

August 2012

Vol. 14, No. 8

<http://www.tgcfersoc.org>

**Summer Party: Sunday, August 19, at 2:00 p. m. – Larry Rucker’s Home,
8010 Arletta, Houston, TX 77061 – Phone: (713) 649-3535 – Map included**

In Memoriam

Jean Keiser

We have lost a friend and valued member of our Society. Jean Keiser has lost her battle with cancer. She had been a very active member, served on several committees, and oversaw the raffle for several years. Jean could always be counted on to bring the refreshments with Emma every October with a big Halloween display of orange candies and cookies. She was also active in several other Societies and was well known in the plant world in the Houston area. She will be missed by all of us, but even more by her husband, Bill, and her family. Arrangements will be announced once the Memorial Service date and time have been determined. Our thoughts and prayers go out to all who loved Jean.



Darla Harris

A message from our President:

Hi Everyone,

We had a nice turn out for our meeting last month and I would like to welcome our new members to the Society! We do hope to see you at our Summer Party this month. We use this time to get to know each other better and learn how other members are growing their ferns. If you have any question on attending the party please let me know.

I hope everyone who was able to attend Roy Vail's presentation enjoyed it as much as I did. Learning the natural habitat of any plant will help us when we try to grow them at home. Roy brought us copies of his book on CD's and we have copies for members who were not able to attend. Thank you to all who helped to make the day a very nice example of our Society's warmth, outstanding refreshments and staghorns.

Remember the September meeting will be our plant exchange so start getting your special plants ready for the trade!

See you at Larry's on August 19th.

Take care,

Darla



A message from our Vice President:

Come on over to my house

August 2012

Well, not my house, Larry Rucker's house. I have heard tales of Larry's garden and I was not disappointed when Darla and I took last month's speaker, Roy Vail, over to Larry's garden (what a good excuse to get an early tour!). How fortunate for us Larry has gone to so much trouble to host this summer's party, renovating the kitchen, living room, and I don't know what to call the room off the living room heading out to the garden except spectacular! Larry, really you shouldn't have, but I'm so glad you did!

Summer Party: Sunday August 19, 2012
Larry Rucker's house- map at end of newsletter
2:00 PM to 4:00 PM???

This is pot luck late lunch / early dinner so sign up for food with Cherie Lee if you haven't already done so. See the Refreshments section for more information.

Other news: Get your plants ready for the annual plant exchange and if you don't have a plant, bring a plant related item - book, craft, unusual pot, etc. How it works is simple: bring a plant or item, get a plant or item in return. Numbers are passed out, one is drawn, and that lucky person starts the process by picking the plant/item of their choice. The person whose plant/item is picked is the next person who gets to select. Whoever's plant/item they select then gets the next pick and on and on until all the plants/items are picked! Lots of fun, but there are a couple of rules.

Each person may bring up to 5 plants/items for the exchange. Plants are not restricted to ferns. However, they need to be established in their pots. No cuttings or freshly potted plants, please. Also, they must be labeled, whether a plastic plant marker or a piece of paper. Give as much information about the plant as possible. If you do not know the botanical name, give the common name and include YOUR name on all of your plants. That way, if the recipient needs to ask something about the plant, they know who to ask.

The more attractive/unusual plant/item that you bring the better chance it will be selected early and then you will get to pick. There is stiff competition for the first plant picked so get your game on! Start your plants now!


Submitted by: Jessica Sheldon, Vice President



Welcome New and Returning Members

Michael Lyle
Darlene Morris
Judith & Loren Neufeld
Ryan Paddock

Please welcome them at our next meeting.



Up and Coming Attractions:

- Aug 19: "Summer Party"
hosted by Larry Rucker
Sept 16: "Annual Plant Exchange"
Oct 21: "Taxonomic Monographs"
presented by Alejandra Vasco, assistant to
Robinn Moran from New York Botanical Garden
Nov 18: Open
Dec 16: "Holiday Party"
location to be announced later

Submitted by: Jessica Sheldon, Vice President




Refreshments

Refreshments for July were generously furnished by:


- Drinks: Betty Mooney
Savory: Beth Ayer
Deviled Eggs: Faye Stansberry
Fruits: Cherie Lee
Veggies: Marcia Livingston
Desserts: Jessica Sheldon
Service ware: Cherie Lee

August Summer Party:

This is pot luck late lunch / early dinner, so if you haven't signed up to bring a dish, please call Cherie Lee (713-999-8368) or email Cherie.d.lee@sbcglobal.net and let her know what dish you plan to bring. With this heat, think cool.




2012 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 Lu Lu Leonard
Membership Chair: Noreen Tolman
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: Jeanie Richardson
Welcoming at Door: Beth Ayer and Marcia Livingston
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Need Supplies?

Larry Rucker will be organizing an order of supplies through the Society Store so take an inventory, make your shopping (wish) list, and get with Larry at the next meeting.



Texas Gulf Coast Fern Society General Meeting July 15, 2012

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.

General: Darla welcomed our guests and new members to our meeting. She discussed our upcoming August Summer Party at Larry Rucker's home and reminded members to sign up for the pot luck meal. Larry has also offered to have the raffle so bring your extra plants along to donate.

Darla also reminded members that the September meeting will be our annual Plant Exchange so get your plants ready. Up to five plants per member are allowed. See the Vice President's article on page 1 for more information.

As a follow-up to the June program on growing spores in agar, Larry Rucker reminded everyone to keep their petri dishes well watered.

Program: Roy Vail, author of "Platycterium Hobbist's Handbook", presented a wonderful program on platycteriums discussing their habitat and growing conditions. He also demonstrated techniques for mounting staghorns on plaques. Roy generously provided each member with his book and a video of Australia, as well as other information, on two CDs. Members also brought a variety of staghorns to display the diversity and beauty of Platycteriums - thank you Darla, Frank, Larry, Malcolm, and Patrick.

Plant Raffle: Larry Rucker ran the plant raffle with many plants finding new homes. An exciting addition to this month's raffle was a special raffle for Platycterium bloomii donated by Patrick Hudnall and won by Darlene Morris. The raffle raised \$115.

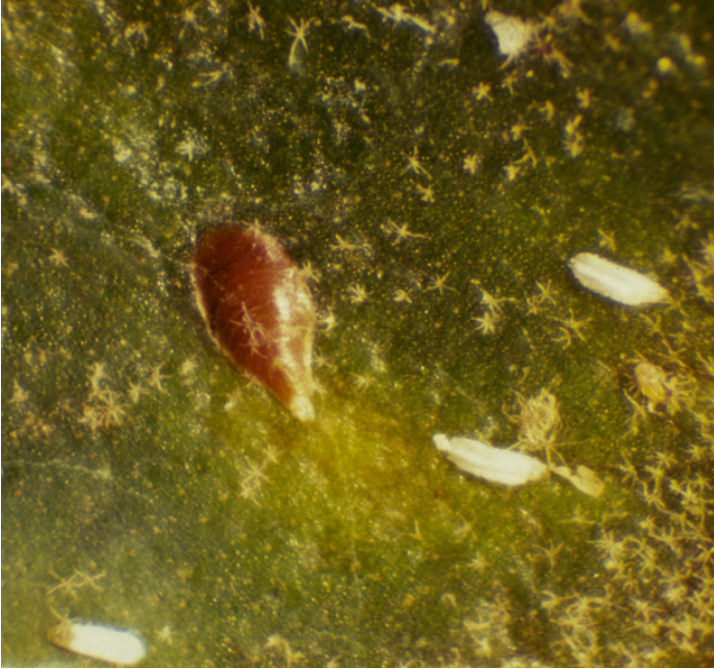
Attendance: 16 Members
6 Guests - including Roy and Mary Vail

Meeting was adjourned at 3:40 PM.

Submitted by: Cherie Lee, Secretary



The Dreaded Scale



At our last meeting, I noted that fern scale on staghorns was common on some of our samples. Mine in particular. Following the meeting I took time and searched the internet for information. What I found currently recommended is: Dinotefuran N-methyl-N-nitro-N. I found this available at my supplier as **Safari**[®] 2G granular systemic. I will refer to Dinotefuran as Safari below.

Background:

Fern scale (*Pinnaspis aspidistrae*) often affects staghorn ferns. Males are white, becoming mobile as they reach adulthood, while females are light or medium brown and immobile. The male's white armor remains attached to the fern even after he's emerged as a mobile adult, making a fern scale infestation seem much larger than it actually is. Adult male fern scale seeks out immobile females to fertilize in their hours-long adult lives. The female then lays her eggs under her brownish armor, dying once the last egg is laid. Crawlers hatch under the armor and remain there for several hours until the temperature and humidity outside the armor is ideal. They spend several hours seeking out a feeding location and usually affix themselves on the underside of a leaf or on a stalk of the staghorn fern. As the young insects feed, they emit a protective wax coating that makes penetration by insecticides difficult. They will molt several times before reaching their adult forms; females molt twice, males molt four times.

Prevention includes maintaining good air circulation, washing dust off, maintaining high light levels, and don't over fertilize.

Methods for control:

- Alcohol - Some people dab alcohol on the scale using a Q-tip. I understand it works but in my case it would be very time consuming.
- Insecticidal soap - Better than just water and helps wash dust off.
- Neem Oil - Fairly effective for use during the cool season.
- Diazinon - Remains available and effective against crawler stage scale, though I have had limited success with it in controlling adult stage.
- Orthene - Acephate applied at 1/2 strength. I consider this the current *standard* for control in home gardens. If routine use is maintained and combined with other methods it is effective.
- Imidacloprid marketed as Merit[®] and others - Last year I recommended this. Perhaps this year I haven't been using a strong enough solution or frequent enough applications, but it hasn't been successful at my home in controlling scale. During my research I found conflicting information on effectiveness on hard scale.

Safari:

I have tested Safari on many genera of ferns including *Platycerium vetchii*, *hillii* cultivars, *bifurcatum* and others. Instructions specify application of 1tsp for an 8" diameter pot. I used ~1 tsp. for each plaqued *Platycerium* and ~3 tsp. for each basket fern. References indicate Safari is quickly soluble in water. So I took a gallon bucket and added 1 cup to the water, mixed vigorously, and let it set for about 5 minutes. I poured the liquid into a pump sprayer and sprayed on the growing tips of the same staghorns. In about a week it appeared that none of the ferns dosed with Safari exhibited any damage at all from my two methods of application. It also appeared that the crawler stage scale had fallen off of the various ferns, including from the growing tip of the staghorns.

I am reminded that proper storage for most garden chemicals include a cool location. Keep that in mind since the temperature in most garages is likely to breakdown or cause other undesirable changes in the chemicals and is not in keeping with manufacturer's instructions.

Submitted by: Patrick Hudnall



2012 Dues:

If you have not renewed your 2012 membership or wish to join, please request a membership form from our Membership Chair Noreen Tolman and return it with your payment to her or our Treasurer Terri Dolney at our next meeting or mail it to:

Noreen Tolman
15915 Pasadero
Houston, TX 77083

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.



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 August 31, 2012.

Cherie Lee, Editor, *TGCFS Newsletter*



August Book Review

"The Gardener's Fern Book" by F. Gordon Foster

This book is an excellent reference for the serious horticulturist or nature-lover. It includes identification drawings and descriptions as well as advice on growing and using ferns in various locations. In this book, the parts of the fern are identified, carefully and simply explained, and beautifully illustrated by silhouettes of the entire leaf, together with enlarged sketches of diagnostic features. There is also a wealth of specific information on light, soil, potting, fertilizing, watering, temperature, and other important pointers for growing tender and exotic species indoors, and hardy species outdoors.

Submitted by: Frank Lee



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. If there is a particular book you would like to check out at the meeting, please contact Frank Lee at f.a.lee@sbcglobal.net or 281-999-8368 prior to the meeting to make sure it will be available.

Upcoming Events in the Houston Area:

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

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 August 21, 2012

Fall Sale – September 8, 2012

Gethsemane United Methodist Church
6856 Bellaire Blvd. (east of the SW Freeway)
9 AM to 2 PM

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 September 6, 2012.

Platycerium
Presented by Roy Vail



Summer Party - August 19th at 2 PM
Larry Rucker's Home
8010 Arletta, Houston, TX 77061
Home Phone: (713) 649-3535

