



July 2008

Vol. 10, No. 07

<http://www.tgcfersoc.org>

Next Regular Meeting: Sunday, July 20, 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:

Darla is on vacation. There is no special report except for confirmation of the following:

July Meeting

Our meeting on Sunday will be our annual Plant Swap. Every member is encouraged to bring no more than two plants – any kind – but, ferns are preferred. For each plant brought and presented, each member will be able to select one plant from the collection displayed. Please remember that the plants should be established pot or container plants and not something picked or repotted recently.

This has always been a lot of fun, enjoyed by all. So come on out and see what kind of new plant you can take home for your garden.



TGCFS DUES

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.

Members: - Spread the word – encourage someone you know to visit us - we always have room for more!



Officers and Committees:

- President: Darla Harris
- Vice President: Laura Lee
- Secretary: Terri Dolney
- 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



**Texas Gulf Coast Fern Society
Statement of Income & Expenses
January 01, 2008 to June 30, 2008**

INCOME

Membership Dues:	\$455.00
Sale of Plants:	\$0.00
Raffle Income:	\$233.00
Sale of Books:	\$13.00
Interest Income:	\$3.53
Outstanding Checks:	\$0.00
Total:	<u>\$704.53</u>

EXPENSES

Program Expenses – Matl's.:	\$767.03
Program Expenses -- Lecturer:	\$0.00
Member Education:	\$0.00
Field Trip Expense:	\$0.00
Newsletter:	\$201.58
Cost of Plants Sold:	\$0.00
Facility Charges:	<u>\$24.00</u>
Total:	<u>\$992.61</u>

CHECKING ACCOUNT

Deposits:	\$701.00
Checks Written:	\$992.61
Bank Charges:	\$0.00
Interest Income:	\$7.18

Cash Balance, June 30, 2008: \$7,347.51

NET INCOME

Cash Balance, June 30, 2008: \$7,347.51
Cash Balance, January 01, 2008: \$7,631.94

2008 Net Income: (\$248.43)



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.

The following is contributed by Donna McGraw in her continuing series of educational material:

Hardening Off

Getting your baby ferns (and lots of other plants for that matter) out of their nursery container and into ordinary atmosphere is the most difficult step in propagation for most people. Sowing the spore and potting up the babies are the easy parts. Having the patience it takes to be successful is hard (no pun intended).

Humidity level is crucial. Don't even attempt this process when we're having a period of low relative humidity or, if you're doing this inside, when your air conditioner or heater is going full blast.

Some ferns are easier to harden off than others. The thicker the leaf, the easier it is. The very thin leaved ones are very difficult and need to be given much more time. If I know that the humidity level is going to be high for the next week or so and the temperature is not going to be extreme, I sometimes put the thicker leaved ones in an uncovered plastic container on the covered back porch to begin the process.

Please be aware that you shouldn't start this process at a time in your life when you're likely to be very busy such as a holiday season; or when you'll be traveling; or if you know that you'll be distracted by work or family obligations. Don't ever think you can turn your back on them for a day or two!

My suggestion is to start with only a few plants especially with your first or second try. It's much less disheartening to lose one or two plants than a whole tray full. If you have a lot of one kind of fern, as tempted as you might be, don't try to harden all of them off at once. Chances are you'll lose some of them. If you've saved some of them in reserve you can profit from your mistakes and perhaps do better with the next batch.

You've already begun your first step by potting-up the babies and putting them in a nursery container. Let the babies live in the nursery - a translucent plastic container with a water tight top or a zip top plastic bag, etc. - for a long time. I believe letting them develop a good root system is vital at this point. They may lose some leaves in the hardening off process but if they have a good root system they can regenerate the leaves. I usually give them a shot of root stimulator at least once while

in this stage. I know people who leave them in this contained atmosphere for a year or more

When you're ready for the next step gradually decrease the humidity. If you're using a lidded plastic container you can lift the top and set it back down on the container slightly askew.



Photo by: Donna McGraw

Since I haven't found a new source for the hard plastic boxes that I like to use, I'm experimenting with enclosing one of my shelves in plastic sheeting to see if I can harden off a larger quantity of plants at one time.



Photo by Donna McGraw

Don't forget to share your extra babies after you get them hardened off.

