



Texas Gulf Coast Fern Society

February 2011

Vol. 13, No. 2

<http://www.tgcfernsoc.org>

**Next Regular Meeting: Sunday, February 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:

Hi Everyone!!!!

Burrrr..... I don't know about you guys...but I'm done with winter.

First, I hope everyone stayed safe and warm and did not try to brave the elements and I hope everyone was as prepared as you could be for this very cold snap. Only Spring will tell how well we did at protecting our plants.

I'm sorry I was not able to attend the January meeting, but I'm hearing everything went well. Patrick sharing his wealth of knowledge and the round table discussion on what has worked and not worked for different problems, made for a very informative meeting. I'm sorry I missed it but, I did snag some notes. We can learn so much from each other when we are talking about ferns, so it is always nice when everyone is willing to share their information! Let's hope we all have bug-less plants this next year!

We will be having a board meeting at 1PM before our regular meeting this month for those who are on the board and anyone wanting to attend. We have several agenda items, but if anyone has anything that they feel we should discuss please feel free to email me darla@fernplantation.com or phone me 281-733-5564 and we will add it to the agenda if it is not already there. This is everyone's society so making it the best it can be is a shared effort. This will be a fast paced meeting so we may have to follow up on some items at a future date. I will email the agenda items to the board members that have emails so please look it over and be ready to discuss. Lulu, I will phone you.

I'm looking forward to seeing each of you at the meeting!

Take care,

Darla



A message from our Vice President:

The Girl with the Dirty Tattoo*

February 2011

Mikelp Bloomkiss here: investigative journalist for the monthly periodical "Microsorium" and long time friend of Lisbeth Selaginella. As you might know, Lisbeth gained some of her reputation from her 'dirty' tattoo. It's that tattoo which has her in this, um, situation. However, to get a better idea of what is going on, I have to take you back to the beginning.

Three hundred million years ago, in the Carboniferous Period, is as far back as we go. It is when an extinct relative of our present day Lycopodiums and Selaginellas, *Lepidodendron*, was then living. Stately, as tall as 130 ft, a living green trunk of photosynthetic tissue with a crown of bifurcating branches and at the end of these blade-like branches, a cone containing spores. Magnificent! The name *Lepidodendron* translated means "Scale Tree". And what do scales remind you of???? So from the beginning Lisbeth has been carrying around that stigma with her, poor girl. To make matters worse, *Lepidodendron* has gone to the 'dark side'...more about that later.

Lisbeth Selaginella's situation is, and I wouldn't say it if this wasn't a professional periodical, sexual. As old as her relative *Lepidodendron*, her survival has persevered through the ages because of her propagative varieties. Having male and female sporangia, all of her 700 species reproduce sexually. However, her talents to propagate go beyond the usual mating, she will happily send forth her prodigy by cuttings, layering, and dividing. She is a survivor.

Lisbeth has found herself in head over scale in love with Kalle Lycopodium. A rather sensitive guy, Kalle is slow in relationships, with an almost resentful attitude to being disturbed in his routine. Their sexual relationship is in trouble. Kalle is not as promiscuous as Lisbeth. Transplanting almost always ends in certain death. Layering or cuttings, painfully slow growing, if at all. And spores, forget it. But Kalle has not gone over to the 'dark side'. For as frustrating, as tedious, as slowwww to procreate as he is, he has also endured on this earth as long as Lisbeth, both mourn the 'dark side' of *Lepidodendron*, now only a fossil.

As a last ditch effort to save their relationship, I have brought in a sex counselor for this month's meeting, Joan N. Hudson**. She will give us "counseling" for the sexual

reproductive cycles of Selaginellas and Lycopodiums. You will remember her from our lively November meeting on, what else, sex! The microscopes will be in tow! She also has some Lepidodendron from the 'dark side'. You won't want to miss this!

So, the dirty tattoo? Lisbeth has gone so far as putting her beloved Kalle on as a tattoo, complete with scales-like leaves twining around her, rather suggestive! You see they shall never have a sexual relationship: their spores are just not compatible. Come to the meeting to find out why.

*I hope this was amusing even if you have not read "The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo" by author Stieg Larsson.

**Joan N. Hudson is a grant recipient, teacher, and researcher for Sam Houston University in Huntsville, Tx. You can read more about her and her accomplishments in the November 2010 newsletter.

Our Plant for the Month is SELAGINELLA - aka SPIKEMOSS (and if you saw Lisbeth's hair, you would agree that Spike is appropriate!) Lycopodium, as usual, couldn't be disturbed, another no show for him.

Cypress Spikemoss and Pin-Cushion Spikemoss - nurture them, we will use them in a future project.

YOUR SELAGINELLAS AND LYCOPODIUMS ARE ENCOURAGED TO ATTEND THIS MEETING! Time will be given to look, share, and admire your companions!

Submitted by: Jessica Sheldon, Vice President



Refreshments:

Refreshments for January were generously furnished by:

Drinks: Jean and Ted Richardson
Chips & Dip: Mary McConnell
Cheese & Crackers: Terri Dolney
Fruits/Veggies: Susan Peacock
Desserts: Marcia Livingston & Cherie Lee
Service ware: Cecil Strange

Refreshments for February will be generously furnished by:

Drinks: Jean and Ted Richardson
Chips & Dip: Patrick Hudnall
Fruits/Veggies: Darla Harris
Desserts: Marcia Livingston & Beth Ayer
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!



Welcome New Member

Wayne Dupont

Please welcome him at our next meeting.

Submitted by: Mary McConnell, Membership Chair



2011 Dues:

2011 dues are now being accepted. If you haven't paid for 2011, please complete the membership form 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.



Board Meeting

There will be a Board Meeting at 1 PM on February 20, 2011 before the regular February meeting at the Houston Garden Center. Board members and all interested members are welcome to attend.



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.



Angiopteris evecta

Genus: [Angiopteris](#) (an-jee-OP-ter-is) ([Info](#))

Species: [evecta](#) (e-VEK-ta) ([Info](#))

My first experience with the Angiopteris or mules foot fern was in Costa Rica. Wow I thought, look at the size of that cycad, each frond a minimum of 15 feet long and 5 foot wide. After I had learned more about ferns a few years later, I knew that this had not been a cycad but the BIGGEST fern on earth. The Angiopteris is an old world fern. I got my first two from a mail order placed to Thailand. I received the two 10" half balls, dried out and cracked looking things, the stipules. I was told to put them in a pot not much bigger than their crown with well drained soil and keep them warm with bottom heat. I did and 8 months later, the first sign of life. This was about 10 years ago. I'm sure you can appreciate my excitement when I got my first frond that was as long as I was tall. For those who saw the ones I took to the Orchid show, that's them.

These ferns grow in the Hawaiian Islands everywhere where they have been brought in and have naturalized. The trip Joe and I took last month with my Dad, we went to Maui in Hawaii and also Pohnpei, in the Federated States of Micronesia where these ferns grow, not because someone had them shipped in, but because this is one of the places in the world they call home.

Knowing I was going to an island in the middle of the Pacific Ocean that was a fern collector's paradise, I went armed with my books, Ferns and Orchids of the Mariana Islands and Hawaii's Ferns and Fern Allies. I was not disappointed. Most of Pohnpei gets about 335 inches of rain a year and has a tropical maritime climate with the temperature range of 74-84 degrees from night to day all year round. So the ferns grow in mass there and get to their full potential. Many of the ferns I saw are ferns that I have, however, my ferns have not had the opportunity to reach their full beauty like they do at home. Walking down (or up) to see several waterfalls you would see the stipules of the Angiopteris, but you would have to look up to see the fronds. Most of the ones we saw were next to creeks and streams coming down the hill from all the runoff rain water.

Being the book nut that I am, I got a couple of books there in Pohnpei, one being Ethnobotany of Pohnpei which has a lot of culture and folklore and a full chapter on ferns. The folklore for the Angiopteris says to take fronds and leaves and boil them, using the steam like a vaporizer to treat spiritual sickness or any hex that may have been put on you and it would rid you of any evil spirits. You would repeat the treatment daily until you felt better. This was thought to be a very powerful fern.

To grow the Angiopteris, you need good humidity, which we have here in Houston, and lots of water. They are big plants and do not want to dry out. In fact, the massive fronds will wilt to the ground from lack of water. If you water right away, they will perk back up in a day or two. They prefer the heavy shade of a thick tropical forest, but will take partial shade here pretty well, mine have. The cold is their worst enemy for us, and they do not like to get cold. They really don't like to go below 40 degrees, but mine last year got down to 32 for a few hours and I could not see any damage. Those growing them in Florida say they just cover the stipule really

well and don't worry about the fronds for freezing weather and they have had good luck. I now have mine planted in the ground but in a very well protected place. I hope to try a smaller one out in the yard to see how it will do for us here with just minimal protection. So I will keep you posted!!



Submitted by: Darla Harris



2010 Officers and Committees:

President: Darla Harris
 Vice President: Jessica Sheldon
 Secretary: Cherie Lee
 Treasurer: Terri Dolney
 Board Members at Large: Sharon Banister, 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
 Hospitality: Cecil Strange
 Welcoming at Door: Marcia Livingston



February Book Review By: Frank Lee

“Hawaii’s Ferns and Fern Allies” by Daniel D. Palmer

This book is the first comprehensive survey of Hawaii’s ferns to be published in more than one hundred years. It covers endemic, indigenous, and naturalized ferns and fern allies (including rare and endangered plants). It contains more than 100 drawings along with detailed descriptions for all 222 species, varieties, and forms, and some hybrids. The author also includes information from Hawaiian folklore and mythology, describes uses of ferns by native Hawaiians, and updates Hawaiian common names. Check it out.



Minutes of General Meeting, January 16, 2011 Texas Gulf Coast Fern Society

A regular monthly meeting was held at the Judson Robinson Jr. Community Center, Houston, Texas.

The meeting commenced at 2:20 PM with Vice-President, Jessica Sheldon calling the meeting to order.

Jessica announced that there would be a Board meeting in February before the regular meeting.

Upcoming Programs/Meeting: VP Jessica Sheldon thanked Jean and Ted Richardson for hosting the Holiday Party at their lovely home in December and also thanked Mary McConnell for graciously offering to host the Summer Party at her home. For our February program, we are honored to have Dr. Joan Hudson, Associated Professor of Biology at Sam Houston State University and editor of the Fiddlehead Forum, the American Fern Society newsletter, back again to discuss the sexual reproductive cycles of Selaginellas and Lycopodiums. If anyone has any suggestions for topics for programs, please let Jessica know.

Membership: Chair Mary McConnell reminded members that she was collecting 2011 membership dues and had copies of the membership form if anyone needed one.

Hospitality: Chair Cecil Strange reminded everyone to please sign up to bring refreshments for an upcoming month. Please let him know if you can help out.

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

Spore Bank: Chair Patrick Hudnall explained how he will store and catalog the spores. A list will be posted on the website and if anyone is interested in trying to grow from spores, they should contact him. A suggestion was made to check with Casa Flora about sending them spores to grow for us. Donna McGraw volunteered to present a program on making spore packages to help members gather spores for the Spore Bank.

Sphagnum Moss: Let Cherie Lee know if you are interested in purchasing sphagnum moss and we will see about a group order.

Meeting Location: Some members expressed a desire to have future meetings at the Judson Robinson Jr. Community Center instead of the Houston Garden Center. Donna McGraw offered to research the possibility.



Planters for Sale:

Jessica Sheldon has two types of planters for sale: the window box planters we used in our January 2010 meeting workshop (\$30 for three stacking planters) and green stacking strawberry planters (\$5 each, picture shows three planters). Please let her know if you are interested and she will bring them to the next meeting.

Program: Patrick Hudnall presented a very informative program on “Fern Pest Management” discussing bugs, fungus, and other pests that hurt our ferns. There was a lively round table discussion with many questions and suggestions to try. Handout from the meeting will be posted on the website.

Two ferns, Mairis’s Hardy Maidenhair and Rosy Maidenhair, were available for purchase at cost and Ted Richardson prepared plant data sheets for members to add to their notebooks.

Plant Raffle: Larry Rucker ran the plant raffle with many plants finding new homes.

Meeting was adjourned at 4:20 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, 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 March Newsletter is March 4, 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.

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 March 3, 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 February 15, 2011.

January 16, 2011 TGCFS Meeting



Plants of the Month

Patrick Hudnall

presents

“Fern Pest Management”

