



Texas Gulf Coast Fern Society

January 2012

Vol. 14, No. 1

<http://www.tgcfernsoc.org>

**Next Regular Meeting: Sunday, January 15, 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:

Happy New Year to each of you!!!

I'm happy to be starting a new year and leave 2011 behind. We all faced hardships last year and not much fared worse than nature itself. We had a very harsh freeze last February only to be followed by hot and dry. Normally we look to the trees to see how they are protecting themselves and the creatures that depend on their nuts and berries to survive the winter. How do you look to a dead or dying tree for clues? It was a hard sad year. Putting that behind us and looking forward, we will have the opportunity to branch out and incorporate new things into our yards and gardens. I would never have cut down a huge Oak Tree to replace it with a smaller flowering tree, but nature took care of that for me. Now, I can move that new tree from the wish list onto the growing list and look forward to the new look.

Our Holiday Party was a big success. Sorry some of you could not make it. We really missed you and you missed Malcolm's orchid show. His plants were in full bloom. It really brightened up the day. We have several folks who always roll up their sleeves and work most of the party. I would like to thank them but I would also like for them to have fun, too. So I might need to fire the same workers and ask others to pitch in and help with set up and clean up next time. It should not be any one set of people's full time job.

Jessica and I have discussed our need to support our landscape this year so we plan on devoting time to the hardy ferns. This is not to say those special tropical ferns will not be discussed, but we want to spread out our hardy fern wings and have our Society grow ferns that take less care throughout the year. We want to concentrate on some hardy families and learn all about them. Get them planted in our yards where we can grow them in pots when we don't have a better spot for them. We are going to work on the ones you don't see at the Box stores and rarely see at a nursery. I hope this plan sounds like a nice change to you. As always, please let us know if you have any ideas or suggestions.

It is that time again to send in your dues. Our dues are currently \$10.00 for a single and \$15.00 for a family (at the same address). We do have a new Membership Chair to announce. Noreen Tolman has agreed to take on this job for us this year. Noreen and her husband Ken have been with the Society now for a few years and I believe most of you know them. They are big

plant enthusiasts and belong to several different Societies, so with them, we also will get extra exposure to others who they know as well. So please join with me in thanking Noreen for accepting this position. Her contact information for submitting your dues is included later in the newsletter.

We will be having a board meeting prior to our January meeting. I had thought I was going to be out of town, but it was pushed to the following week. As most of you know, I work for Continental Airlines, at least I did, and as our total one carrier (United) date is coming up fast, we have a lot of consolidation going on. Several of you have expressed concern over my job. Thank you for your concern but I'm fine with my job staying as is here in Houston. We will have an additional work force in Chicago reservation, which they had already. Thus, I have to go to Chicago and train my counterparts on the technology side of the Rate desk as we kept the Continental technology. For those who know my technology skills, don't laugh. I'm not programming, just showing them entries and applications. This means that I will be out of town much of late January and February getting this all done. So, I will see you in January, but I might not be able to be here in February. As for the January board meeting, I will send out an email/phone call to the board members and advise them of the agenda. Let's plan to meet at the Garden Center at 12:45 PM please.

Due to the rising cost of mail and color ink, it has been suggested that those who would like the Newsletter delivered to them via US mail rather than electronic mail should pay slightly higher dues to defray the additional cost. This will be one of the agenda items to be discussed at the board meeting in January and if the board feels this is a good way to go, we will submit the motion to increase the dues for a membership vote. This would be a change in our by-laws so we would have several steps to go through before it would be final and thus, it would not go into effect until 2013. Please contact me or any of the board members prior to the January board meeting if you have any comments on this issue.

As for 2012, health and happiness for all of us and our ferns!!!

Darla



A message from our Vice President:

Happy Green Year

January 2012

Winter freezes, summer droughts, our ferns have been through a lot. Some lived, some died, but this month's meeting will bring green throughout the year. Enter the terrarium. Those wondrous little, and some not so little, mini greenhouses of plants set in a place to brighten your mood while we wait for spring.

Sharon Bannister will be leading this terrarium workshop, giving us the step by step instructions on planting, care, and troubleshooting of things gone wrong. Sharon has experience and success in growing ferns in terrariums, a qualified expert.

So, your first order of business is to find a "house" to be your terrarium. Glass of course is the obvious choice and there are many glass designs from which to choose. I like a glass jar I can get my hand in as there are times when you need to get into the terrarium for tidying up.

Thrift stores are a fun place to hunt for glass containers, but my personal favorite is Ross, and on Tuesdays, its senior day so those of us over 50 can get a 10% discount! My next choice is Marshalls, more expensive than Ross but sometimes more of a selection. Your glass container does not have to have a lid or top. I have successfully used saran wrap on almost all my terrariums. I have some glass containers with a sloped top, something a lid would never fit on, saran to the rescue.

But don't stop at glass, plastic containers work well also. I especially like the big plastic jars cheese puffs, pretzels, or other snack food come in. Sams' has the best big plastic jars, and so does recycle night. Just drive around and help yourself.

Next is to bring \$10 for supplies; there will be ferns, charcoal, and soil for the project. Bring your own saran if your container needs it (doesn't stick on plastic very well, but you can secure the saran with a rubber band). I like to finish off my terrarium with the black rocks from the \$ store, helps keep the soil moist and keeps me from thinking the soil needs water. Not necessary for the meeting, you can always add the rocks later.

Hope to see you there.

Submitted by: Jessica Sheldon, Vice President



Up and Coming Attractions:

January 15: "Terrariums" presented by Sharon Bannister

Submitted by: Jessica Sheldon, Vice President



Board Meeting

There will be a Board Meeting at 12:45 PM on January 15, 2012 before the regular January meeting at the Houston Garden Center. Board members and all interested members are welcome to attend.



2012 Dues:

2012 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 Noreen Tolman 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.



Refreshments

Refreshments for January will be generously furnished by:

Drinks:	Mary McConnell
Savory:	Jean Richardson
Fruits:	Cherie Lee
Veggies:	Jessica Sheldon
Desserts:	Beth Ayer & Marcia Livingston
Service ware:	Society/Jean Richardson

Please let Jean Richardson know if you can help with the refreshments for future months. Email to: tedandjean@aol.com. Come out and enjoy some really delicious food!

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.



**Statement of Income & Expenses
January 1, 2011 to December 31, 2011**

INCOME

Membership dues	\$ 325.00
Raffle Income	331.00
Plant Re-imbursement	865.25
Project Re-imbursement	483.00
Miscellaneous	161.01
Petty Cash	372.26
Bank Interest	<u>2.88</u>
Total:	\$2,540.40

EXPENSES

Cost of Plants	\$ 877.23
Project Supplies	78.54
Lecturer's Fees	150.00
Lecturer's Gifts	40.00
Bank Fees	33.36
Miscellaneous	725.13
Transfer to Petty Cash	<u>200.00</u>
Total:	\$2105.23

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

Petty Cash \$ 168.68

Bank Balance 12-31-2011: \$5,998.84

Outstanding Checks: - \$ 116.63

Net Profit 12-31-2011: \$ 534.76

Submitted by: Terri Dolney, Treasurer



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 Lulu 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:	Jean Richardson
Welcoming at Door:	Beth Ayer and Marcia Livingston



January Book Review

"Common-Sense Pest Control"

by William Olkowski, Sheila Daar, and Helga Olkowski

This book offers an effective alternative – Integrated Pest Management (IPM), a strategy that relies on a variety of physical, mechanical, cultural and biological methods to keep pests under control. The authors discuss least-toxic chemical controls only as a last resort, so you always have a choice of practical and cost-effective solutions that present the least risk to yourself and your environment.

Submitted by: Frank Lee



**Texas Gulf Coast Fern Society
Holiday Party – December 18, 2011**

This year's Holiday party was graciously hosted by Malcolm McCorquodale at his beautiful plant filled home inside the loop. All those attending had an enjoyable time: great place, great food, and great people. The gift exchange was full of surprises with a wide range of gifts including live plants, books, vases, pots, and many other ferny items. Thank you Malcolm for a wonderful time.

We missed those of you who couldn't make it, maybe next year.

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 February Newsletter is February 2, 2012.

Cherie Lee, Editor, *TGCFS Newsletter*



Osmunda cinnamomea

Family: [Osmundaceae](#)

Genus: [Osmunda](#) (os-MUN-duh)

Species: [cinnamomea](#) (sin-uh-MOH-mee-uh)

The Osmundaceae family dates back to the first dinosaurs in the early Mesozoic age which was about 210 million years ago. This fact has been proven by the fossil remains it so generously left us to study. They have been in continuous existence every since. Talk about longevity.

They produced strong, black root fibers that were really their erect rhizome that were so stout that the dinosaurs left them alone. Keep in mind the vegetarian dinosaurs would have been the ones eyeing those sweet crosiers and they did not want to break their teeth on the leaf stem that takes a saw to cut even now a days. This fiber is so long lasting it is often used today in potting mixes. The *Osmunda cinnamomea* is the one we will learn about now.

The Cinnamon fern, as it is most often called, is a specimen plant that can grow 3' wide and tall. It is a clumping fern so it is not likely to spread everywhere in your yard. It is deciduous and goes dormant in the early winter after a nice display of fall color with its yellowing leaves adding to the fall landscape. When spring arrives you will know, because this will be one of the first ferns pushing up its new year's crosiers. They come up in one massive clump of fiddleheads with their very hairy spirals unfurling upwards. Once the crosiers turn in to your spring fronds, you will be thrilled at the arrival of the fertile fronds that will shoot up from the center and look almost like cat tails with their green spore proudly displayed at the top. The shoots will have brownish to cinnamon color hairs and when the spore tops have expired they turn to a cinnamon color, between the two that is how it derived its name.

For those who were able to go on last spring's field trip to the little thicket, we saw the cinnamon fern as it grows wild in the damp marshes of the thicket. We saw the spore shoots with the green spore before it released them to try to make new ferns to keep its species alive for another million years or so.

Growing the *Osmunda cinnamomea* requires acidic soil, moist conditions, and high light. Proper spacing will allow the plant ample room to show off. Growing from spore requires harvesting the green spore and getting them sowed within just a few days. If you are not quite ready you can refrigerate them and this will lengthen their viability a few days longer. The only way to keep them any longer is to freeze them. I have been told that freezing them in an ice cube works, but you're still only talking about a short time frame. It is amazing that it has lasted through the eons of time and the spore only lasts a few days. They only spore once a year, so if you miss it, you wait until next spring when the life cycle starts all over again.

We will have one 4" potted dormant Cinnamon fern per member available for \$2.00 at the January meeting if you would like one for yourself. You need to keep it just moist until it shows signs of life. If you elect to plant it, be sure and keep the crown above ground level. It will still need moisture to keep it alive, but you do not want it to rot because it is not using the excess water to support active growth.

This is a sturdy fern and is sure to give your garden delight throughout its growing season. It is a strong grower and should be placed where you don't need to move it so it will reach its full potential, and it will reward you for years to come. Hey, it out lasted the dinosaurs...



Submitted by: Darla Harris



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 meeting is January 17, 2012.

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 January 5, 2012
and February 2, 2012.

Holiday Party – December 18th
Malcolm McCorquodale’s Home



Ken Gardner - Chef Extraordinaire

The Feast

