

March 2007

Vol. 9, No. 03

<http://www.tgcfersoc.org>

No Regular Meeting this Month

We're Showing, Telling and Selling at the Houston Flower and Plant Expo – See Below

President's Message:

Hi Everyone,

I want to first thank everyone that attended last months meeting. Your help with putting the plaques together for the sale is much appreciated. They all turned out very nice. The refreshments were good and I think we all had a pretty fun time; I know I did. Remember, **we will not have a regular meeting in March** because it would be the same Sunday as the Show and Sale. Instead, we hope to see you at the:

Houston Flower and Plant Expo

George R. Brown Convention Center, Downtown Houston
Friday – March 16, 2007, 10 AM to 7 PM
Saturday March 17, 2007, 10 AM to 7 PM
Sunday March 18, 2007, 10 AM to 5 PM

Again, set up is Wednesday and Thursday. For those that have already signed up to help, I will be checking in with you early that week. If you have not signed up already but want to help, please give me a call at [281-733-5564](tel:281-733-5564).

We need your plants. We need both the plants you're going to display as well as the plants you're donating to the *Society* to sell. You are not restricted to ferns only. If you have other plants the Society can profit from please let us know. I will be checking in with several of you to see what you have, but if you can call me first or send me an email at darla@fermplantation.com it will help me out a lot. We have so much to do to get ready, so anything you can do to help will not be turned down.

See you at the show,
Darla

DUES ARE DUE

If you haven't paid your dues for 2007 yet, this is a reminder – **please don't forget!**

Dues amounts:
Individual: \$10.00
Family: \$15.00
Student: \$5.00

Our Treasurer will be available to collect them at the next meeting or you may mail your payment to:

Mary McConnell
6218 Wister Lane
Houston, TX 77008

Please make your checks payable to Texas Gulf Coast Fern Society or simply TGCFS.

Officers and Committees:

President: Darla Harris
Vice President: Larry Rucker
Secretary: Patsy Geiger
Treasurer: Susan Peacock
Board Members at Large: Ted Richardson & Cecil Strange, Jr.
Membership Chair: Mary McConnell
Newsletter: Paul Geiger
Library: Patrick Hudnall
Raffles: Jean Keiser
Hospitality: Jessica Sheldon
Welcoming at Door: Emma Lee Payne

Meeting Refreshments

Jessica Sheldon, our Hospitality Chairperson wants to remind everyone that we now have several categories of refreshments each month to encourage more participation from our members. The categories are: **Drinks** (sodas, ice tea, water, etc.); **Snacks** (chips, dips, crackers, cookies); **Fruit or Veggie Tray** (seasonal foods); **Desserts** (bought or yum, homemade); **Service Ware** (plates, cups, plastic ware, napkins). And for those who would like to express their culinary talents, think outside the usual and surprise us with your own creation!

February Refreshments:

Thanks to **Jessica Sheldon and Cherie Lee** for the refreshments they supplied for our last meeting. They were delicious!

Library

We encourage you to take advantage of the great resource of information available in our library. At each meeting there are take-home sheets that contain a brief review of available books. Also at each meeting is a wide variety of books and videos available for immediate checkout.

Don't forget to visit our web site (see link in header, page 1) and click on **Library** to see the current list of books available. There you will see some pictures of the books we have and links to reviews at Amazon and elsewhere.



February Members Plant

Equisetum hyemale: ek-wi-se' tum hye-mal'e || <Greek equis, horse and seta, bristle ||.

The common name for this plant is "horsetail fern" and it is a fern ally. It reproduces by dispersing spore from a cone that forms on the top of the stem with a minute point at the tip, but does not have leaves like ferns. They are hollow reed type plants. This one grows to about 3 ft. and is hardy and evergreen during our winters and summers. It will grow in full sun, but likes lots of water in well drained soil. The horsetail can become weedy and difficult to eradicate once established so you may want to keep it in a pot so it does not take over your garden.

Some history of this plant: It was sometimes called "scouring rush" and was used by the pioneers to scrub pots and pans because of its silica-roughened stems.

These plants can also be propagated by division as well as cuttings. You can place a cutting in damp sand to a depth of 1/2 to 2/3 of its stem and with its joints in an upright position. Keep it moist until you see signs of lateral shoots growing.

Cuttings are often used in Oriental flower arrangements.

I hope you enjoy growing this unique plant.

Darla

Pictures of Equisetum hyemale:



Photo by Darla Harris



Close-up

Photo by: Darla Harris



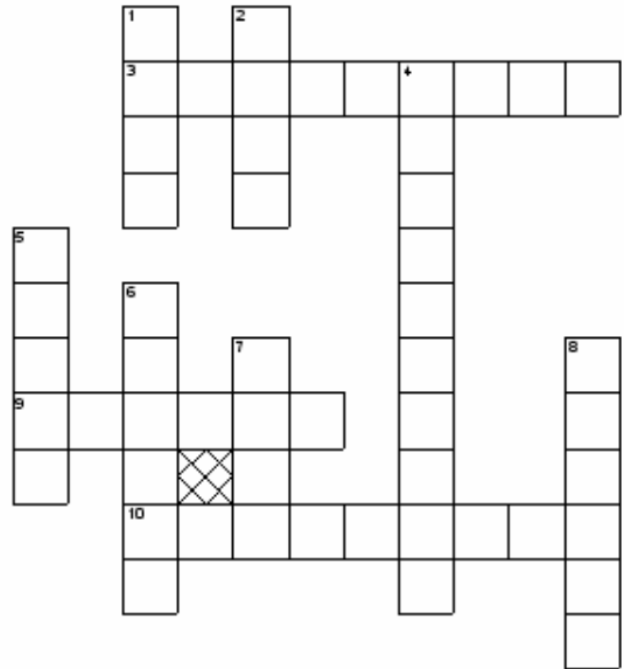
Theme Crossword Puzzle

This month we have another crossword puzzle that you should be able to solve with the information above or with some research – e.g., Barbara H's book.

We'll have the answers in our April Newsletter.

- Darla

Puzzle - Equisetum hyemale:



Across

- 3 To tear out by the roots; get rid of
- 9 This plant's stems are _____
- 10 Does not die back in winter

Down

- 1 Bristle (Greek)
- 2 A watering condition
- 4 This plant is best grown in _____
- 5 Grow in full sun for _____
- 6 Not true ferns
- 7 This plant's spore location
- 8 Cuttings will root at the _____

