

April 2014

Vol. 16 No. 4

<http://www.tgcfersoc.org>

Next Regular Meeting: Sunday, April 13, 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:

For those who were unable to attend the March meeting, Joan Hudson explained how and why some ferns do not reproduce by means of fertilization, but rather the spore acts almost like a pup on a mother fern. It starts as a gametophyte and then goes straight to sporophyte (baby fern stage). As we are nearing our 20th day after putting down our spores, is anyone starting to see any green in their spore container? This is when Joan told us we might start to see some green with a hand lens. Then by 40 days, we should be able to see green without the lens. So by our May meeting, I hope everyone will be seeing something. I found the program very informative and the hands on part of putting down our spore is always fun. I hope everyone has success with the soil method as an option to the peat we previously have used.

By the time you read this newsletter, our sale will be over. I can say how I feel now, wow I'm tired. The sale was very successful. We had some very beautiful plants with 73 different ferns available for the general public and I'm sure they were excited to see such a variety. We got a nice short write up in the newspaper both the Saturday before the sale and the Saturday of the sale. This encouraged some people to come and look for us at the show. I want to thank everyone who worked on the pre-sale, setup/break down, donated plants or materials, and/or worked at the sale itself. You're a great group! Everyone has done so much to make this happen. I would especially like to thank Lulu Leonard for donating a mileage ticket for Larry Rucker to get to Florida and Larry for going with me to pick out the plants and driving them back. Thank you also to Cherie Lee for coming over to my house and helping me to unpack a hundred plus boxes of ferns. We are now working on our final numbers of new members and funds raised to support our future projects and speakers. We should have this by our April meeting. The sale is a large task and it took all of you to make it happen. Thank you!

Our April meeting (13April) is going to be a good one so come early and get a good seat. We will be in the smaller, back room with the projector (this time we will have the windows blacked out) for a talk on "Tree Ferns". Tree ferns are a very under used fern in the Houston landscape. Dan Yansura will be talking to us about tree ferns that he is currently raising and those that he has seen in his extensive travels. Dan has given many talks on ferns and is an avid volunteer at the San Francisco Botanical Gardens conservatory. (Don't you wish Houston had a conservatory?)

I first met Dan in L.A. when I was there for a fern show/sale. He and Barbara Joe Hoshizaki were trying to identify a tree fern. Dan ran DNA analysis on the fern while Barbara used her hand lens. Together they came to the same conclusion on the name of the tree fern and it was published in the American Fern Society Journal. Reading the paper after having listened to them talk about their work on this was priceless for me.

I know this month's message is short but I have lots to finish up this week after the sale and we need to get the newsletter out earlier than usual due to our April meeting date being moved up one week to the 2nd Sunday, the 13th. Don't forget and please mark your calendars!

Take care my friends,

Darla



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 |



Up and Coming Attractions:

- 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)



Refreshments

Refreshments for March were generously furnished by:

| | |
|---------------|------------------------------|
| Drinks: | Patrick Hudnall |
| Savory: | Darlene Morris, Larry Rucker |
| Veggies: | Mary McConnell |
| Desserts: | Donna Williams, Cherie Lee |
| Service ware: | Cherie Lee |

Refreshments for April will be generously furnished by:

| | |
|-------------------|-----------------|
| Drinks: | Teresa Dolney |
| Salty Snacks: | Patrick Hudnall |
| Non-salty Snacks: | ? |
| Fruit: | Midge Gorman |
| Veggies: | ? |
| Desserts: | ? |
| 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!



Please Welcome Our
New Members

Dodie Jackson

Kathie Johnson

Alice Thomas



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

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

General: Darla reported that she and Larry Rucker had traveled to Florida to purchase ferns. It was a very busy trip and they were successful in buying many varieties. Set-up time for the sale will be Thursday, 3 P.M. – 7P.M. Our booth is in a very good location in the back of the building. We will be able to accept credit cards but a surcharge is yet to be decided. Pictures and information on the sale have been mailed to Kathy Huber for write up in the Houston Chronicle. Members need to advise if they plan to donate plants. Badges will be available on days of show. No food can be brought in once the show opens.

There was a sign-up sheet for the sale and also for meeting refreshments.

A motion was made, seconded, and carried that the first quarter Treasurer's Report be deferred until the May Newsletter in order to include the sale information

Upcoming Meetings: Date of our April meeting has been changed to the second Sunday. Mr. Daniel Yansura of San Francisco will present a program on "Tree Ferns" and may bring a few plants with him. In July, our project will be to make moss balls. For our information, Darla showed us an example.

Program: Joan Hudson presented a program on *Pellaea atropurpurea*. It is a native Texas fern and grows throughout the state but is found especially in the Hill Country. It grows on rock ledges and in partial shade. It is commonly called Purple Cliff Brake or Blue Fern. The spores are dust-like. She explained how the spores are formed and how the plants are eventually produced. She brought spores and members planted them in plastic containers to take home and grow.

Plant Raffle: Larry Rucker conducted a successful plant raffle.

Attendance: 14 members were present.

Submitted by: Secretary Anna Belle Hicks



Lasagna

April, 2014

Lasagna is not your typical Easter entrée, ham is more likely or in Houston with the best of spring weather, steaks on the grill. For my mother-in-law Maria, first generation Italian, it was homemade Lasagna. My family was the ham sort, so being introduced to other cultural traditions and foods was like traveling to a foreign country without leaving home. Days ahead, Maria would start making the sauce, letting it simmer, stirring, tasting, adjusting ingredients as needed: maybe a little more oil, oregano, garlic or salt. As the sauce cooked it turned from a raw tomato look and taste, to something dark, rich with a complex flavor.

When the sauce was ready the rest was easy. It was just a matter of layering ingredients; mozzarella, sauce, noodles, sausage, sauce, noodles, ricotta, sauce, noodles, one over another until everything was gone, topped with one last layer of mozzarella. Once cooked, the ingredients transformed from identifiable layers into something of melded goodness. Ah, traditional Lasagna; we feasted.

Have you noticed how traditional lasagna ingredients have changed? I must have at least 20 lasagna recipes, none are the same: pumpkin lasagna, summer squash lasagna, lasagna using eggplant instead of noodles, roasted vegetables lasagna, some recipes I wouldn't even recognize as "Lasagna" except they all layer ingredients, cooked to meld flavors and layers into edible goodness.

You might ask, what does this all have to do with ferns? A lot because ferns, plants, and people all love lasagna. The difference is that the lasagna we feed our plants is made up of compostable materials, layered, than "cooked" into an edible feast of micro organisms, nutrients, and beneficial fungus.

Composting is a simple subject made complex. If you look at the number of books on composting, and there are a lot, it is mostly because everyone has their own recipe, and like traditional lasagna has turned "Nuevo", so has "traditional" composting. As one person wisely said, "Composting isn't something we do, it is something nature does; we just help her along".

Not interested in composting? Takes too much time, space, special equipment? Don't have any outdoor space? Why bother, when you can buy compost? Really, only the last statement is true. You can buy good quality compost, the choices and availability are better than ever. You can even hire someone to spread the compost for you. You can buy "Stouffers" frozen lasagna, too.

This is the first in a series of articles on composting. I can't take credit for something Mother Nature does anyway, but I can share what I have read and my experiences with composting. By the end of the series, maybe you will change your mind and instead of frozen lasagna, try making your own.

Submitted by: Jessica Sheldon



Editor's Comments:

Deadline for the May Newsletter is May 1, 2014. Thanks.

Cherie Lee, Editor, *TGCFS Newsletter*



2014 Dues

The 2014 Membership Directory is being prepared and we want to include you so 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.



April 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



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 832-566-5788 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.

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: April 3, 2014
and May 1, 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 April 15, 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.**

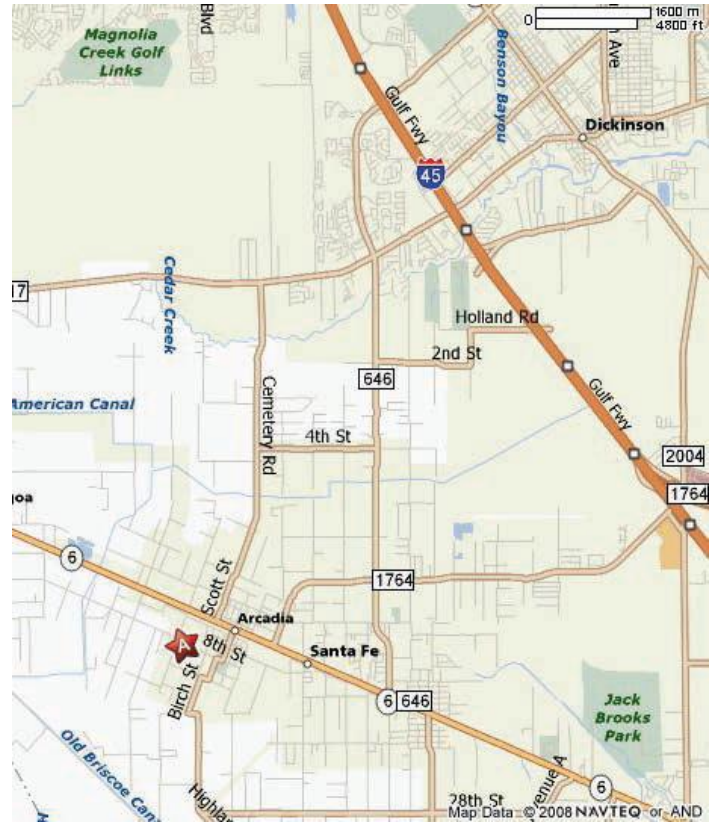
Bromeliad Society / Houston Inc.

Multiple Societies' Plant Sale April 26th

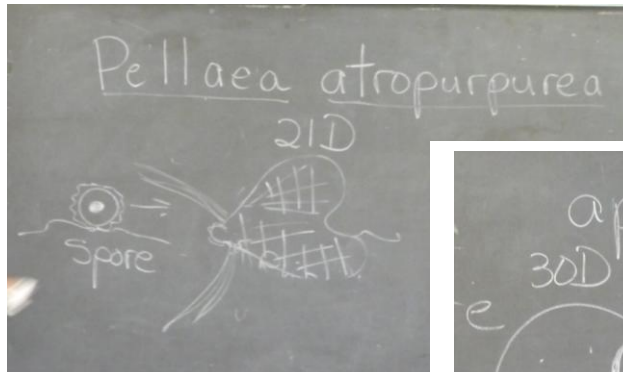
Jimbo's Nursery – 15019 8th Street, Santa Fe, TX 77517

Jimmy and Joanne Woolsey will once again host a plant sale at their nursery on April 26th. Similar to last year, there will be a variety of plants available including bromeliads, cacti, succulents, ferns, etc. Come check it out.

Sale starts at 9 a.m. and ends around 3 or 4 p.m.



“Gametophyte Growth in *Pellaea atropurpurea*, an Apogamous Fern” presented by Joan Hudson

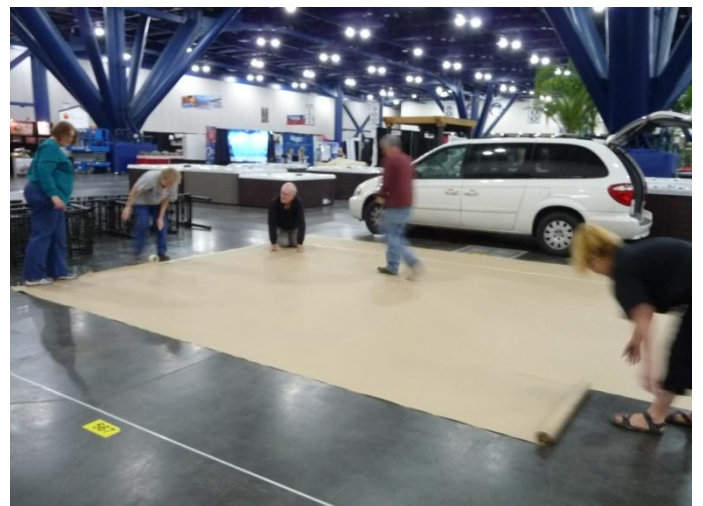




The Society Sale at George R. Brown Convention Center



Packing for the Sale



Laying the Ground Work



The Race is on.....



Unloading the Ferns



Ready to Sell



Many thanks to all those who came out to help with the sale. My apologies to those I missed in the pictures.

Beth Ayer
Bob Brugman
Teresa Dolney
Lisa George
Darla Harris
Joe Harris
Patrick Hudnall
Laura Jordan
Fred Jordan
Diane Kerr
Cherie Lee
Frank Lee
Michael Lyle
Mary McConnell
Malcolm McCorquodale
Darlene Morris
Judith Neufeld
Larry Rucker
Faye Stansberry
Cecil Strange
Donna Williams
Johnny Williams



And an extra big “Thank you” to Darla and Larry for traveling to Florida to purchase the ferns, driving them back to Texas, plaquing up some additional ferns, caring for the ferns until the sale, and packing / unpacking them before and after the sale. This is a tremendous amount of work.