September GROWing Together™ Newsletter

Memberships continued to increase with admissions this summer, even when visitors embraced soaring temps to find respite among the beauty of our Garden. For more information on membership, visit fwgrow.org.

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NSF Funds Specimen Digitization Grant
The National Science Foundation (NSF) has awarded BRIT $1.5 million over four years to digitize its 355,000 herbarium specimen collections from the states of Texas and Oklahoma. This prestigious grant is part of a larger project that brings together 46 collaborating herbaria from across these two states and elsewhere to digitize the data from nearly 2 million such specimens. BRIT is the lead institution on the project with a total award amount of $4.7 million, which is divided among 16 institutions.

"We were thrilled to get this news," said BRIT VP of Research Peter Fritsch. "This project is primed for action through the integration of Texas and Oklahoma Regional Consortium of Herbaria (TORCH), which will help oversee and guide the project and in which BRIT has played a lead role since its inception in 2006."

The digitization process will involve specimen image capture, transcription of label data, addition of geographic coordinates, and dissemination of the data through searchable online portals.

In addition to digitization, project goals include 1) involving members of plant enthusiast organizations (such as native plant and naturalist societies) in specimen data entry; 2) contributing to a globally competitive STEM workforce through workshops and lectures for technicians and practical training for undergraduate interns; 3) developing and implementing innovative strategies to increase efficiency in specimen digitization and more.
BRIT and University of North Texas Health Science Center (UNTHSC) will launch a new annual lecture series by co-hosting “Medical Cannabis: Illness & Symptom Relief,” at 7 p.m. Sept. 19. Event location is the UNTHSC MET Auditorium, 1000 Montgomery St., Fort Worth. Co-sponsored by Fluent and Fort Worth Business Press, event tickets cost $10 and include a 6 p.m. lobby reception. Purchase tickets [here](#).
Featured speaker Dr. Michael Moskowitz, MD, MPH, will outline his research and practice using medical cannabis as a means of treating pain for his patients. His book, “Medical Cannabis: A Guide for Patients, Practitioners and Caregivers,” emphasizes integration of this treatment into standard medical care using neuroplasticity (the brain’s ability to change throughout life) as its central focus. A business panel discussion moderated by Hayden Blackburn of Tech FW follows Dr. Moskowitz’ speech and includes: Featured speaker, Dr. Moskowitz, Presenting Panelist, Jose Javier Hidalgo of Fluent, Panelist Billy Brentlinger, BRIT Board Member, and Panelist Tyler Sickels, SolGro, Inc.

“The use of medical marijuana is garnering increasing curiosity and serious interest among academics, the medical and business communities and more,” said Robert McClain, PhD, UNTHSC associate vice president of research and commercialization. “With the qualifications of Dr. Moskowitz in the development of brain neuroplasticity and pain treatment – along with the caliber of our panelists – this discussion promises to be informative.”

This event is the first of a co-hosted annual lecture series by BRIT and UNTHSC under a 2018 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), where both institutions agreed to collaborate on research and community education programs. “The MOU represented a great partnership benefiting both of our institutions,” said Ed Schneider, PhD, BRIT president and executive director. “The lecture series offers a forum for community education, thought-provoking dialogue and exploration of significant scientific topics like medical cannabis.”

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**BOTANICAL ART WORLDWIDE: AMERICA’S FLORA**

**September 26 - November 27**

10 am - 4 pm

Monday - Friday

**FREE**

Cornus florida, Dogwood, Fall and Spring (detail), watercolor on paper, Margaret Farr
Herbarium Highlights: Visiting Researchers and Media

The BRIT Herbarium recently hosted James Henrickson from the University of Texas at Austin and Dave Holdermann from Texas Parks and Wildlife for their unique studies. Henrickson works on the nightshade family (Solanaceae). Specifically, he looked at specimens of the Chamaesaracha genus across all collections from the southern United States and Mexico. Holderman looked at specimens of Oxalis drummondii (wood-sorrel family, Oxalidaceae, pictured here) collected throughout Texas. The tubers of this plant species make up the diet of the Montezuma quail that Holdermann is studying. By studying the locality data of herbarium specimens, Holdermann can predict the geographic distributions of the wood-sorrel and the quail and better understand their relationship.

The herbarium was also the focus of "Plant Museum Thriving in Fort Worth Cultural District," a feature article in Green Source DFW. To read it online visit here.

October 4 - 5
Fall Plant Sale & Mariposa Market

Summer Education Program Connects with Community

“I've never planted a seed before. I am going to take my seed home and give it water and sunshine.” – Student participant
This summer’s GROW education program led by Cameron Barlow made meaningful connections with the City of Fort Worth Education Initiative, which will continue to strengthen GROW programming in the months to come.

With material learned in training sessions hosted by the City of Fort Worth, Cameron led a series of nature-based programs at the Como Community Center for local students. They enjoyed story time together, learned new vocabulary words, and embarked on outdoor investigations with scientific tools.

Through this experiential exploration, students made valuable connections between story time and the world outside. Students also planted their very own seeds – a first for many of the children – tying their experience back to GROW’s plant-focused mission.

Let’s tour the Botanic Garden!

Check out the latest video adventure of Bella the Begonia as she tours the Fort Worth Botanic Garden!

JBRIT Releases Summer Issue
The BRIT Press published Volume 13, Number 1 of the *Journal of the Botanical Research Institute of Texas (JBRIT)* on July 23. The 36-page issue contains 29 scientific papers from national and international botanists describing new plant species, new fossils, and new floristic discoveries and from all across the U.S.A. including Texas, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, India, Mexico, and Vietnam.

Dr. Peter Fritsch, BRIT VP for Research, is co-author of a paper that describes a new evergreen tree species (Styracaceae, Storax family) from Vietnam. BRIT Research Associate, Robert J. O’Kennon, is author of a paper that discusses the taxonomy of small-flowered, pedatisect-leaved morning glory from Central Texas.

This issue is available in libraries around the world, through subscription, and online at [http://www.brit.org/brit-press/jbrit](http://www.brit.org/brit-press/jbrit).

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**Calendar of Events**

**September 3 through September 30**

- **September 6**: [Gallery Night Members Only Reception](#)
- **September 7**: [Gallery Night at BRIT](#)
- **September 7**: [Bella’s Saturday Storytime](#)
- **September 7, 14, 21, & 28**: [Hike with GROW Girl](#)
- **September 3**: [Bella’s Book & Nature Club](#)
- **September 4**: [StoryTime Yoga](#)
- **September 11**: [Seedlings](#)
- **September 17**: [Little Sprouts](#)
- **September 17**: [Teacher Tuesday](#)
- **September 19**: [Lecture Series: Medical Cannabis](#)
- **September 19**: [North Texas Giving Day](#)
- **September 26**: [Botanical Art Worldwide Exhibit](#) Opens (thru Nov. 27)