



Texas Gulf Coast Fern Society

November 2006

Vol. 8, No. 11

<http://www.tgcfernsoc.org>

**Next Regular Meeting: Sunday, November 19, at 2:00 p. m. – Houston Garden Center in Hermann Park,
1500 Hermann Drive, Houston, TX 77044 – Phone: (713) 529-3960**

A message from our President:

Hi Everyone!

Wow! We had a great meeting in October! We had a good turn out for Reggie Whitehead's talk on ferns from his world-wide travels. Reggie gave us a glimpse into parts of the world some of us may never get a chance to go see.

We are invited to go to Miami for a show and sale next May. We should think about this as our field trip. Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden, where the event will be held, is a wonderful botanical garden and world famous for its palms. (They are changing their normal date so it will be announced later.) There will be ferns and other rare plants to purchase. I have been several times and it is always worth the trip. So if you think you might like to join the group and go please let me know ASAP. We may be able to get a nice group rate.

Our meeting this month is going to be on building a terrarium and we will have some terrarium type ferns to work with. Please bring in your own container. We will have moss and a couple of plants to get you started (this will be free for members but non-members will be charged \$10.00, each person, for materials). If you have something else you want to put in your terrarium please bring it with you. This will be a wet, dirty type program so dress accordingly. This has always been a good fun program so come early so you can get set up.

We will have some Society business to take care of before we can start the program. We will have our election for officers for 2007 at the meeting. Our nominating committee has been meeting and talking with members to see who would like to help the Society out and help move us into the future with new ideas. At the October meeting it was decided to amend our by-laws and allow a position to be filled up to 4 consecutive years, by the same person, provided the members of the Society both nominate and vote for them to stay in that position each year. It does not mean this is what will happen, but just in case we need to fill a position longer than the 2 years it had been.

I would like to thank everyone for bringing Raffle plants in. This is our only money maker for paying our speakers, purchasing member plants and materials for our hands-on projects. The membership support on this has been incredible.

I would also like to thank everyone that has provided refreshments for the meetings. Each of you has done an outstanding job on this and thanks for the couple of stand-ins we have had with last minute cancellations. You're the best!! I'm sure I can speak for everyone in our Society on that.

We will be passing around a sign up sheet for our "Members Talk About Ferns" article for next year's *Newsletters*. The members that contributed to the *Newsletter* this year have really helped to enrich our knowledge. Hands on experience and what you have read and discovered is always appreciated by all. So I hope we can have at least one a month next year.

Our host for our end of year party this year is Laura Lee. Her address and instructions on traveling to her home will be provided in the December *Newsletter*. We will be having it on the 17th of December at 2 pm. We will pass around a Food List for the party. We have in years past went with traditional type food, but what ever you would like to bring will be good. We will be having our gift exchange at the party for those that would like to participate. The gift should be a fern, plant, or any related item. This has always been a fun part of the party.

I'm looking forward to seeing each of you Sunday,
Darla



Officers and Committees:

President:	Darla Harris
Vice President:	Martha Burg
Secretary:	Patsy Geiger
Treasurer:	Al and Susan Peacock
Board Members at Large:	Ted Richardson, Cecil Strange, Jr. and Larry Rucker
Membership Chair:	Cecil Strange, Jr.
Newsletter:	Paul Geiger
Library:	Patrick Hudnall
Raffles:	Jean Keiser
Hospitality:	Lulu Mae Leonard
Welcoming at Door:	Emma Lee Payne



Library

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Refreshments for November Meeting

Refreshments for our upcoming meeting will be supplied by Sara Chumley and Sharon Banister.



Darla's Fern-of-the-Month: Pteris Flame

Pteris Flame this fern does not have a common name. It is a cold hardy fern that does well in our area. It grows to about 15 to 18 inches tall. This Pteris has fertile fronds (ones with spore) that shoot up taller than the non-fertile fronds. This fern likes sandy, well drained soil and is very forgiving. It will take over-watering and under-watering pretty well. The leaves will get about the size of your hand and maintain the reddish color even as a mature frond, though not as red as new growth. It can be near a walkway since the plant does not break easily. It may be grown as a container plant and works pretty well in the house with the lower humidity. I have found that, in general, the thicker the leaf, the better it does without as much humidity. It is not a real fast grower, but once happy will spread out some. The fronds are long lived, so it gets full and nice.

You should really enjoy this plant.



Minutes of Meetings – October 16, 2006

A meeting of the TEXAS GULF COAST FERN SOCIETY Board of Directors was held at 1:00 pm, prior to the regular meeting, to discuss a recommendation to change Article VI, Section 2 of the By-laws whereby members would be allowed to serve a specific term of up to 4 years in an office in lieu of the present limit of 2. Martha Burg, V. P., proposed that a recommendation be presented to the general membership at the 2:00 pm general meeting for discussion and possible motion to amend. The Board unanimously agreed.

A regular monthly meeting of the TEXAS GULF COAST FERN SOCIETY was held at 2:00 p.m., at the Houston Garden Center in Hermann Park, 1500 Hermann Dr., Houston, TX 77044. President Darla Harris presided.

During the regular meeting, the Board approved By-laws amendment proposal was read by the Secretary, followed by a motion by Bill Barrett to accept. The motion was seconded by Paul Geiger and carried by acclamation of the membership. A final vote of the membership is scheduled for the November meeting.

A nominating committee consisting of Susan Peacock, Chair with Ken Altwater and Cecil Strange assisting was announced. Recommendations for offices will be presented at the November meeting for a vote of the general membership.

Patrick Hudnall reported on the September 2006 field trip to San Antonio Botanical Garden.

Darla introduced the speaker, Reggie Whitehead.

Refreshments were provided by Patsy and Paul Geiger.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:30 pm.

Submitted by: Patsy Geiger, Secretary



Members Talk about Ferns!!

This month's fern of the month article is contributed by Patrick Hudnall. Note: More information on the underlined names or phrases can be found by a search of Wikipedia.com.

Cibotium is a genus of eleven species of tropical tree fern - subject to much confusion and revision - distributed fairly narrowly in Hawaii (four species, plus a hybrid), Southeast Asia (five species), and the cloud forests of Central America and Mexico (two species). Cibotium glaucum, from Hawaii, is the most frequently encountered Cibotium species in the horticultural trade, together with its sibling species Cibotium chamissoi and the potentially huge Cibotium menziesii. The

remaining Hawaiian Cibotium, C. nealiae, is a one-meter dwarf variety, restricted to the island of Kauai, and never seen in the horticultural trade. Precise identification of the Cibotiums is difficult, although all have shiny and rather waxy fronds when viewed from above, with varying degrees of powdery-pale bluish when seen from underneath. The dripping forests and stream gulleys of the cloud forests on Hawaii's volcanic slopes are the natural habitat of Cibotium. The other Cibotiums that often surface in botanical collections are Cibotium schiedeii and Cibotium regale (Mexico), plus Cibotium barometz (Asia). The latter species is best known for its role in ancient medicine. The medieval world was beguiled by stories that claimed Cibotium barometz, the "Scythian lamb", was half-sheep and half vegetable.

I have grown 3 species of Cibotium: C. schiedeii, C. glaucum, and C. chamissoi. I obtained the C. schiedeii at about a 4" and has thrived in the Houston climate outdoors all summer in dappled shade. During the winters I have been moving it into a plastic wrap "greenhouse". This winter I believe I will try to over winter it outdoors only providing protection during hard frosts. After about 5 years the fronds measure about four feet long and have produces spore for the past two years. This spring it started producing 'pups' at the base. As I understand these can be removed as a means of propagation. I understand that many years ago this fern was common in cultivation but is no longer the case. I have seen a clump of this fern over 30ft in diameter on Point Loma in San Diego. It has since been destroyed to make room for condos. The C. glaucum has provided many challenges for me. It is slower growing and highly subject to wind damage as well as scale. This summer it seems to have contracted crown hardening, a normally fatal disease in the tip of the rhizome. Starting at about a 4" pot 5 years ago it now is in a 2 gallon with fronds about 12". The C. chamissoi I am growing from spores I collected at a coffee plantation on Kauai. They took only about 6 months to reach sporophyte stage and continue slow steady growth. Now 18months the plantlets are about 1" across.

Sources include: The Fern Factory

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e-mail JIMB@fernfactory.com

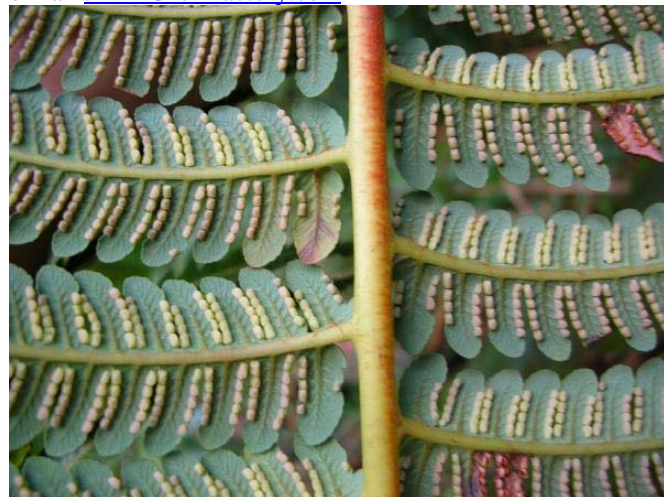


Photo Starr USGS

