

March 2015

Vol. 17 No. 3

<http://www.tgcfersoc.org>

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

Well, I am still waiting for spring. It looks like another cold front this week. I surely hope it is the last one for the season. Our poor plants have started to sprout at least three times now only to be knocked back down by Mother Nature. I have to say this winter hasn't been as bad as last year but I'm still ready for spring.

We had another informative and fun meeting last month thanks to Darla Harris. She discussed building a terrarium including how to prepare the soil for it, plant it, and maintain it. I hope all of you who attended enjoyed it as much as I did. I can say that our members made some really nice terrariums. Check out the pictures at the end of the newsletter.

I would like to welcome our new member. I hope we will see you at all our future meetings. To our current members, please remember to pay your dues before the end of March so your membership will remain active and you will be included in the directory.

As I mentioned at the meeting, we have been asked to help sell ferns at the Mercer Arboretum and Botanic Garden March Mart Plant Sale this year. It is Friday and Saturday, March 20 & 21 from 8 AM to 4 PM. I sent out an email with a Volunteer Sign-Up Sheet. If you would like to help, please fill it out and send it in. If you have any questions, please let me know.

Darla Harris has another fun and informative program for us this month. We will be learning about vegetative reproduction in ferns and yes, this includes a hands-on project. Please see her article that follows with more information.

I hope to see you all at the meeting this month. Take care and stay warm and dry.

Cherie

Vegetative Reproduction

In nature ferns have endured the test of time in part because most ferns have more than one way to reproduce. We are familiar with growing from spore, but for those who have tried to grow ferns from spores, you know it is not always as easy as it seems. Everything has to be just right. The spores have to fall on a medium that will support growth, have the proper amount of water for fertilization, and the right amount of light. In nature this can be a very hit and miss proposition. We go through droughts and rainy seasons, trees die and the amount of light can become too bright. All of this has to work out pretty much perfect or you don't get your gametophytes. Then, even if you do get them, that does not mean you will get a sporophyte, a new baby fern.

So ferns have some backup systems in place to help them reproduce. We covered *apogamous* reproduction last year with our *Pellaea atropurpurea*, where the spore produces a gametophyte that is more like pup. It is able to skip the fertilization stage of reproduction and thus allow the sporophyte to mature and grow into a baby fern quicker. This is one form of asexual reproduction.

Our next meeting will be a hands-on class on propagating ferns by vegetative reproduction. We will be discussing many different ferns that use asexual reproduction to produce pups in many forms in order to produce new offspring. Sometimes you will hear the term 'Mother Fern'. This name could be applied to dozens of different ferns and we will be working with a few of these to grow up pups ourselves.

Come join us in growing some new ferns a different way. This is a free project and we will supply everything you need for your new babies.

Submitted by Darla Harris, Vice President



Up and Coming Attractions:

- Mar 15: "Vegetative Reproduction of Ferns"
presented by Darla Harris
- Apr 18/19: Sat "Field Trip"
led by Carl Taylor, destination TBD
Sun "Isoetes (Quillworts)"
presented by Carl Taylor
- May 17: "Fern Fossils"
presented by Diane Kerr Hudnall
- June 21: "Microscopic Study of Ferns"
presented by Joan Hudson
- July 19: "Pellaea atropurpurea
– Potting Up & Hardening Off"
- Aug 16: Summer Party
location TBD
- Sept 20: Annual Plant Exchange

Submitted by: Darla Harris, Vice President



Refreshments:

Refreshments for February were generously furnished by:

- Drinks: Donna McGraw, Cherie Lee
Savory: Cherie Lee, Mary McConnell, Larry Rucker, Judith Neufeld
Fruit: Terri Dolney
Veggies: Diane Hudnall
Desserts: Anna Belle Hicks, Jean-Marie Jones, Cecil Strange
Service ware: Cherie Lee

Refreshments for March will be generously furnished by:

- Drinks: Raini Cunningham, Jacqueline Smith
Savory: Biruta Claunch
Veggies: Karen Pol
Desserts: Cherie Lee
Service ware: Cherie Lee

Please let Faye Stansberry or Terri Dolney know if you can help with the refreshments for any months in 2015. Email to stansberry.faye@yahoo.com or call 713-734-0170 or email to 102666@email.hal-pc.org or call 713-592-9029. Come out and enjoy some really delicious food!

Please Welcome Our New Member:

Jacqueline Smith



2015 Officers and Committees:

- President: Cherie Lee
Vice President: Darla Harris
Secretary: Diane Kerr Hudnall
Treasurer: Mary McConnell
Board Members-at-Large: Patrick Hudnall
Larry Rucker
Education Chair: Darla Harris
Hospitality Chair: Terri Dolney and Faye Stansberry
Library: Frank Lee
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



2015 Dues

2015 dues are now being accepted. 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.



Hemionitis palmata Strawberry fern

Family: [Pteridaceae](#)

Genus: [Hemionitis](#) hem-ee-oh-NYE-tiss

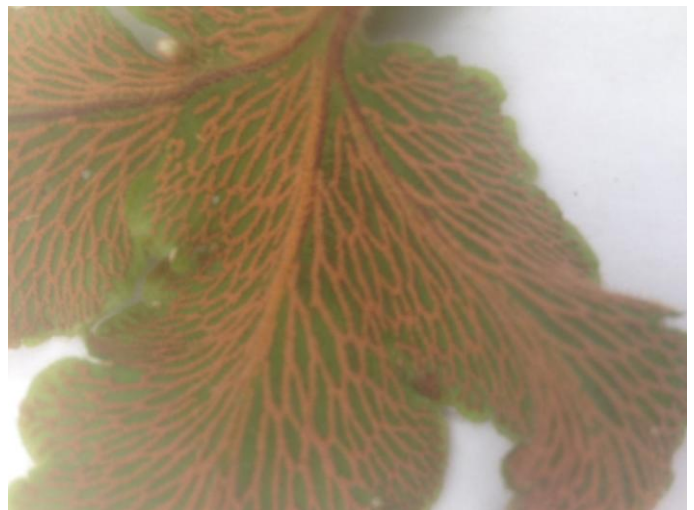
Species: [palmata](#) pahl-MAY-tuh

Hemionitis is a small genus of ferns from the neotropics with seven species. They are small terrestrial ferns and live in very moist environments around shaded rocks, tall forests and along rivers.

Hemionitis palmata gets its common name from its leaves which resemble the leaves of a strawberry plant. This is a very pretty fern with broad maple-like fronds. The sterile and fertile fronds are shaped the same making it monomorphic rather than dimorphic even though the fertile fronds are held on longer stems and taller. The leaves have netted veins or free and the sporangia run along the veins without indusia.

H. palmata also reproduces itself by producing buds or pups on the large marginal notch on the blade and can be grown easily from these pups.

Growing conditions in cultivation should consist of medium light and a soil mix that is moist to dry. I find they do not like to be over watered and cannot take too bright of light. They also need high humidity and do very well as a terrarium plants. They grow to an overall height of about 10-12 inches and are a clumping type fern. They are a zone 10-11 so are tender for our area and need to be protected from the cold.



Submitted by: Darla Harris



Texas Gulf Coast Fern Society General Meeting – February 15, 2015

The regular monthly meeting was held at the Judson Robinson Jr. Community Center, Houston, Texas. The meeting was called to order at 2:09 pm by President Cherie Lee. Cherie welcomed all of the visitors and new members and asked each visitor to introduce themselves. Cherie also thanked the people who brought refreshments and mentioned the library and policy for checking out and returning books. There were 31 people at the meeting, 3 visitors and 1 new member. Darla Harris invited anyone who would like to order a t-shirt to come see her, she told everyone the new t-shirts would be available at the next meeting in time for the field trip in April. She sold 4 t-shirts. Darla mentioned the field trip in April and introduced the speaker, Carl Taylor, who will be speaking the Sunday after the field trip. Darla announced the March meeting would be a project led by her, April would be the field trip and May a talk on Fern Fossils.

Larry Rucker updated the group on the botanical garden vote. The vote was unanimous approving the use of the abandoned Glenbrook Valley golf course located where the Sims bayou crosses I-45. Houston Botanic Garden Inc. will now begin raising money; they must raise \$5MM in one year.

Darla Harris introduced our project for the month which was making a terrarium. She discussed details around terrariums, saying that it works as a completely sealed environment. The ferns emit carbon dioxide and moisture. The moisture is necessary and must be kept in the terrarium for the ferns to stay healthy. Soil should be 10% Perlite, 10% Vermiculite to 80% rich soil. The terrariums should be located by east or north facing windows or inside with fluorescent light 12-16 hours/day. Fertilize after 6 months and only once per year after that.

Larry Rucker raised \$74 on the raffle.

Submitted by: Diane J. Hudnall, secretary



March Book Review

“Fern Finder”

by Anne C. Hallowell and Barbara G. Hallowell

This book is a pocket guide to identifying native ferns that grow in the U.S. Midwest and Northeast, and eastern Canada. The "Fern Finder" leads the user step-by-step through a series of choices to the species being identified. It is heavily illustrated with line drawings and is perhaps the most popular nontechnical guide to fern identification ever published in this country. Check it out.

Submitted by: Frank Lee



Did You Know...

Did you know there are three terms in ecology that are used to describe the water availability in an area?

Mesic: A habitat with a moderate or well-balanced supply of moisture. Compared to a dry habitat, a mesic habitat is moister.

Xeric: Requiring only a small amount of moisture, usually defined as less than 250 mm of annual precipitation. They may be further characterized as hyperxerófila (very dry) and hypoxerófila (less dry).

Hydric: Soil which is permanently or seasonally saturated by water, resulting in anaerobic conditions, as found in wetlands.

Submitted by: Darla Harris



Texas Gulf Coast Fern Society Board Meeting – February 15, 2015

The board met after the regular meeting adjourned. Cherie Lee, Larry Rucker, Mary McConnell, Darla Harris, Pat Hudnall, and Diane Hudnall attended. Cherie distributed a Statement of Income and Expenses, ending 2014 balance was \$8,002.04. Mary asked about how many out of town speakers were lined up and Darla said one confirmed and one potential. Darla said the projects were almost meeting expenses. Diane said the May presentation would be a powerpoint so the meeting will be held in the other room. The group discussed possible locations for the April field trip and agreed the Woodville location east of Lufkin was best. The trails are all decked which would be better for people. The group also discussed traveling via bus, large vans or car pool.

Submitted by: Diane J. Hudnall, secretary



Library

We encourage you to take advantage of the great resource of information available in our library. At each meeting there are a wide variety of books 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.



Editor's Comments:

**Deadline for the April Newsletter is April 3, 2015.
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., Houston, TX 77005

Next regular meetings are March 5, 2015 and April 2, 2015

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 17, 2015

The HOUSTON ORCHID SOCIETY presents



ORCHIDS: NATURE'S MASTERPIECE

2015 Spring Show & Sale, April 11-12, 2015

Museum of Natural Science, Main Lobby
5555 Herman Park Drive
Houston, TX 77030

For info visit <http://www.houstonorchidsociety.org/show>

**Bromeliad
Spring Sale**

**Saturday
April 11, 9am-3pm**

**West Gray
Multi-Service Center
1475 W. Gray St.**

Bromeliad Society / Houston Inc.

“Building Your Own Terrarium”

by Darla Harris



Ferns to choose from for members' terrariums

Instructor Darla demonstrating building a terrarium



Preparation and planting

The Finished Products



