



November 2009

Vol. 11, No. 11

<http://www.tgcfersoc.org>

Next Regular Meeting: Sunday, November 15, 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:

Hello, Everyone,

Fall has finally arrived! I hope everyone is taking a hint from the recent cool spell and making plans to protect your tender ferns this winter. Some of you will remember the meeting we had at Fern and Jerry Seymore's a few years ago at which we helped Jerry get ready for winter and in the process learned some of his secrets. He has an interesting system of buried PVC pipe that he is able to slip a smaller diameter pipe into creating the framework for a "hoop" greenhouse (think of a series of upside down U's) He covers the frame with a sheet of fairly thick translucent plastic, thus creating a temporary greenhouse directly over the plants that are planted in the ground. If you've come up with a method to provide temporary protection for your plants we'd love to have you share it with the rest of the group at this month's meeting.

We have a busy schedule for this month's meeting. We need to have our annual election of officers for next year. I hope that those of you who have been asked to serve on the board will accept enthusiastically - after all, this is your society.

Our scheduled speaker for this month has had to reschedule for next year but never fear we have a great project in store for you. We'll be having a program next year on Vertical Fern Gardening and we're going to do an experimental project in preparation for that program. We'll be planting two small hanging containers using sphagnum moss in one and an inert material in the other. The sphagnum filled container will be our control medium - we know we can grow in sphagnum. What we don't know is: can we get our plants to grow in a medium that won't break down over time the way sphagnum does? This should be a fun hands-on experiment that you'll need to report back on at a future meeting. Larry asks that if you have wire cutters to please bring them to the meeting.

Casa Flora is sending us another fern to try in our landscape - remember, we need to report back on how it fares in our part of Texas.

We've gotten new ferns at almost every meeting this past year - how are yours doing? If you have some that you're particularly proud of please take pictures or bring the plants to this month's meeting and share your growing secrets with the rest of the members.

I hope to see you all at the meeting Sunday.

Donna



DUES

TGCFS 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:

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|-------------------------|--|
| President: | Donna McGraw |
| Vice President: | Sara Chumley |
| Secretary: | Cherie Lee |
| Treasurer: | Terri Dolney |
| Board Members at Large: | Sharon Banister, Darla Harris and Lulu Leonard |
| Membership Chair: | Mary McConnell |
| Ways and Means: | Ted Richardson |
| Special Projects: | Larry Rucker |
| Newsletter: | Paul Geiger |
| Library: | Frank Lee |
| Raffles: | Patrick Hudnall |
| Hospitality: | Jessica Sheldon |
| Welcoming at Door: | Marcia Livingston |



**Minutes of General Meeting, October 18, 2009
Texas Gulf Coast Fern Society**

A regular monthly meeting was held at the Houston Garden Center, Houston, Texas.

The meeting commenced at 2:30 PM with President, Donna McGraw calling the meeting to order.

General Meeting: Donna McGraw discussed society business and upcoming meetings / activities.

Ted Richardson was appointed as Chairman of the Nominating Committee by Donna McGraw. Cecil Strange and Frank Lee volunteered and were elected to make up the rest of the Nominating Committee. If you are interested in holding an office, let them know. The election for 2010 officers will be held during the November meeting.

Marcia Livingston, with Jessica Sheldon as her backup, will be the new Welcomers at the Door for meetings, giving Emma Lee Payne a break after a job well done.

Jessica Sheldon, Chairperson for the Propagation Group, is gathering names of interested members who would like to participate. First activity is not being planned until after the New Year.

December 20th will be our Christmas Party at Donna and Monty McGraw's home. It will be our usual potluck meal with an optional gift exchange.

Program: "Mixing Potting Soil" was presented by Sharon Banister and Donna McGraw. Members mixed five gallons of potting soil to take home using Sharon Banister's special recipe:

- 2.5 gallons peat moss
- 2.5 gallons vermiculite or perlite (gives you potassium)
- 9 Tbsp. Dolomite Lime (granular)
- 5 Tbsp. Gypsum (gives you calcium)
- 2.5 Tbsp. Single Superphosphate (gives you Phosphorus)
- 1 Tbsp. Calcium Nitrate (gives you Nitrogen)
- 1/8 teaspoon fritted trace elements (gives you trace minerals)

Members received two plants, *Asplenium nidus* (Birds Nest) and *Blechnum brasiliense* (Brazilian Tree Fern), to take home and plant in their new potting soil.

Plant Raffle: Frank Lee ran the plant raffle with many plants finding new homes.

Meeting was adjourned at 3:50 pm.

Submitted by: Cherie Lee, Secretary



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.



July Book Review

By: Frank Lee

"Ferns of the Tropics" by Wee Yeow Chin

This book offers an introduction to the structure and life cycle of ferns, with clear illustrations and photographs. It also includes a step-by-step explanation of how to propagate and cultivate ferns successfully in a range of climates. It explores the habitats of ferns and gives a sampling of the range of fern species found in the tropics. Each species is illustrated in color and extended captions contain a wealth of information about the plant, including habitat, origin, usage, and tips on cultivation.

If you don't have your own copy you can check it out of our library. Just see Frank for the sign-out sheet.



Upcoming Events – Other Societies in Houston Area:

If you have the time and would like to expand your horticultural activities, take note of the following announcements by the Houston Bromeliad and Orchid Societies.

Bromeliad Society/Houston Inc.:

www.bromeliadsocietyhouston.org

Regular meetings are held the third Tuesday of every month at 7:30 PM at: The Houston Garden Center.

Next regular meeting is November 17, 2009

The Houston Orchid Society, Inc.

www.houstonorchid.society.org

Regular meetings are held the first Thursday of every month at 7:30 PM at: The Houston Garden Center.

Next regular meeting is December 3, 2009.

