



# Texas Gulf Coast Fern Society

October 2010

Vol. 12, No. 10

<http://www.tgcfersoc.org>

**Next Regular Meeting: Sunday, October 17, at 2:00 p. m. – Mercer Arboretum & Botanic Gardens,  
22306 Aldine Westfield Rd, Humble, TX 77338 – Phone: (281) 443-8731**

## A message from our President:

Hello friends,

Wow! Today is wonderful fall day! I hope you're all enjoying this weather as much as I am. I'm sure all of you are keeping your fingers crossed that winter isn't a repeat of last year. I'm hoping it at least holds off until my fall tomatoes have a chance to produce. I have another batch of seeds started for growing in the greenhouse. This will be my first year to try my hand at growing veggies in the greenhouse during the winter. If any of you have had experience doing this, I'd appreciate tips and hints. For instance, am I going to have to take a paintbrush and pollinate the tomatoes or will they do it themselves without my help?

Once again it's time to elect Fern Society officers. The nominating committee was formed at the September meeting. I realize that this is a month earlier than required by our by-laws but as a former nominating committee chair, I felt that more time would help this process. I hope no one has a problem with that decision. I also hope that if the nominating committee approaches you about serving, you'll seriously consider accepting the responsibility. I was asked several years ago to take the position of president and volunteered for another position instead, thinking I could do more for the society in that other position - but I said that I would take my turn as president at a later date. I have fulfilled that promise and would ask that each of you consider what you can do for *your* club. Having the same people doing the work of the society year after year creates a stagnant society and frankly creates burnout. Pat Hudnall is chairman of the committee - call him and volunteer - each of you has something special to add to the direction the club will be taking in the next few years.

The Houston Federation of Garden Clubs regular meeting for October will be on the 8th at 10:30 AM at the Garden Center. The speaker this month is Dan Phillips talking about "Recycling for Home Exteriors and Interiors".

I hope to see you all at our meeting this month

Donna



## A message from our Vice President:

Field Trip – Field Trip – Field Trip !!!!! October, 2010  
Mercer – Mercer – Mercer !!!!!!!!

Finally, after this hot humid summer, we have our first reprieve of cool, crisp, mornings and well, not so hellishly hot afternoons. So imagine a day like this, walking among plants and ferns revived with the cooler weather, once again looking more like plants rather than the burnt fronds and withered crosiers of this summer. There is so much detail to observe on our walk, not just the ferns with their sometimes subtle (or not so subtle) changes of form, structure, and color, but the way they are placed, presented, cultivated. All the work of nature with the busy body fussing of people like us who want in on what nature does so well on her own.

I am feeling rather smug with myself for finding a program for this month's meeting that will get us outside, up front, and personal with the fern garden at Mercer Arboretum. Actually I was terrified that I wouldn't have a program, you all would be at the meeting, staring at me, pounding on the tables chanting "Program, Program, Program". Oh the nightmares of a VP!!

Not to worry! No nightmares here, ghouls or goblins. Our imaginary walk will be a dream of a tour of the fern garden guided by the head botanist of Mercer, Anita Tiller, 2:00 pm sharp in front of the visitor center on our regular meeting day, Oct 17<sup>th</sup>.

I hope I am not just dreaming that we (Jean Keiser is using her power of persuasion to help me out) will have reserved the meeting room (or is this another nightmare???), will be able to use their kitchen for our refreshments, and perhaps even have arranged a tour of the greenhouses. As of yet, I have to perform a little magic, and an email, to pull that altogether. I promise not to take up my broom at night, drop notes tied to dead ferns at your door steps to let you know about the room and refreshment arrangements; I'll send an email.

I thought I hadn't been to Mercer before, but now I remember I have. I had the flu, throwing up, fever, you get the picture and it wasn't pretty, another kind of nightmare. I hope to make it past the bathroom this time. In anticipation of a beautiful day, I plan on taking lots of pictures of ferns, plants, people or even a fern fairy or two. If you haven't been there before, a map is attached to help guide you. I understand there is a matter of signing in at the front office, reading the

guidelines of courtesy to plants and people. Please allow yourself extra time to do this before our tour begins.

Oh, one last thing; I understand if we all wear our society T-shirts, the goons will stay away, the fern fairies will play, and just maybe we will attract another one of those helpless people who try to capture nature at home in their yards, gardens or a bottle. See you there!!!

Submitted by: Jessica Sheldon, Vice President



### Up and Coming Attractions

October 17	Mercer Arboretum Field Trip
November 21	Fern Reproduction
December 19	Holiday Party

### October 17 – Mercer Arboretum & Botanic Garden Tour

Anita Tiller, our guide for our fern garden tour at Mercer Arboretum, received a B.S. in biology/chemistry with emphasis on plant communities' ecology in 1979 and an Environmental Science certificate in 1980 from the Univ. of AL. She received an M.S. in Botany at Univ. of FL, Gainesville with an emphasis on aquatic botany in 1983. Her field biology training includes terrestrial and aquatic vegetation mapping, avian and mammalian ecology and limnological monitoring in FL and AL for university and federal government grants. Through the 13 years as she worked as a scientist and manager for clinical and research labs at the Veterinary Teaching Hospital at UF and Baylor College of Medicine, Houston, she also studied at the School of Forestry, Wildlife Biology at UF and the Dept. of Ecology & Evolutionary Biology at Rice Univ. in Houston. Anita accepted a position as botanist and conservation manager at Mercer Arboretum and Botanic Gardens, Harris County Precinct 4 in December of 2000. As Center for Plant Conservation officer at Mercer Arboretum and Botanic Gardens, Humble, TX, she coordinates plant conservation efforts throughout east Texas and the Upper Gulf Coast with numerous governmental agencies. She teaches for the Texas Master Gardener, Mercer's Texas Gulf Coast Gardener, Texas Master Naturalists programs and has authored numerous scientific and conservation publications and presentations. Anita, a life-long naturalist and certified Texas Master Naturalist, promotes ecologically sound gardening practices and her backyard "refuge" reflects her love for wildlife, herbs, and vegetables with a tropical ambiance.

### November 21 – Fern Reproduction

Our program for November will be presented by Joan Nester-Hudson, Department of Biological Studies, Sam Houston State University. Joan is a well established member of the fern community. She will bring us a lively program on sex, in ferns that is, complete with dissection microscopes and live material. This will not be g-rated! Don't miss the show!

We have many other possibilities and speakers being pursued for our Society. As always, suggestions for programs are always welcome so please let me know if you have any for 2011.

Submitted by: Jessica Sheldon, Vice President



### Refreshments:

Refreshments for September were generously provided by:

Drinks:	Cecil Strange
Non-sweets:	Cherie Lee
Fruits/Veggies:	Jessica Sheldon
Desserts:	Larry Rucker
Service ware:	Cecil Strange

Refreshments for October will generously be furnished by:

Drinks:	Emma Payne
Non-sweets:	Jan Keiser
Fruits/Veggies:	Sara Chumley
Desserts:	Donna Williams
Service ware:	Cecil Strange

Please let Cecil know if you can help with the refreshments for future months: [c2strange@comcast.net](mailto:c2strange@comcast.net) or 281-481-3884. Come out and enjoy some really delicious food!



### 2010 Officers and Committees:

President:	Donna McGraw
Vice President:	Jessica Sheldon
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
Marketing:	Darla Harris
Web Master:	Malcolm McCorquodale
Newsletter:	Cherie Lee
Library:	Frank Lee
Raffles:	Patrick Hudnall
Hospitality:	Cecil Strange
Welcoming at Door:	Marcia Livingston



### Dues:

If you haven't paid your dues for 2010, this is a reminder.

#### 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.



**Texas Gulf Coast Fern Society  
Statement of Income & Expenses  
January 1, 2010 to September 30, 2010**



**Minutes of General Meeting, September 19, 2010  
Texas Gulf Coast Fern Society**

**INCOME**

Membership dues	\$ 325.00
Raffle Income	267.00
Plant Re-imbursement	708.00
Miscellaneous	665.00
Petty Cash	172.26
Bank Interest	<u>2.25</u>
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$2,139.51</b>

**EXPENSES**

Plants	\$ 810.34
Projects	230.65
Lecturer Fees	830.33
Lecturer Gifts	104.27
Miscellaneous	<u>570.53</u>
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$2,546.12</b>

<b>Cash Balance 12-31-2009:</b>	<b>\$5,971.93</b>
<b>Cash Balance 9-30-2010:</b>	<b>\$5,565.32</b>
<b>2010 Net Loss:</b>	<b>\$ (406.61)</b>

Submitted by: Terri Dolney, Treasurer



**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.



**October Book Review**

**By: Frank Lee**

“Gardening with Nature in Texas” by Karen M. Breneman

This book provides the basic principles to garden successfully, provide habitat for wildlife, reduce pollution of air and water, and improve quality of life. You will learn about native plants and their importance to conservation of natural resources and wildlife, working with nature to reduce watering requirements and pesticide usage while maintaining a landscape, gardening in the shade, alternatives to turf grass, producing healthy vegetables, and creating a water feature and surrounding habitat to promote wildlife. Following the suggestions outlined in this book will not only promote colorful flowers and healthy plants, but also reward the gardener with beautiful butterflies, hummingbirds, and other desirable wildlife.

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

The meeting commenced at 2:15 PM with President, Donna McGraw calling the meeting to order.

**General Meeting:** Donna McGraw reminded members that election of officers for 2011 will take place at the November General Meeting and that Patrick Hudnall had agreed to act as Chairman of the Nominating Committee. Terri Dolney and Frank Lee volunteered to serve on the Nominating Committee with Patrick and the members present unanimously approved.

Discussion around the Society manning a booth at Bulb Mart to hand out membership information was held. Comments were made that past participation was not very productive. Decision was made not to participate this year.

Donna opened the floor for Committee Chair updates.

**Membership:** Chair Mary McConnell requested members check their information in the notebook and make any necessary changes to their addresses and/or emails.

**Hospitality:** Chair Cecil Strange reminded everyone to please sign up to bring refreshments for the upcoming meetings.

**Library:** Chair Frank Lee reminded all that the Library was open for checking out books and to please return books at the next meeting.

**T-shirts:** Please see Darla Harris if you are interested in a T-shirt.

**Newsletter:** Editor Cherie Lee reminded members that the deadline for the October Newsletter is October 1<sup>st</sup>.

**Society Store:** Larry Rucker informed members that plant tags were available for \$5 per 100 and 2 copies of “The Fern Dictionary” by Wilbur W. Olson were available for \$5 per copy.

**Auction of Fern Items:** Donna McGraw proposed having an auction of various fern items at her home on November 6<sup>th</sup> at 2 PM. Interested members are invited to attend.

**Program:** Darla Harris presented a wonderful program on “Ferns from A to Z”. She brought over 50 ferns and demonstrated the variations in the families and within the species. She showed examples of various growing methods /containers and discussed growing conditions. After the presentation, most of the ferns were available for purchase.

**Plant Raffle:** Patrick Hudnall ran the plant raffle with many plants finding new homes.

Meeting was adjourned at 4:30 PM.

Submitted by: Cherie Lee, Secretary



**Editor's Comments:**

As most of you are aware, the Newsletter is posted on the TGCFs website at the same time as it is mailed out to the members. In an effort to save money on mailings, it has been suggested that email notification be sent that the Newsletter has been posted on the website instead of mailing the Newsletter. Members can then visit the website to view the Newsletter and print it for themselves if they wish. **If you have not done so**

already, please let me know if you are willing to accept the email notification and forgo the mailed Newsletter. You can contact me by calling 281-999-8368, emailing [cherie.d.lee@sbcglobal.net](mailto:cherie.d.lee@sbcglobal.net), or let me know at the next meeting. If I don't hear from you, you will continue to receive the Newsletter as usual. Thanks.

**Deadline for the November Newsletter is October 23, 2010.**

Cherie Lee, Editor, *TGCFS Newsletter*



**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.

**The Houston Orchid Society, Inc.**

[www.houstonorchidsociety.org](http://www.houstonorchidsociety.org)

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

Next regular meeting is November 4, 2010.

**Bromeliad Society/Houston Inc.**

[www.bromeliadsocietyhouston.org](http://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 October 19, 2010

**September 19, 2010 General Meeting  
“Ferns from A to Z”  
By Darla Harris**



A big  
“Thank you”  
to Darla for a  
job well done.

And a big  
“Thank you” to  
Monty McGraw  
for the pictures  
since the editor  
forgot her  
camera.

Shopping for some new ferns!



And don't forget the raffle!

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