



Texas Gulf Coast Fern Society

November 2010

Vol. 12, No. 11

<http://www.tgcfersoc.org>

**Next Regular Meeting: Sunday, November 21, 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:

Dear Friends,

We had a wonderful day for our October meeting at the Mercer Botanical Gardens. Hope you all enjoyed it as much as I did. I got some good ideas for future landscaping projects - didn't you all just love the series of small ponds connected and surrounded by paths? And the bed of full grown Holly Ferns?

I'm looking forward to this month's meeting and hope to see you all there - don't forget we're electing 2011 officers at this meeting.

If you haven't signed up for the Christmas party, remember to do so at the November meeting.

I hope to see you soon.

Donna



A message from our Vice President:

Tom Turkey Talks Dirty

November 2010

"Gobble, gobble, gobble only goes so far with the ladies, if you know what I mean," winks Tom Turkey as he takes a drag off his 'American Native' cigarette. "Herbal, you know." He says as he catches my eyes widen with the copious clouds of smoke he exhales. "Helps with lung capacity; develops bigger, ugh, you know, breasts." I think he blushed, but couldn't tell with all those bumps, wrinkles, and that thing hanging off his nose. "It's called a 'snood'. Man don't you guys know anything about Turkeys! And those bumpy things on my face are called 'caruncles' and I have a 'dewlap', too." He says with some contempt.

"Most people say 'Let's talk Turkey', like that is some sort of accomplishment. But I'm here to say, 'Let's talk Dirty'!!!" Tom's snood, caruncles, and dewlap all turn bright red. Gross.

"Whoa," I say, "we have respectable people reading this."

He eyes me, which is a little scary, and starts in: "Antheridium, archegonium, gametophytes!!!!. How about them words, gobble, gobble!"

"Tom!" I feel like a schoolteacher ready to send an errant student to the corner. "Where did you learn such language!"

"I can read you know," says Tom with feathers all puffed up as he starts to do that Tom Turkey strut around the room.

"I thought turkeys were dumb, you know, look up to see if it's raining, forget to put their heads down and drown," I say, from experience of having raised turkeys in the past.

"No comment, and if you don't mind your manners this interview is over." The red colors flaring, feathers all fluffed, wings flapping.

"Hold on there Tom, no offense, have another 'American Native', ugh herbal smoke." And he settles down. "Tell me about those dirty words," I ask.

"I found them in the barnyard, dirty place that barnyard. That's how come I knew they were dirty words!" Tom is hunkered down puffing on his herbal cigarette looking like a bad boy.

Dumb all right, I thought.

"Tom, those words aren't dirty. They refer to the reproduction of ferns. Yes, those words have sexual attachments: antheridia are the male organs in ferns which produce the male gametes or spermatozoids. Male, Tom like you." Tom looks surprised, I think.

"And the word archegonium is the female organ which produces the egg. Female, Tom, like that pretty hen over there giving you the eye." Tom is starting to get the picture.

"Furthermore, the word gametophyte is the sexual stage in the life cycle of cryptogams producing the eggs and the sperm, it contains half the number of chromosomes of the sporophyte." I'm sounding off now. I just hope he doesn't ask me where the other half of the chromosomes come from. A confused look spreads over his caruncled face. "Just stick with the male and female parts, Tom," I reassured him. He relaxed and the interview ended.

Well, turkeys might be dumb, but then I will have to admit I have a lot to learn about sex. Oh, respectable, right; about fern reproduction. We have just the person to guide us through the sexuality of our ferns with articles like 'Gametophyte development in *Anemia mexicana*' 1981, 'Antheridiogen activity of *Anemia Mexicana*' 1982, 'Scanning electron microscopy on antheridia and archegonia of *Anemia mexicana*' 1985, to 'Gibberellin A45 and Gibberellin A61 from gametophyte culture extracts of *Anemia mexicana*' 1998 (I've no clue what that is!). There are grants, research projects, and class teaching at Sam Houston State University by the bucket. B.S., Horticulture, Texas A&M University, 1978; M.S., Botany,

Texas A&M University, 1979; Ph.D., Botany, Iowa State University 1985. This gal knows her stuff!

Joan E. N. Hudson is Associate Professor of Biology, in Biological Sciences in the Arts and Science Department at Sam Houston State University. And she knows ferns. The editor of the Fiddlehead Forum, newsletter of the American Fern Society, Joan lives right in our backyard, so to speak. How lucky are we!! And she will talk to us about sex! Respectable, fern sex! With microscopes and live..., you have to come to the meeting to find out what else! Wow, I'm as excited as Tom Turkey. I just don't have all that face stuff going on, turning bright red, and feather strutting. I might blush a little though.

See you at the meeting!

Submitted by: Jessica Sheldon, Vice President



Up and Coming Attractions:

November 21 Fern Reproduction presented by
Dr. Joan Hudson
December 19 Holiday Party hosted by
Jean and Ted Richardson

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 October were generously provided by:

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

Refreshments for November will generously be furnished by:

Drinks: Terri Dolney
Non-sweets: Mary McConnell
Fruits/Veggies: Noreen Tolman
Desserts: Darla Harris
Service ware: Cecil Strange

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



Fern for the Month:

We are going to have the "Christmas Fern" in a 4" pot for purchase at the November meeting. Rudy from Casa Flora says this could be planted outside now, hoping we have a mildish winter, or planted into a slightly bigger pot and kept in a sheltered area outside until springtime.

If anyone is growing this fern, please consider bringing it to "show and tell" at the November meeting and pass on your growing experiences, tips, etc.

Submitted by: Jessica Sheldon, Vice President



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



2011 Dues:

2011 dues are now being accepted. Please complete the membership form included with your Newsletter or with your email Newsletter notice and return it with your payment to our Treasurer Terri Dolney or our Membership Chair Mary McConnell at our next meeting or mail it to:

Mary McConnell
6218 Wister Lane
Houston, TX 77008

TGCFS dues amounts:

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

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



Acrostichum danaeifolium

Pronunciation: ack-ro-STISH-um dan-ee-if-FOLE-ee-um

When Joe and I were in Jamaica a couple years ago, we saw these massive ferns along the banks of the Black River growing in full sun and brackish marshes near the mangroves and looking very majestic. Needless to say we were both begging our boat driver to get close enough so we could get a good look and hopefully a few spores. We took our pictures and dreamed of these beautiful ferns gracing our yard, but no one knew their true name, just calling them the giant fern. So the name remained a mystery to me. I just put my spore down the end of September and it looks like they are going to take. I have a nice green mat so we will see.

Now, two years after our trip to Jamaica, Joe and I have finished our koi pond so off to the store I went to get some nice water plants to fill in some bare spots in and around the pond and to my amazement, I found this Jamaican fern at Nelson's Water Gardens in Katy. *Acrostichum danaeifolium* or commonly known as the Giant fern in the tropics of the New World, the only place it is found growing in nature. Needless to say, I had to have one (or two) of these giant beauties.

This fern should grow for us here in the Houston area. It is a zone 9 fern and most of us are in zone 9 here. This is a very large fern with fronds that cluster and can reach up to 13 feet long in the wild anyway. We will see how well it does in captivity. If you don't have a pond, this fern can still be grown by placing its container in water, placing it in a whiskey barrel, or even placing it in a ceramic pot with no holes in the bottom to retain the water in the pot.

I'm very excited to see how it does!!!

I would like to thank Barbara Joe Hoshizaki for helping me identify this fern. You can read more on this fern in her book the Fern Grower's Manual page 156.



Submitted by: Darla Harris



TGCFS T-shirts Available:

There are some extra T-shirts available for anyone needing one (or more). They are \$10.00 each. We have our basic black and green, but also a couple other colors in large and extra large. See me at the meeting if you are interested.

Submitted by: Darla Harris, Marketing Chair



Minutes of General Meeting, October 17, 2010 Texas Gulf Coast Fern Society

A regular monthly meeting was held at the Mercer Arboretum & Botanic Gardens, Humble, Texas.

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

Upcoming Meetings: Jessica Sheldon discussed the upcoming November meeting presentation on "Fern Sex".

Holiday Party: Jean and Ted Richardson have graciously offered to host the party at their home inside the 610 loop. The party will be at 2 PM on our normal meeting day, December 19th. It will be a pot-luck dinner so be prepared to sign up at the November meeting to bring your favorite dish. We will also have a gift exchange for anyone interested in participating. Directions, maps, and more information will be included in the December Newsletter.

Hospitality: We had a festive Halloween spread this month. See the Newsletter Refreshments section for those creative folks. Chair Cecil Strange reminded everyone to please sign up to bring refreshments for the November meeting and several members stepped up to fill the gaps. Thanks for helping.

Nominating Committee: Chair Patrick Hudnall reminded folks that election of officers for 2011 will take place at the November General Meeting and he may be contacting folks to volunteer for a position.

Program: The program this month was a tour of the fern garden at Mercer lead by our own Donna McGraw, Darla Harris, Patrick Hudnall, and Larry Rucker. Many ferns were identified and some growing tips were shared. The garden tour was followed by a tour of the green houses arranged by Jean Keiser and a chance to purchase some of the many ferns they had growing. It was a beautiful day for a stroll through the gardens.

Meeting was adjourned at 4:30 PM.

Submitted by: Cherie Lee, Secretary



November Book Review

By: Frank Lee

“Ferns” by Brooklyn Botanic Garden

This book includes growing tips as well as growing conditions for various ferns. It also has a discussion on fern propagation including growing from spores. There are pictures and one page descriptions with cultivation tips for various ferns including our Fern of the Month, the Christmas Fern. Check it out.



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, 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 December Newsletter is November 22, 2010. Yes, this is the day after our meeting.

Cherie Lee, Editor, *TGCFS Newsletter*



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.



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

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

Next regular meeting is January 6, 2011.

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 16, 2010

October 17, 2010

Mercer Arboretum & Botanic Gardens
22306 Aldine Westfield Rd, Humble, TX 77338



Autumn Fern
Dryopteris erythrosora



Lace Fern
Microlepia strigosa



Australian Tree Fern
Sphaeropteris cooperi



Our guides from left to right: Donna McGraw, Patrick Hudnall, Darla Harris, and Larry Rucker in front.



Oriental Chain Fern
Woodwardia orientalis



Cemetery Fern
Pteris vittata



Climbing Fern
Lygodium Japonicum



Pyrosia lingua
variegated



Bracken Fern
Pteridium aquilinum



East Indian Holly Fern
Arachniodes simplicior
Var. *simplicior* 'Variegata'



Blechnum
Silver Lady



Sensitive Fern
Onoclea sensibilis



Pteris ensiformis
Evergemeiensis



Maidenhair Fern
Adiantum



Royal Fern
Osmunda regalis



Japanese Painted Fern
Athyrium niponicum



Leather Fern
Rumohra adiantiformis



Investigating



And more shopping



Shopping



The loot!