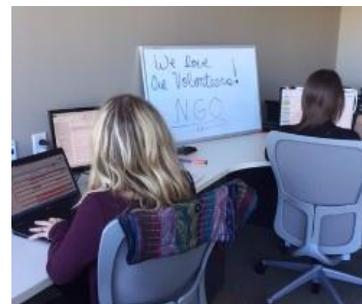


- October: Field Skills for Outdoor Investigations lead by Dr. Brooke Best, Editor-Botanist
- November: From Field to Cabinet: Documenting Botanical Diversity lead by Tiana Rehman, Herbarium Collections Manager

The spring series beginning in February will focus on Creating Project-Design Challenges to tackle local environmental issues.

New Volunteer Check-in System Celebration and Training

Starting December 1, 2015, we will have an automated volunteer check-in/check-out system called NGO, and that deserves a party! This system is part of a BRIT-wide database upgrade. Several staff members have been working for months combining volunteers, donors, educators, and more into one database for a more cohesive system. Having all of our constituents in one system will make communicating and tracking more efficient. So what does this mean to our dedicated volunteers? When you arrive for volunteering you will check-in and out using our new system. This system will let us know you've arrived, who is in the building, how many volunteers helped with a task, and will calculate hours given to BRIT. No reservation is necessary but please come have a tasty treat, meet other volunteers, and learn about NGO! If you would like more information about volunteering, please contact [Julie Donovan](#), Director of Volunteers and Visitor Relations at 817.546.1846. To help you become familiar with the process we are having two training parties:



- December 3, 2015, at 1 p.m. in the classroom
- December 7, 2015, at 10 a.m. in the classroom



Teacher Tuesday Series: Pollinators – Spreading the Word

The November Teacher Tuesday session provided teachers with information and ideas in creating pollinator-friendly areas in their school communities. The discussion covered the many challenges pollinators face in their natural environment: habitat loss, diseases, and environmental contaminants, as well as the impact of their loss to the environment. What does their loss mean to our future?

Dr. Tory Bennett, an Assistant Professor at Texas Christian University, provided teachers with information on bat research being conducting in the DFW area. Stan Key, from the Metro Beekeepers Association, shared ways to protect and increase the bee population area communities.

Save the Pollinators!



Consider Giving a BRIT Membership During this Gift-Giving Season

BRIT's work is all about caring for the priceless collections we hold in trust and inspiring people of all ages and from all walks of life through our research and education programs. Our programs touch the lives of hundreds of North Texas students each year. You can help us expand our scientific research, serve more students, and reach more teachers just by becoming a member. We could not provide these services without your support.

Remember if you're looking for that perfect gift to say thank you to those you depend on throughout the year, how about giving them BRIT Family Memberships? What a wonderful thing to honor someone with a contribution to making our world a better place for all of us. Call us today to start your holiday shopping or go [online](#) to make those purchases.

It's a wonderful thing to honor someone with a contribution to making our world a better place for all of us. If you need additional information, please contact [Tammie Crole](#) at 817.332.7518.

Reciprocal Membership Partners

Do you have a retail business? Why not become a [Reciprocal Partner](#) of BRIT by offering our BRIT members a discount at your business. It's great marketing! We're always looking for new or unique shopping experiences for our members.

BRIT is thrilled to be able to offer members shopping discounts at the following local Reciprocal Partners. Remember, BRIT members can take advantage of these discounts by showing your card while shopping at these locations: [Calloway's Nursery](#), [Marshall Grain Co.](#), [Redenta's Garden](#), and [The Tree Place](#).

Corporate Membership Opportunities

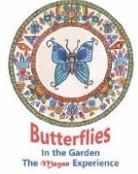
Are you looking for a way for your organization or business to become more connected in the community? Or perhaps you want to give a gift to your employees? Then consider becoming a [Corporate Member](#)! With a Corporate Membership you'll receive a varying number of Family Partner Level memberships to use at your discretion. For additional information on these programs, you may call or e-mail contact [Tammie Crole](#) at 817.332.7518.



**Bella is
Celebrating the
Holidays
Check Back in
February!**

BRIT Member Discount - Butterflies in the Garden 2016

- BRIT Members save \$1 per ticket between Nov. 27 - Dec. 31
- When: March 1 - April 3, 2016
- Hours: 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.
- Prices: Adults \$10; Child 3-12 \$6; Seniors 65+ \$8
- BRIT Members can call us at 817.332.4441 for a discount code prior to purchase
- Get your tickets starting November 27, 2015



At Home on the Range

Green Revolution's Agents of Change are living up to their name again. On Saturday, November 7th, the group of young leaders visited RW Ranch in Weatherford, TX, to enrich and spread their message of positive change in the community and environmental stewardship. Agents rolled up their sleeves and worked tirelessly on the ranch, learning what it takes to manage and sustain a healthy environment for all living things. Visit Green Revolution on Facebook and like our page to see more pictures from this event and others to come.

Botanical Research Institute of Texas (BRIT)
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Open Tuesday to Friday from 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

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.

Please provide us your email to be entered into a \$50 drawing for a free Membership gift to keep or give. tcrole@brit.org.

Happy Holidays
from
Your BRIT Family

Thankful by nature.

