



### A New Genus in the Storax Family

It isn't every day that a new genus is discovered in the plant world, but Peter Fritsch and his colleagues have done just that, at least in a way. In considering evidence from overall plant features and comparative DNA sequences, they named a new genus in the Storax Family (*Styracaceae*) to accommodate the Chinese Silverbell, what used to be called *Halesia macgregorii*. This species is more closely related to a different genus native to East Asia than to the two other species of silverbells (*H. carolina* and *H. diptera*), both from the southeastern U.S. It also has many unique features, so a new genus name for the Chinese species is warranted on both the rules of nomenclature and phylogenetic theory. The new genus, *Perkinsiodendron*, is named in honor of Janet Russell Perkins (1853–1933), an American-born botanist who spent most of her botanical career in Germany, and who was the foremost early 20th Century authority on the Storax Family. You can see the full technical report about this work in the most recent issue of our very own Journal of the Botanical Research Institute of Texas [here](#).



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### IRA Charitable Rollover Permanently Extended

#### Make a tax-efficient gift to BRIT from your IRA in 2016

Individuals who are age 70½ or older can make gifts of up to \$100,000 directly from their IRA accounts to one or more qualified charities, without paying federal income tax on the withdrawal. If you wish to make a gift to benefit BRIT, its campus, or an educational or research program of your choice, or if you're fulfilling an existing pledge, you may want to make a Qualified, Charitable Distribution.

For more information, please contact Cleve Lancaster, Vice President of Development at 817.332.6657.

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Thankful by nature.

## Tis the Season of Change

Green Revolution's Agents of Change are taking this season on with a renewed mission to spread their message of community stewardship and environmental progress. Throughout the year BRIT's Green Revolution Agents of Change could be seen in our community serving tirelessly. During this season Green Revolution is challenging us all to be the change we want to see in our community. Tis the season of change, together we can make a difference.



#AgentsofChange

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## BRIT Holiday Hours



The BRIT building will be closed to the general public from Monday, December 19 through Monday, January 2 to allow for critical year-end activities and employee vacations. During these dates we will accommodate pre-scheduled visitors, space rentals, private tours, and deliveries, with the exception of December 23rd, 26th, and January 2nd. Some staff members will be available during this time. Messages left in BRIT's general voicemail mailbox will be checked and requests for publication purchases will be processed within two business days.

Happy Holidays!



## The Digital Age in Nature

The last session of the Teacher Tuesday fall series, "Literacy in Nature," encouraged teachers to embrace citizen science opportunities and become a steward of data. Sam Kieschnick, the DFW Urban Biologist for Texas Parks and Wildlife, engaged teachers in using the very popular social network for inquisitive individuals, iNaturalist. Teachers from ten different districts from grades K-12 took part in this event and left with ideas on using technology to help encourage curiosity in outdoor explorations. The next time a student asks, "what's that?" these teachers will have an answer that will change the student's life. Join the crowd, download the iNaturalist app and become a part of the bigger picture.



Coming spring 2017: The STEM in Conservation Series

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## 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 resumes 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.

# Playful by nature.

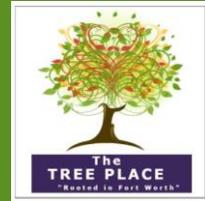
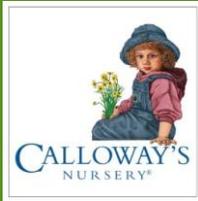
## Winter Woes: Don't Let a Sudden Cold Snap Catch You Off Guard!

Things to think about in advance:

- Cover shrubs and climbers with burlap
- Cut back dead limbs
- Wrap tender plants
- Pull tubers and bulbs from the ground, wrap in burlap, and store in garage
- Bark, straw, sawdust, peat moss, leaves and even grass clippings make great mulch
- Protect low limbs with straw and twine
- If possible move potted plants to the garage, shed, or indoors
- Protect heavy pots by wrapping the container with bubble wrap, burlap, or fabric
- While you're at it wrap or cover those outdoor faucet

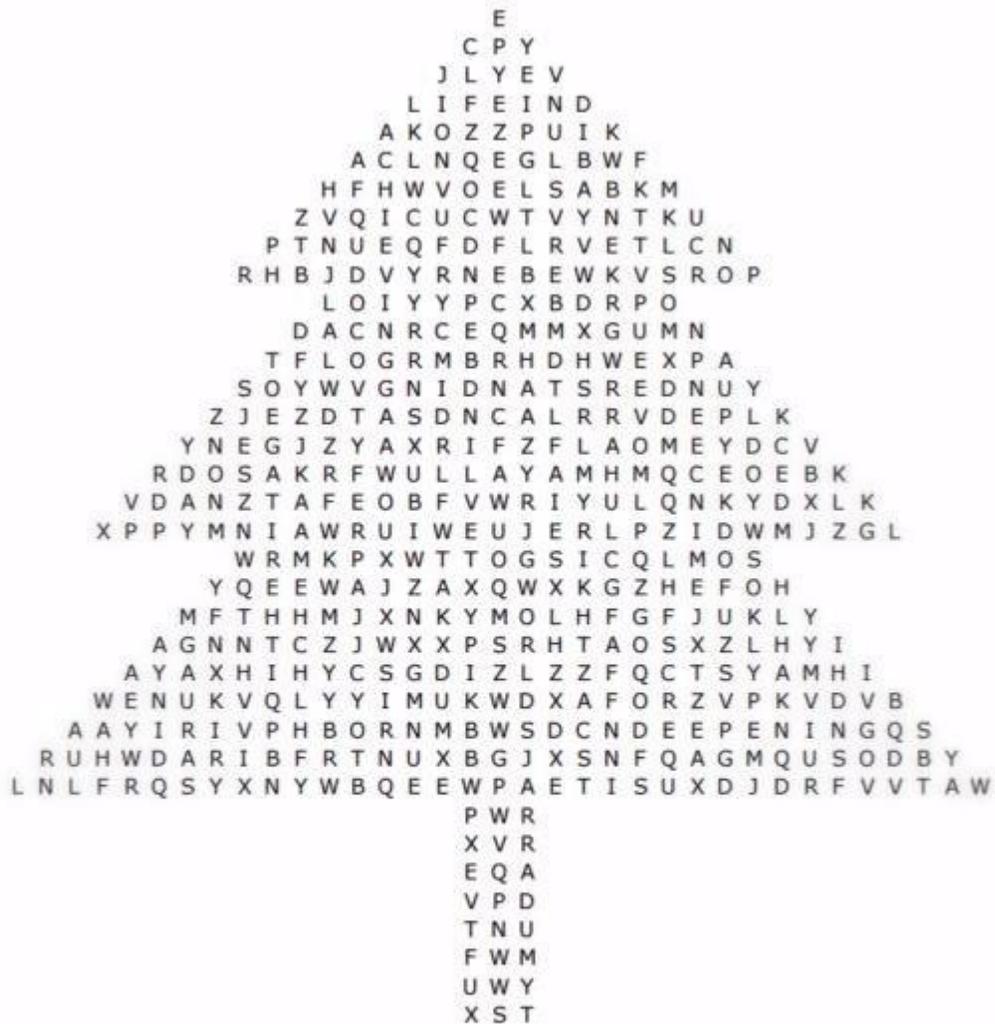


## Thank You to Our Reciprocal Membership Partners



These are great places to start your holiday decorating and save a little dough by showing your BRIT membership card!

### BRIT Word Search



#### WORD LIST:

ACHIEVING  
CONSERVE  
DEEPENING

HERITAGE  
KNOWLEDGE  
LIFE

NATURAL  
PLANTS  
PUBLIC

UNDERSTANDING  
VALUE  
WORLD

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If you have an email account, please let us know by emailing [tcrole@brit.org](mailto:tcrole@brit.org).

This will help save a postage stamp and paper each month!