



August 2011

Vol. 13, No. 8

<http://www.tgcfersoc.org>

**Summer Party: Sunday, August 21, at 2:00 p. m. – Mary McConnell’s Home
6218 Wister Lane, Houston, TX 77008 – Home Phone: (713) 880-2530 – Map included**

A message from our President:

Hi Everyone!!

August? That means it's time to sit back, cool off, and have a much deserved "Party". This year it's at Mary's house! Thank you, Mary! Unfortunately, I will not be able to visit with you all at the summer social. I have a prior commitment with my dad and will be out of town. I will miss the opportunity to talk with each of you, as this is truly our bonding time and why we have such a close, warm, and caring group! Sometimes at our monthly meetings things get very hectic and I know I don't get a chance to catch up with each of you like I really relish doing. It will be December before we know it and the next party. Then, I will have the time to talk. And I do like to talk!!!

Duane Petersen put on a great show and tell for us on the **Nephrolepis exaltata** fern group, the 'Bostons'! He was good enough to tell us how to start new plants from the stoles, so let's all try and share with our other members. Remember the stoles are the long strings that hang down from the plant. Cut them off, put them on some damp potting medium, and tack them down every few inches with the potting mix. Keep them evenly moist and you should have some nice starts by spring to share or put in the raffle. Don't forget to tag them so you know which one is which. All Duane's plants are very unique and I'm sure most of us would have liked to have every one of them! I know I would.

And parking was a *Breeze* this monthtoo hot for everyone but us!

I hope everyone has been looking through their plants and dividing them so you can participate in the plant swap in September. This is always a great opportunity to get something new, that one of our members has grown up. Remember, it does not have to be a fern but something nice to trade. Since we are having it at the Garden Center and limiting it to 5 plants to trade per member (10 per family), we should have some time to discuss growing tips to make this a learning experience as well. There's always someone who can grow that plant you just can't seem grow.

We are always looking for articles for the newsletter. This can be a good idea that you came up with, or someone else did, that you want to share. If you found a great fern at a local nursery, share the information so we can all take advantage of a new plant. If you know of a plant event coming up, share it with the group. We all have a story in us. Let's share!

I was able to speak at the Mercer Symposium on Tropical Plants, sharing fern information with the group. There was a lot of interest in ferns. I'm hoping we get some new fern enthusiast to join our group. Mercer would like for us to have some volunteers at the March Mart sale next year, so mark your calendars and let me know you want to join the March madness, I plan on it!!

I want to wish a speedy recovery to a couple of our members who are going through some extreme health issues right now. If you need anything let me know. "Get well Soon!!" from all of us.

Be careful out there and don't get over heated taking care of your plants this month!

See you in September. (I won't sing.)

Darla



A message from our Vice President:

Too hot to get down and dirty,

August 2011

So be cool and come to the party

I think the title says it all. With this 100+ heat, gardening outside is mostly the chore of watering to keep plants alive until it cools off. So, this is a perfect time to head over to Mary McConnell's for our summer party Sunday August 21.

Cool eats and conversation start at our usual meeting time of 2:00 PM. This is pot luck late lunch / early dinner, so if you haven't signed up to bring a dish, please call Jean Richardson (713-963-0118) to see what cool dish you can bring.

This is probably the shortest newsletter article I have written, so enjoy it! Map and directions to Mary's are at the end of the newsletter.

Submitted by: Jessica Sheldon, Vice President



Up and Coming Attractions:

August 21: Summer Party at Mary McConnell's home
Sept 18: Annual Plant Exchange – get those plants growing and potted before the Sept meeting
October 16: Open
November 20: Open
December 18: Christmas Party with gift exchange

Submitted by: Jessica Sheldon, Vice President



Refreshments:

Refreshments for July were generously furnished by:

Drinks: Ted Richardson
Savory: Darla Harris
Fruits/Veggies: Cherie Lee
Desserts: Terri Dolney
Service ware: Society

August is our summer party. If you haven't already done so, please let Jean Richardson know what you plan to bring for our cool pot luck meal. <mailto:tedandjean@aol.com>. Come out and join us for a great time and some really delicious food!



2011 Officers and Committees:

President: Darla Harris
Vice President: Jessica Sheldon
Secretary: Cherie Lee
Treasurer: Terri Dolney
Board Members at Large: Marcia Livingston, Donna McGraw, and Lulu Leonard
Membership Chair: Mary McConnell
Ways and Means: Ted Richardson
Special Projects: Larry Rucker
Web Master: Malcolm McCorquodale
Newsletter: Cherie Lee
Library: Frank Lee
Raffles: Larry Rucker
Spore Exchange: Patrick Hudnall
Society Store: Larry Rucker
Hospitality: Jean Richardson
Welcoming at Door: Beth Ayer and Marcia Livingston



Statement of Income & Expenses April 1, 2011 to June 30, 2011

INCOME

Membership dues	\$ 230.00
Raffle Income	213.00
Plant Re-imbursement	791.00
Project Re-imbursement	340.00
Miscellaneous	161.00
Petty Cash	251.46
Bank Interest	1.43
Total:	\$1,987.91

EXPENSES

Cost of Plants	\$ 668.39
Project Supplies	44.51
Lecturer's Fees	100.00
Lecturer's Gifts	40.97
Bank Fees	33.36
Miscellaneous	625.38
Transfer to Petty Cash	200.00
Total:	\$1,691.60

Bank Balance 12-31-2010: \$5,516.13

Petty Cash 6-30-2011: \$ 202.68

Outstanding Checks \$ -55.00

Bank Balance 6-30-2011: \$5,960.12

Net Profit 6-30-2011: \$ 536.09

Submitted by: Terri Dolney, Treasurer



Gardening Tips:

In this world of "Recycle, recycle, recycle", here is one way to do just that.

Because pots dry out quickly, they must be watered frequently. An inexpensive yet effective drip-irrigation system can be made from a plastic bottle. Simply drill / punch a few very small holes in the bottom of the bottle. Fill it with water, tightly screw on the top, and place it in the pot.

If you want something less "bottled water" looking, you can bury a small water bottle in the pot, with the neck exposed and fill it as needed.

If you have any tips to share, please contact Jean Keiser at jbkeiser@swbell.net.

Submitted by: Jean Keiser



Upside Down Fern

Family: [Dryopteridaceae](#)

Genus: [Arachniodes](#) (a-rak-nee-OH-dees)

Species: [standishii](#) (stan-DEE-shee-eye)

After our last two winters, I think most of us are looking for something that will be pretty and still alive during those cold January mornings and yet, still alive after a weeklong of our over 100 deg F brutal summer. If so, this is the fern for you!

It received its name because when you look at the top of the frond, it looks like you're looking at the underside of most ferns. The veins are prominent on the upper side of the frond surface rather than the more common under side. This gives it a very unique look against other ferns.

Being evergreen year round in the Houston area is a huge plus for this shapely formed fern with gracefully arching fronds. Its relatively fine texture sets it apart from other garden plants with less refined foliage. Once mature, it can be 3' tall and wide however, it is a slow grower but well worth watching.

This fern does best in partial shade to shade. It prefers an evenly moist well-drained loamy soil for optimal growth. I have found this fern to be forgiving on the water too. On those occasions when it received too much or not enough water, it seemed to just take it in stride along with the temperature. That being said, this is not a bog fern. It cannot take standing water.

It is particular about its soil conditions though, with a strong preference for rich, acidic soils. Consider applying thick mulch around the root zone over the growing season to conserve soil moisture. This plant can be propagated by division.

The nice thing too for those of us who live outside the loop is that deer don't particularly care for this fern. This is a relatively low maintenance fern with light green new fronds that turn to a darker almost forest green once mature.

The Upside down fern really is a Plus Plus for us. It has no significant negative characteristics. I got my first plant about 5 years ago and it is said they can live about 15 years. So far so good!



Bottom of the frond

Submitted by: Darla Harris



August Book Review

“Ferns to Know and Grow” by F. Gordon Foster

This book includes information detailing fern identification, culture, and propagation presented in easily understood language for both the new and experienced fern growers. Among the book's useful features are its splendid drawings and tracings of fronds, spores, and crociera for each species, which reveal small identifying features that are often overlooked. This book includes chapters with the following headings: getting acquainted with ferns; ferns, then and now; the plant and its components; easy steps to identification; the culture of hardy ferns; growing ferns in the home garden; woodland plantings that feature ferns; growing ferns indoors; how to propagate ferns; native and exotic ferns to know and grow (illustrated with line drawings of each species); and composite descriptive summary (giving characteristics and cultural requirements of species), as well as a glossary, a fern selector (recommending species for particular situations in the home and garden), and a nomenclatural update.

Submitted by: Frank Lee



Top of the frond

**Minutes of General Meeting, July 17, 2011
Texas Gulf Coast Fern Society**

A regular monthly meeting was held at the Houston Garden Center, Houston, Texas. The meeting commenced at 2:00 PM with President, Darla Harris calling the meeting to order.

Upcoming Programs/Meetings: VP Jessica Sheldon reminded members that the Summer Party would be at our 2 PM regular meeting time August 21 at Mary McConnell's home. The September meeting will be the Plant Exchange. Each person may bring up to 5 plants (10 per family) for the exchange.

Hospitality: Chair Jean Richardson reminded everyone to please let her know what you plan to bring for the Summer Party pot luck meal.

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

Program: Duane Petersen presented a very informative talk on Nephrolepis – Boston Ferns. He showed many examples of different varieties and discussed their origin and growing conditions. He also brought a large number of ferns to sell and there were many happy members going home with new children.

Attendance: Members 28
 Visitors 0

Meeting was adjourned at 3.45 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, there 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.



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 September Newsletter is September 2, 2011.

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.

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 meetings are August 16 and September 20, 2011.

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 meetings are September 1, 2011.



July 17, 2011 TGCFS Meeting
“Nephrolepis-Boston Ferns”
Presented by Duane Petersen



