

March 2016

Vol. 18 No. 3

<http://www.tgcfernsoc.org>

**Next Regular Meeting: Sunday, March 20, 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:

Is it Spring? Boy I hope so. I have committed and started to bring plants back out of the greenhouse and doing some planting. We can only hope and blame the groundhog if he was wrong. I have been watching the moon and over the last few years have noticed that our early springs coincided with the full moons arrival after the spring equinox. This year it is on the 23rd of March, three days after the equinox. Last year the full moon was in April 15 days after the equinox and we had some late cool weather. We will see, but planting by the moon sure works.

We had a great turn-out for our February meeting with Linda Gay talking about easy to grow ferns for our area. Linda always gives good information to help us improve our gardening. She is a great speaker and teacher. We thank Linda for talking to our group on such short notice.

Our March meeting will be a hands-on project demonstrating how to grow Staghorn ferns from spore to sporeling in six months. Everything you need for the project will be provided. This is a new way of growing for us so let's see how we do. We will be using a solution made up of Ammonium Sulphate, Magnesium Sulphate, Manganese Sulphate, Ferrous Sulphate and Mono Potassium Phosphate. Thank goodness Larry Rucker is going to make up our formula for us, but he will show us how he did the measurements. I think those who have had trouble getting the results they wanted in the past will have a better chance this time. One of the spores we will be using is Patrick's *Platynerium veitchii* cv. Auburn River. We will have a couple others as well.

I would like to thank Raini Cunningham and Ruth McDonald who volunteered to Co-Chair the Hospitality position. This will be the first time for each of them to chair a committee in our society, so please let's help

them out by signing up to bring refreshments, letting them know in advance if you won't be able to fulfill your commitment, and if you are a good person for a last minute call to help out. We do have a great group, so I know we will all continue to participate.

April is our Field Trip! We will be going to 'Peckerwood Gardens' this year. If you haven't been there before, it is located northwest of Houston off of Hwy 290 close to Hempstead. Please check out their website, <http://www.peckerwoodgarden.org/>. Our trip will be on **Saturday the 16th of April**. We will meet there at 10:30 in the morning and have a guided tour lasting 1½ to 2 hours. The cost is \$10.00 per member after the Society picks up \$5.00 of the cost. Non-members are most welcome to join our group at a cost of \$15.00 per person. More information with directions will follow in next month's Newsletter.

I think we have a great year of programs planned and look forward to seeing each of you at the meetings, the field trip, and the Parties!

*Darla*



### February Raffle Results:

**Thank you to our Donors:** Biruta Claunch, Will Fleming, Darla Harris, Pat & Diane Hudnall, Jan Kramer, LuLu Leonard, Hannah Martin, Jacqueline Smith, and Cecil Strange

**Congratulations to the Winners:** Biruta Claunch, Darla Harris, Jan Kramer, Mary McConnell, Ruth McDonald, Cecil Strange, Donna Williams, Johnny Williams, and Beth Whitley



## Up and Coming Attractions:

### 2016:

- Mar 20: "From Spore to Staghorn Fern in 6 Months"  
by Darla Harris & Larry Rucker  
(hands-on)
- Apr 16: Field Trip "Peckerwood Gardens"  
(Sat.) 20571 FM 359, Hempstead, TX 77445  
10:30AM \$10 per person
- May 15: "Ferns of Mexico Systematics"  
by Alejandra Vasco
- June 19: "Fern Gametophyte Growth & Development"  
by Joan Hudson
- July 17: TBD
- Aug 21: Summer Party  
at Larry Rucker's home
- Sept 18: Annual Plant Swap
- Oct 16: TBD
- Nov 20: "Fern Holiday Ornaments"  
by Larry Rucker (hands on, cost TBD)
- Dec 11: Holiday Party  
at Biruta Claunch's home

Submitted by: Lisa George & Larry Rucker, VPs



### 2016 Dues

2016 dues are now being accepted. Please review the 2015 directory for any updates to your information, complete the membership form, and return it with your payment and any changes noted 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.



## 2016 Officers and Committees:

- President: Darla Harris  
Vice President: Lisa George and  
Larry Rucker  
Secretary: Diane Hudnall  
Treasurer: Mary McConnell  
Board Members-at-Large: Biruta Claunch  
Terri Dolney  
Education Chair: Darla Harris  
Hospitality Chair: Raini Cunningham and  
Ruth McDonald  
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 February were generously furnished by:

- Drinks: Bret Cunningham, Cherie Lee  
Savory: Biruta Claunch, Terri Dolney,  
LuLu Leonard, and Larry Rucker  
Desserts: Raini Cunningham, Darla Harris, and  
Cherie Lee  
Service ware: Cherie Lee

Refreshments for March will be generously furnished by:

- Drinks: Jane Lackow  
Savory: Donna Williams, Johnny Williams,  
and Beth Whitley  
Desserts: Mary McConnell and Patricia Ross  
Service ware: Cherie Lee

Please let Raini Cunningham, [bnrc@xmission.com](mailto:bnrc@xmission.com) / 801-891-2254, or Ruth McDonald, [rmmcdonald0@gmail.com](mailto:rmmcdonald0@gmail.com) / 979-530-6186, know if you can help with the refreshments for any months in 2016. Come out and enjoy some really delicious food!





## The Eyelash Fern

Family: Pteridaceae  
Genus: Actiniopteris  
Species: semiflabellata

This fern is a collector's fern. It is best grown as a houseplant due to the fact it likes low humidity and just moist soil, definitely on the dry side. It does like high light so it is best on a light stand or in a bright window. This fern is considered challenging to grow, but that is because it is a xerophytic fern.

The plant reaches a total height of about 7 inches. Graceful with its fan shaped, repeatedly forked or eyelash looking fronds. It is a terrestrial fern, but needs to be in a very well drained mix. In nature when the fern dries out, the frond blades bend toward the leaf stock, so when you see this happening, it's time to give it a little water.

This is a small Old World genus of only five species and it is native to the arid tropical part of Asia. The pictured fern *Actiniopteris semiflabellata* grows in Africa, Arabia, Madagascar, Mauritius, and Nepal.

This is a beautiful little fern and if you're up to the challenge can be very rewarding.



Submitted by: Darla Harris



## Texas Gulf Coast Fern Society General Meeting – February 21, 2016

The general meeting was held at the Judson Robinson Jr. Community Center, Houston, Texas. The meeting was called to order at 2:00 pm by President Darla Harris.

**General:** Darla opened the meeting by asking for a volunteer to be the hospitality coordinator and no one volunteered. Darla also discussed the April field trip to be held on Saturday April 16th to the Peckerwood Gardens.

Frank Lee reminded all that the library is located in the back of the room and available for all to check books out to be returned at the next meeting

Jere Noerager, a volunteer at the Mercer Botanical Gardens, mentioned that Mercer March Mart will be March 18<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> and volunteers were needed to man the fern sales area.

**Program:** Linda Gay presented “Easy to Grow Ferns”. Linda talked to us about many ferns that grow locally and provided growing tips. Two growing tips to remember is water sparingly and move your fern until the plant tells you it is happy.

**Attendance:** 35 members were present.

**Raffle:** \$106.00

Submitted by: Diane J. Hudnall, secretary



### March Book Review

#### “A Field Guide to the Ferns and Their Related Families” by Broughton Cobb

This unabridged paperback edition is a completely illustrated pocket guide to all the species of ferns, horsetails, clubmosses, spikemosses, and quillworts found in a major portion of the North American continent. The clear text and precise drawings are based on the Peterson Field Guide system of visual identification and make this a book readily understood by the beginner, yet authoritative enough to meet the demands of the professional biologist. There are over 500 illustrations showing both the full plant and details of spore cases, leaf patterns, and other diagnostic characters.

The author has included two separate sections by other botanical experts, one on the geological history of ferns and the other on the creation and care of a fernery. The many closely related species to be found in the British Isles and Western Europe are described in a brief chapter featuring a key of plant silhouettes that leads the reader instantly to proper identification.

Submitted by: Frank Lee



## Texas Gulf Coast Fern Society Board Meeting – February 21, 2016

The Board meeting was held at the Judson Robinson Jr. Community Center, Houston, Texas. The meeting was called to order at 4:20 pm by President Darla Harris.

**General:** Darla called the meeting to order and noted that Larry Rucker would serve as the voting member in the co-chair vice president role. She asked for advice on the speaker budget suggesting \$500 - \$600. There will be one out of town speaker from Mexico this year, could cost \$400. Cost for February speaker was \$150. The rest of the talks will be local with no costs and the projects for this year will all have minimal costs. All agreed on the budget recommendation.

Darla asked if the club should pay a part or all of the cost for the April field trip. Mary McConnell suggested the club pay \$5.00 and the members pay the remaining \$10.00. The suggestion was unanimously approved.

Larry Rucker asked if he should purchase glass in frames for a future etching project while the cost is low and the store still has enough for everyone. All agreed he should purchase up to 40 at no more than \$3.00 a piece.

**Attendance:** Darla Harris, Terri Dolney, Cherie Lee, Larry Rucker, Mary McConnell, Biruta Claunch and Diane Hudnall

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.



### Editor's Comments:

**Deadline for the April Newsletter is March 28, 2016. 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](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 meetings are:  
April 7, 2016


### Bromeliad Society/Houston Inc.

– [www.bromeliadsocietyhouston.org](http://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 15, 2016

  
 the HOUSTON ORCHID SOCIETY presents  
**ORCHIDS AROUND THE WORLD**



**Spring Show & Sale, April 2-3, 2016**  
 Saturday 9 AM - 5 PM | Sunday 9 AM - 4 PM

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

for info visit <http://www.houstonorchidsociety.org/>

**Mercer Botanic Gardens**  
 and  
 The Mercer Society  
 welcome you to the largest plant sale in the Gulf Coast region

**MARCH MART PLANT SALE**

Friday, March 18 Members Only Sale  
 8 a.m. to 10 a.m. VIP Members  
 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. TMS Members  
 You can join TMS on sale days  
 visit [www.themercersociety.org](http://www.themercersociety.org) for details

**Friday, March 18, 2016 12 p.m. to 4 p.m.**  
**Saturday, March 19, 2016 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.**  
 Shop tax free both days!

Experience a plant sale like no other! March Mart offers an enormous range of hard-to-find and unusual plants that thrive in Houston area gardens, along with experienced horticulturists who will help you make your selections. The Garden Cafe will be open for lunch. Shuttle transportation provided from parking lots to the sale entrance.

22306 Aldine Westfield Road  
 Humble, Texas 77338  
 713-274-4166  
[www.themercersociety.org](http://www.themercersociety.org)

  
 B. Jack Cagle  
 Conservatory

*Wow!!*  
*It's March Mart!!*

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**“Easy to Grow Ferns”  
Presented by Linda Gay**



**Our Presenter Linda Gay**



**Another Great Raffle**