



Texas Gulf Coast Fern Society

March 2014

Vol. 16 No. 3

<http://www.tgcfersoc.org>

**Next Regular Meeting: Sunday, March 16, at 2:00 p. m. – Judson Robinson Jr. Community Center,
2020 Hermann Drive, Houston, TX 77004 - Phone: (713) 284-1994**

A message from our President:

Hi Everyone!

This week it really feels like spring! We have had a whole week with no freeze here on the north side of town and the only ice is in our tea. As nice as it is, I'm not going to take any chances by bringing my plants out of the greenhouses, not just yet. Those of you on the far south side of town might be safe. This has been a tough year on plants. Spring is going to mean a lot of TLC but think of all those new fronds that will be popping up soon. I'm going to put down fresh mulch while everything is still dormant then I don't have to work around those tender crosiers and take the chance of breaking them off. Joe has been busy trying to get our vegetable garden ready to put in our spring crops. I hope to bring in some fresh vegetables for you to enjoy. When the garden does well we end up with more food than we can eat and put it up in the freezer or can. It's funny when you have so much zucchini you fix it three ways for dinner, but oh so good.

We had a great turn out for our February meeting on getting prepared for our Big Sale. Everyone helped put 960 name labels on the plastic plant labels. This went so fast with your help! I had 32 sheets with 30 names per sheet and you had them all done in just about an hour. That was incredible! I greatly appreciate your invaluable contribution. It took me four hours just to get the names formatted and printed. The bad news is, we may have that many to do again at the March meeting. Larry Rucker and I will be heading to Florida and once we know all the plants that we will have at the sale, I will finish off our list and get the rest of the name labels printed. So if you can arrive a little early or stay a little late after the meeting and do a sheet or two of names, that will be a tremendous help. If you are planning on donating any ferns for the sale, please let me know so I can make a matching tag for them as well. For any business that donates, we will be putting a card on the plant with *This Plant was Donated by* so the business will get credit and some advertising.

At the March meeting, we will have a signup sheet for everyone to let us know when you are available to help work at the sale. As Larry brought up in the meeting, there is a lot to do during the day in addition to selling the plants. We have to keep the plants watered. The AC dries them out so fast. I have a rechargeable sprayer on wheels we will use for watering. We

also need to keep the booth and tables clean and replenish plants as they are sold. We will have a hold table so someone will need to make sure the purchases are tagged and the right bag goes home with the right person. Beth Ayer has volunteered to work all three days as cashier, but of course she will need some relief help so please sign up. This is such a fun experience. You learn so much about each other plus you really get to know your ferns! So if you were not a total fern nut before the sale, you will be afterwards. There is additional information about the sale on page 7.

For those who asked for a cheat sheet, it is coming. Lisa George is working on it for us. Laura Jordon is working on a fold out with several ferns featured and a membership form on the last page. We will also have our normal membership forms available if they do not want to tear their brochure. We really want to try to find some new members to join our Society. The more the merrier!

As everyone heard at the February meeting, Carl Taylor is not going to be able to lead our March field trip or give us a talk this year due to illness. However, he does plan on rescheduling for next spring. But never fear, Joan Hudson has come to our rescue and will be our speaker for March! She is such a wonderful speaker and is always ready to step in when needed. I want to extend a personal *Thank You* to her! I hope you find her topic as fascinating as I do. We had planned this for next year but she was able to move the date up for us. She will be discussing how ferns have adapted to their surroundings to reproduce from spore in dry areas where there is no water for fertilization. Hybrids with chromosome counts that don't work for normal fertilization also use this prorogation method of producing new sporophytes (baby ferns) known as apogamy. As if this isn't enough, Joan also has a fern for us to grow from spore that develops through apogamous reproduction. The fern spore she is bringing is *Pellaea atropurpurea*, (pe-LEE-uh aht-row-pur-PURE-ee-uh), commonly known as the Purple Cliff Brake fern (See photos below). We will have supplies for everyone at the meeting so all who want to do a spore container may do so. This time we will not be using a peat pellet or agar but will use a seed mix for our media in a clear salad container that seals. This will be a new and different way of putting down spore for many of us so I hope everyone will have good success with this fern.



I think everyone enjoys their newsletter. I know I do and I would like to take the time to say 'Thank You' to Cherie Lee for all her work on taking pictures, making sure the correct names are on the pictures, putting the articles in a nice order, and most of all, correcting all those sentences that sounded so good in our heads as we wrote our articles but really did not read like we thought they would. To Cherie and her second set of eyes, Frank Lee, 'a job well done every month!' Please take the time to tell them yourselves. This takes several hours of prep-work to make it seem so nice and simple for all to enjoy. My appreciation is beyond expression for all your efforts and contributions for our Society.

The February meeting refreshments were outstanding and what a nice surprise when we have members bringing refreshments even though they were not on the list for that month. This speaks well for our members. When you take that little extra step, it is such a nice surprise and greatly appreciated! That is part of what makes our group so special. It really helps to round out our treats.

The T-shirts are in and we did pick up a few extras for anyone who might need more than one for the Sale. I know I go through 3 or 4 over the weekend counting set up day on Thursday. They are still \$10.00 per shirt.

Well I think that's all for now. Take care and enjoy our spring!

Darla



Up and Coming Attractions:

- Mar 16: "Gametophyte Growth in *Pellaea atropurpurea*, an Apogamous Fern"
presented by Joan Hudson
- Mar 28-30 Fern Sale – See page 7
Texas Home & Garden Show
George R. Brown Convention Center
- Apr 13: "Tree Ferns"
presented by Daniel Yansura
- May 18 "Light Requirements for Ferns"
presented by Takashi Hoshizaki
- June 15: "Documenting Your Ferns Using Photography"
presented by Malcolm McCorquodale
- July 18: "Making Moss Balls"
presented by Darla Harris and Cherie Lee
- Aug 17: Summer Party
location TBD
- Sept 21: Annual Plant Exchange
- Oct 19: Cycad Reproduction and More
presented by Joan Hudson
- Nov 16: Project
- Dec 14: Holiday Party
location TBD

April Speaker Bio:

Daniel Yansura has been an avid fern collector for over 30 years. During that time he was also a scientist at Genentech, where he worked on some of the earliest biotech products, including Humulin and Human Growth Hormone. Since retiring in 2011, he has used his molecular biology capabilities to identify tree ferns using DNA. Dan has traveled extensively to countries with rich fern flora, including New Zealand, Australia, Chile, Costa Rica, Mexico and Myanmar, where he photographs ferns and collects spore, particularly tree fern spore. His personal collection exceeds 200 species, and includes over 20 tree fern species.

Submitted by: Cherie Lee, Vice President (with Darla's help)



2014 Officers and Committees:

President:	Darla Harris
Vice President:	Cherie Lee
Secretary:	Anna Belle Hicks
Treasurer:	Mary McConnell
Board Members-at-Large:	Patrick Hudnall Larry Rucker
Education Chair:	Donna McGraw
Hospitality:	Faye Stansberry
Library:	Frank Lee
Marketing Chair:	Laura Jordan
Membership Co-chairs:	Beth Ayer and Marcia Livingston
Newsletter:	Cherie Lee
Spore Exchange:	Patrick Hudnall
Ways and Means:	Larry Rucker
- Raffle, Store, etc.	
Web Master:	Malcolm McCorquodale
Welcoming at Door:	Beth Ayer and Marcia Livingston



Refreshments

Refreshments for February were generously furnished by:

Drinks:	Mary McConnell
Savory:	Marcia Livingston, Larry Rucker, Judith Neufeld, Laura Jordan
Veggies:	Darlene Morris
Desserts:	Beth Ayer, Cecil Strange
Service ware:	Cherie Lee

Refreshments for March will be generously furnished by:

Drinks:	Patrick Hudnall
Savory:	Darlene Morris, Judith Neufeld
Veggies:	Mary McConnell
Desserts:	Cherie Lee
Service ware:	Cherie Lee

Please let Faye Stansberry know if you can help with the refreshments for any months in 2014. Email to stansberry.faye@yahoo.com or call 713-734-0170. Come out and enjoy some really delicious food!



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.

2014 Dues

The membership committee would like to thank all of you who have renewed your membership for 2014. Currently 81% of the 2013 members have renewed. We look forward to hearing from all the other members soon.

If you have not done so already, please complete the membership form and return it with your payment to our Membership Co -chairs Beth Ayer and Marcia Livingston at our next meeting or mail it to:

Beth Ayer
5815 Portal Drive
Houston, TX 77096

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.



Texas Gulf Coast Fern Society General Meeting – February 16, 2014

The regular monthly meeting was held at the Judson Robinson Jr. Community Center, Houston, Texas. The meeting was called to order by President, Darla Harris at 2:05 PM.

General: Darla provided information on our upcoming plant sale, March 28th – 30th. Set up will be Thursday. Sale will open Friday 2PM – 7 PM, Saturday 10 AM – 7 PM, and Sunday 11 AM- 5 PM. Workers for various jobs will be needed during those hours. A sign-up sheet will be available at the March meeting. A “Hold Table” will be provided for customers’ convenience. Payment for plants other than by cash is being investigated. Darla asked members to bring plastic bags to our next meeting for use at the sale.

Upcoming Meetings: Due to health reasons, our March speaker, Carl Taylor, will be unable to give the program. Since he was also to lead the Field Trip on Saturday, it has also been canceled. Plans are to reschedule both his talk and Field Trip next year. Joan Hudson will present a program on *Pellaea atropurpurea* at our March meeting.

Program: A partial list of sale ferns was passed out. Darla showed a large number of these ferns, pointing out their different characteristics and how best to care for them. After this information discussion, members prepared name labels for the sale plants.

Plant Raffle: Larry Rucker ran the plant raffle and collected \$74.

Attendance: 23 members were present.

Submitted by: Secretary Anna Belle Hicks



Dirty Dancing

March, 2014

I had a different title for this article, but with the weather here in Silver City, NM, I changed the theme to suit the current conditions in this new home of mine.

While you in Houston have had unusual cold, even freezing conditions, here the fruit trees are blooming a full month before they should. It has been record hot, dry, and (how could I forget?) windy!!!!

I am dancing around swirls of leaves in need of raking and putting into my yet dedicated compost pile site. The wind picks up and deposits things in my yard which I am sure have an origin from three states over or the Far East. I could be Darwin discovering new species for all the things the wind blows in!

Lexi, my 5 year old Bernese Mt dog, and constant helper in all things, drags in dead grass (I think it is grass, but am not sure, either way it is dead) and inside I am dancing with the broom, vacuum, and a very dirty big dog.

Yet there is a consistency in the seasons and spring, here and there, warrants looking at cleaning up in yards, greenhouses, and potted plants.

Like we take preventative methods for staying out of the clutches of the common cold, flu, etc., our Mothers, doctors and any magazine vying for promises of health tell us to “Wash Your Hands”. So it is when working with our plants. Things contaminated stick to your hands like, well as it is said, “white on rice”. Such a simple thing, such a bore but make it easier by keeping a hand sanitizer where you work or wear disposable gloves to keep those creepy crawlies out of any cuts you might have and from traveling to your next praised plant. Blood poisoning is nothing to sneeze about, ask Larry Rucker.

Another spring cleaning job is really a year round habit to develop and I confess at 64, I have more bad habits than good. This habit might have a chance to stick now that I have a yard again and all those necessary tools which go along with it. It is the last thing we want to think of after a satisfying day working with our plants or in our yards. Like getting up to brush your teeth at night after you have already crawled in bed; an ounce of prevention is worth a hand in the bush? Is that the right saying, I mean there is a saying for everything, just not sure what that one even means, yet let’s assume it means “a hand which washes up tools , pots, flats, work benches is worth bushels of time”. Keeping tools etc. clean, sharp, and free from rust is right up there with “washing hands”.

Use ¼ cup of household bleach to 1 gallon of water and to disinfect, leave on or in the solution for 2 minutes. Oh and be cautious of cross-contamination. Use different cleaning materials for the different things you are cleaning; a scrub brush only for pots, mop for floors, rag for benches, you get the idea. Rinse, rinse, and dry in the sun (if possible). Add this dance to your ritual of Spring Rites and freely dance the dance of clean tools, pots, and benches regularly.

This should be a no brainer, check your plants for diseases and pests; those you are just bringing home and those you already have. If something is suspicious, isolate. Determining what disease or pest is the topic best left to those who are more knowledgeable. Do remember courtesy and proper decorum

when bringing a sample to someone to inspect for disease or pest and put your sample in a clear plastic baggie, and oh did I mention “Wash Your Hands”?

This dance is one less thought of but no less important. Dead plants, debris, trash all go into a lidded bin, or tied plastic bag, outside of your greenhouse or away from your potting / gardening area. Those little bugs are everywhere, lurking, waiting for their chance to get you and your plants.

Lastly, no dance is proper without the appropriate clothes. Avoid wearing yellow or blue clothing for these colors attract insects. What no blue jeans? Who knew? Just do wear clothes, there are other insects attracted to exposed skin, you know what I mean.

Dirty dancing around the yard, greenhouse, houseplants, pots, tools, or the May Pole gets things, well, clean!

Submitted by: Jessica Sheldon



March Book Review

“Tree Ferns” by Mark F. Large & John E. Braggins

This book is the source of information on the living tree fern. It surveys all the families, genera, and species, including those that are suitable for the home garden. It offers up-to-date taxonomy and detailed description as well as in-depth coverage of everything from tree fern use to conservation. In recognition of the horticultural importance of tree ferns, the authors provide extensive cultivation information, including propagation and diseases and pests.

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.



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 April Newsletter is March 31, 2014. Due to the sale and the April meeting being a week early, it would be appreciated if you could please get your submissions in as early as possible. Thanks.

Cherie Lee, Editor, *TGCFS Newsletter*

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.

The Houston Orchid Society, Inc.

www.houstonorchidsociety.org

Regular meetings are held the first Thursday of every month at 7:30 PM at the First Christian Church, 1601 Sunset Blvd.

Next regular meetings are: March 6, 2014
and April 3, 2014

Bromeliad Society/Houston Inc.

www.bromeliadsocietyhouston.org

Regular meetings are held the third Tuesday of every month at 7:30 PM at the West Gray Multi-Service Center, 1475 W. Gray St., Houston, TX 77019

Next regular meeting is March 18, 2014



The
Houston Orchid Society
Presents
**Timeless
Treasures**
2014 Spring Show & Sale
April 12-13, 2014

Free Admission | SAT 9-5 & SUN 9-4
Museum of Natural Science, Main Lobby
5555 Hermann Park Drive
Houston, Texas 77030

For more information please visit <http://www.houstonorchidsociety.org>



**Bromeliad
Spring Sale**

**Saturday
April 5, 9am - 3pm**
**West Gray
Multi-Service Center
1475 W. Gray St.**

Bromeliad Society / Houston Inc.

Discussion on Sale Plants – February 16th

Presented by Darla Harris

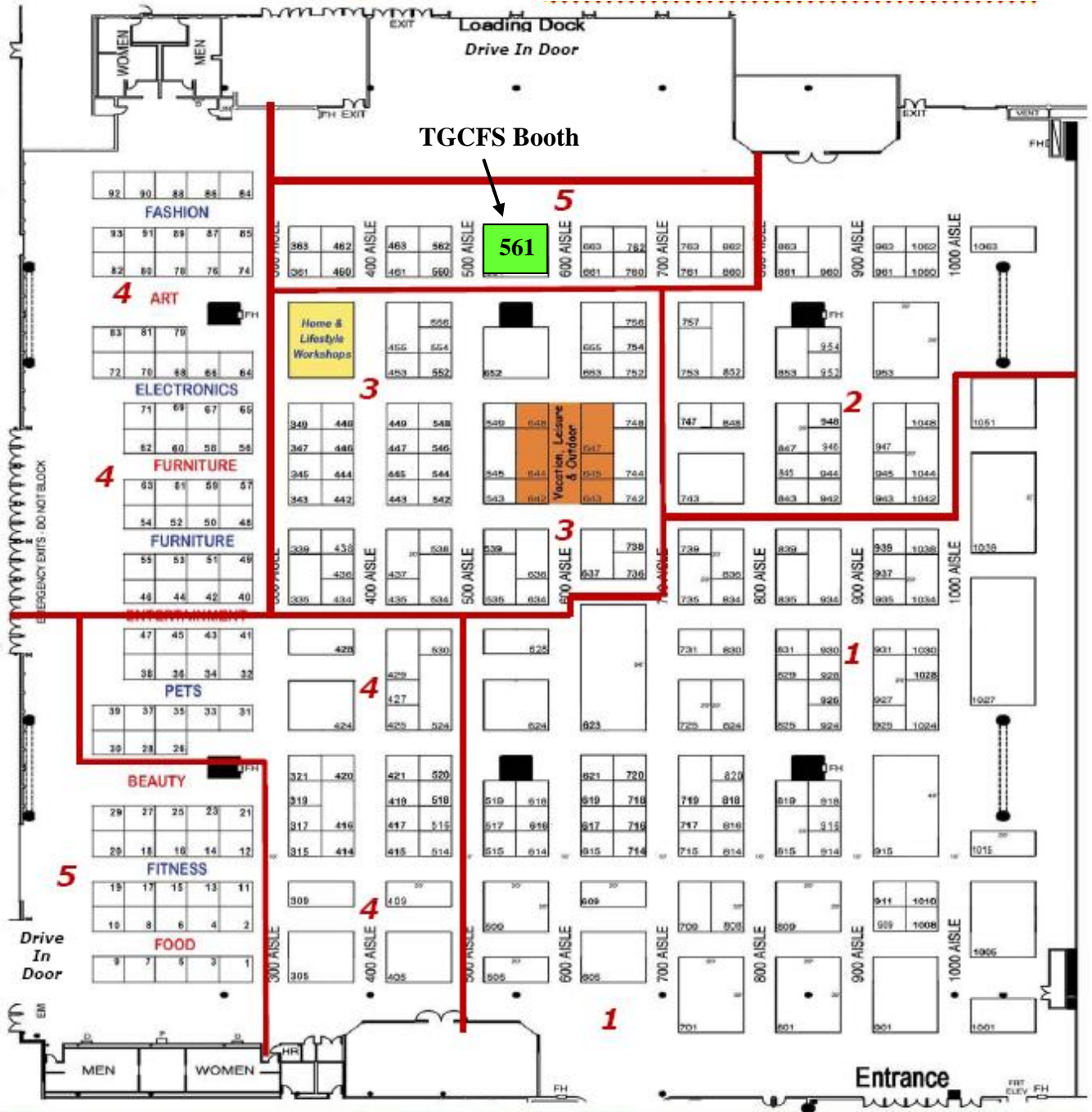


Texas Gulf Coast Fern Society Sale Information



**George R. Brown Convention Center
1001 Avenida de las
Americas Houston, TX 77010**

Parking: \$10 per day with no in and out privileges



Set up:	Thursday	March 27th	3PM - 7PM
	Friday	March 28th	8AM - 12PM
Take down:	Sunday	March 30th	5PM - 8PM

Sale Hours:	Friday	March 28th	2PM - 7PM
	Saturday	March 29th	10AM - 7PM
	Sunday	March 30th	11AM - 5PM