



June 2015

Vol. 17 No. 6

<http://www.tgcfernsoc.org>

**Next Regular Meeting: Sunday, June 21, 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:**

**The Wonder and Beauty of the Fern**

Hi Everyone,

Hope everyone survived the storms and flooding this past month. We were lucky up here on the northwest side receiving only about 7 inches of rain over the week because I know some of you further south received a lot more. I do hope no one flooded. I will say that these 90 plus temperatures we are now having sure seem hot after those cloudy and rainy cooler days. I hope the forecast for a cooler summer is right because I'm not looking forward to 100 degree plus days.

Last month, Diane Hudnall gave a very interesting presentation on the history of ferns and the development of fern fossils. In addition, each member present received two fern fossils, one type generously donated by members Frank and Sally Tastinger and the other type procured by Darla Harris for the society. Thank you all for making this a very memorable meeting. And for those of you who missed the meeting, you might find a few fossils on the raffle tables in the upcoming months.

I would also like to thank Donna McGraw for offering to host our Holiday Party this December 13th. For those of you who have never been there, I think you will find it very impressive. I hope you can all make it.

Once again I'd like to thank everyone who brought refreshments. We had a nice assortment of goodies. Thank you all for your generosity.

I hope to see you all at the meeting this month. Take care.

*Cherie*



**Please Welcome Our New Member:**

*Jere Noerager*

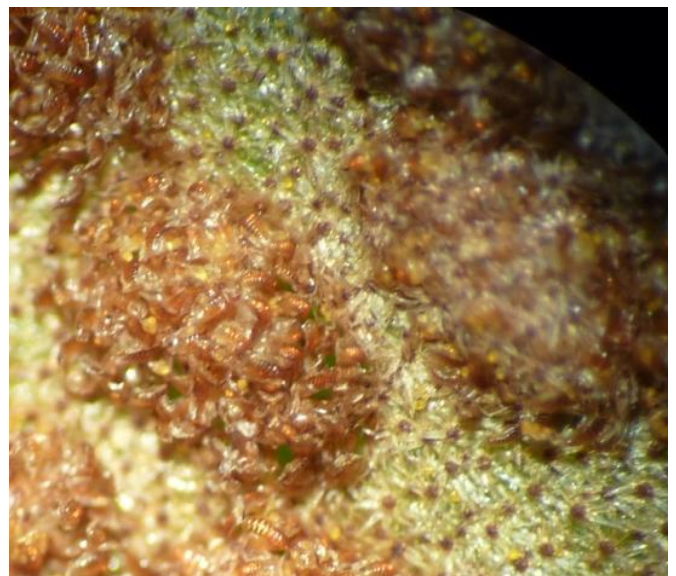


What do you see when you look at a fern? Normally there are green leaves, possibly with some variegation or may be some red new fronds. We see some tall and some short, some spreading and some clumping. So what really distinguishes these 13,000 ferns from each other and how do we know that there are so many different families of ferns? Ah... it is a trained eye that sees the differences. Sometimes it is so subtle you could easily miss them.

Joan Hudson is going to tell us and show us with dissecting microscopes just what some of these differences are that make a fern unique. We will be exploring the world of sporangia, veins, hairs, and scales. We will get to see the sheer beauty that is present in every fern. You too will have a trained eye after this meeting and will see ferns in an entirely different light.

Flowers .... who needs flowers when you have ferns!

The following are examples of sporangia and hairs as seen through the microscope.





Submitted by Darla Harris, Vice President



### Up and Coming Attractions:

- June 21: "Microscopic Study of Ferns"  
presented by Joan Hudson
- July 19: "Pellaea atropurpurea  
– Potting Up & Hardening Off"
- Aug 16: Summer Party  
at Biruta Claunch's home
- Sept 20: Annual Plant Exchange

Submitted by: Darla Harris, Vice President



### 2015 Officers and Committees:

- President: Cherie Lee
- Vice President: Darla Harris
- Secretary: Diane 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



### Refreshments:

Refreshments for May were generously furnished by:

- Drinks: Terri Dolney, Cherie Lee, Rodolfo Reyes
- Savory: Biruta Claunch, Marcia Livingston, Larry Rucker
- Desserts: Beth Ayer, Mary McConnell, Lucy Melara
- Service ware: Cherie Lee

Refreshments for June will be generously furnished by:

- Drinks: Beth Ayer
- Savory: Judith Neufeld, Faye Stansberry
- Fruit: Diane Hudnall
- 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](mailto:stansberry.faye@yahoo.com) or call 713-734-0170 or email to [102666@email.hal-pc.org](mailto:102666@email.hal-pc.org) or call 713-592-9029. Come out and enjoy some really delicious food!



### June Book Review

#### New Addition to our Library

#### "The Plant Lover's Guide to Ferns"

Richie Steffen & Sue Olsen

This book offers expert advice on how to get the most out of versatile ferns and highlights the most rewarding varieties. It includes profiles for 134 plants, with information on growth and propagation, advice on using ferns in garden design, and lists of where to buy the plants and where to view them in public gardens. It is filled with beautiful photographs of ferns and gardens.

Submitted by: Frank Lee



### Editor's Comments:

**Deadline for the July Newsletter is July 1, 2015. Thanks.**

Cherie Lee, Editor, *TGCFS Newsletter*



## **Pteris fauriei**

Family: **Pteridaceae**

Genus: **Pteris** TARE-iss

Species: **fauriei** FAU-ree-eye

**Pteris** (brake-) is a genus of about 280 species of ferns in the Pteridoideae subfamily of the Pteridaceae. They are native to tropical and subtropical regions of the world. The *Pteris fauriei* is native to Asia being found in Japan, China, the Ryukyu Islands, Taiwan and Vietnam.

These ferns get about 18 inches tall, and are very easy to grow. They are said to go down to as low as 21°F. They require moderate water and medium to bright light so can be planted in the ground or in a container.

Two varieties have been found, *P. fauriei* var *minor* which is a diploid and produces sporophytes (baby ferns) by sexual mode and *P.fauriei* var *fauriei* which is a triploid and produced sporophytes by apogamy. The plants with 64-spore sporangia are considered the diploid and those with 32-spore sporangia are considered triploid. If we get a fertile frond before our meeting we can take a look at it under the microscope and see which one we have by counting the spore sporangia.

The Funny thing is *Pteris* is from Greek *pterid-*, *pteris* fern; akin to Greek *pteron* feather, wing, and Brake is a Middle English word for "fern"). So this is a Fern fern.

Submitted by: Darla Harris





## Growing Ferns from Spores

I encourage our members to grow ferns from spores. There are several advantages to doing this. There is a higher likelihood of variation from one plant to the next than you would get from a spontaneous mutation. What this means is that you may grow a fern that is at least slightly different than the parent fern. It may exhibit greater cold hardiness, become more compact or have longer or more divided fronds or grow more robustly. When growing from spores you will likely end up with lots of plants which you can share with other people or market if you wish. Also, growing from spores can be very satisfying to observe the entire cycle of fern growth first hand.

Usually at least once a year the fern society conducts spore growth starts as part of a program. Many of you are familiar with the various techniques. ‘The Fern Growers Manual’ by Hoshizaki and Moran provides excellent guidance on growing spores if you haven’t attended one of these meetings. As many of you know, some ferns are easier to grow from spores than others. I will say it does take a bit of time in duration and a little effort to get things rolling.

I encourage those who are starting ferns from spores to use those species or cultivars that aren’t readily available in stores. There are many cultivars of Staghorn ferns. I believe most of those cultivars were developed by people growing them from spores.

Many ferns can only be propagated by spore growth. In most cases those include “Tree Ferns”, solitary Staghorn Ferns and Birds Nest Ferns, to name a few. Most fern growers are more than willing to let others collect ripe spores from their specimens. In a pinch, I have collected spore simply by using a fingernail on ripe spore patches holding a crisp dollar bill underneath. The next paragraph is an excerpt from the American Fern Society article on how to...

“Look on the underside of the fronds for brown colored spots or lines, (a rich cinnamon brown is best). Late summer in temperate regions and almost all year in tropical regions the frond or a piece of the frond should be collected. Place the frond between two pieces of paper, and keep it from being too damaged until you can bring it home. Then lay the frond in a warm, dry and draft free area for about a week or two. Carefully open the two pieces of paper and remove the dried up remains of the frond. You will see (if the frond was fertile) a collection of debris and spores. To separate the debris from the spore hold the paper on an angle and tap the paper the debris is lighter and less sticky than the spores and will fall off the paper. The dust that remains slightly

stuck to the paper is the spores. You can then fold the paper in half and tap more vigorously and collect the spores into the fold for easier planting.”



Platycerium spore just becoming ripe

Submitted by: Patrick Hudnall



## Texas Gulf Coast Fern Society General Meeting – May 17, 2015

The regular monthly meeting was held at the Judson Robinson Jr. Community Center, Houston, Texas. The meeting was called to order at 2:20 pm by President Cherie Lee.

**General:** Cherie welcomed our visitor and thanked the people who brought refreshments. Larry discussed Saturdays meeting held to raise awareness and hear local residents concerns regarding the botanical garden recently approved to be built at the abandoned Glenbrook Valley Golf course. Several residents are opposed to the project because they would prefer a park instead. Larry mentioned that getting signatures from people outside the community would help gain support for the project. He will bring a sheet for people to sign at the next meeting. He expects another awareness meeting will be held in September. VP Darla reminded everyone that our summer party will be held at Biruta Claunch’s home August 16<sup>th</sup>.

**Program:** Diane Hudnall presented a talk on “Fern Fossils”. Her talk was an overview of the history of the earth, how plants evolved with an emphasis on ferns and how geologists use fossils in their everyday work. Diane passed out fern fossil specimens from Darla Harris’ collection so everyone could see what fern fossils look like. Darla also brought enough fern fossil specimens so each person could take home two. One set of fossils was purchased by the society and a second set of fossils of a

different origin were donated from Florida members Frank and Sally Tasting.

**Plant Raffle:** The raffle table was filled with interesting plants and \$60 was collected.

**Attendance:** 17 members and 1 guest were present

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](mailto: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](http://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 meeting is July 2, 2015

### **Bromeliad Society/Houston Inc.**

[www.bromeliadsocietyhouston.org](http://www.bromeliadsocietyhouston.org)

Regular meetings are held the third Tuesday of every month at 7:00 PM at the

Moody Community Center,  
3725 Fulton St., Houston, TX 77009

Next regular meeting is July 21, 2015

---

## **“Fern Fossils” by Diane Hudnall**



Presenter Diane Hudnall discussing fern fossils

