



June 2017

Vol. 19 No. 6

<http://www.tgcfersoc.org>

Next Regular Meeting: Sunday, June 18, 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 has been a very busy spring for me. I just got back from the Miami FL fern show and sale. They have so many beautiful ferns. I am very happy with some new additions to my fern collection that I was able to pick up while I was there. I hope one day more of you will be able to go and see it for yourselves.

Next on my list is the L.A. fern society's show and sale. It's great to be able to see what and how plants are being grown in different parts of our country.

I want to thank Joan Hudson for presenting us an interesting and educational talk on *Psilotum nudum* and its very primitive structure. It is amazing how it can grow without roots or leaves. If you missed this presentation, it is worth researching this fern on your own or asking for more information.

We are lucky to have Larry Rucker present us with a presentation on *Platynerium* - Staghorn ferns. Larry has been growing and propagating staghorn ferns for 30 plus years. When I meet Larry at the very first Texas Gulf Coast Fern Society meeting he was growing almost exclusively staghorns. We know he has broadened out his love of ferns, but the *Platynerium* will always be his first love. I bought my very first *P. stemaria* from Larry. I did not have great luck with it but over the years by attending meetings, reading on ferns, and talking to those who grew them I gained a good working knowledge of this beautiful and intriguing genus of ferns. Read more in the program note about what Larry has planned for us.

Adam Black will soon be back from New Caledonia and will be talking to us in July about all the wonderful ferns that are growing there. He always has beautiful photographs and exciting adventures to share so don't miss our July meeting.

My ferns have really been enjoying the rain we have been having. We are planting some new gardens and discovering which ferns the neighborhood deer will

really enjoy eating. They do like a large number of cool plants but at the end of the day, I will have a great deer proof list.

Take care my friends and see you at the meeting.

Darla



**“*Platynerium*: The Staghorn Ferns”
by Larry Rucker**

Hello fern buddies. Buckle up and get ready to make a fast and furious foray into the realm of one of the most bizarre-looking fern genera, *Platynerium*, aka staghorn. This bodacious aristocratic fern is an epiphyte which is prized for its striking appearance and usefulness as decoration on walls or tree trunks. We will be observing the structure, growth, and reproduction of this favorite fern of mine. We will look at many of the species and cultivars that are available in today's market. This program should be visually beautiful and I hope it will tempt you to become a staghorn aficionado as I was some forty years ago.

Hope to see ya there.
Stay well.



Submitted by: Larry Rucker, VP



Up and Coming Attractions:

2017:

- June 18: “*Platyneriums*: The Staghorn Ferns”
by Larry Rucker
- July 16: “Ferns of New Caledonia”
by Adam Black
- Aug 20: Summer Party & Plant Exchange
at Malcolm McCorquodale’s home
- Sept 17: “Pressing Ferns”
by Alejandra Vasco
- Oct 15: “The Separation of Generations:
The Ferns that Never Grow Up”
by Jerald Pinson
- Nov 19: “Making Pressed Fern Decorated Boxes”
by Jan Kramer
- Dec 10: Holiday Party – 1 PM
at Mary McConnell’s home
- Submitted by: Larry Rucker, VP



Refreshments:

Refreshments for May were generously furnished by:

Beth Ayer, Craig Jackson, Marcia Livingston, Ruth McDonald, Larry Rucker, Faye Stansberry, and Cecil Strange

Refreshments for June will be generously furnished by:

- Drinks: Beth Ayer
Savory: Biruta Claunch, Larry Rucker
Fruit: Ruth McDonald
Service ware: Raini Cunningham, Ruth McDonald

Please let Raini Cunningham, bnrc@xmission.com / 801-891-2254, or Ruth McDonald, rmmcdonald0@gmail.com / 979-530-6186, know if you can help with the refreshments for any months in 2017. Come out and enjoy some really delicious food!



2017 Officers and Committees:

- President: Darla Harris
Vice President: Larry Rucker
Secretary: Diane Hudnall
Treasurer: Beth Ayer
Board Members-at-Large: Terri Dolney
Johnny Williams
Cherie Lee (Past Pres)
- Education Chair: Darla Harris
Hospitality Chair: Raini Cunningham and
Ruth McDonald
- Library: Ruth McDonald
Membership Co-chairs: Beth Ayer and
Marcia Livingston
- Newsletter: Cherie Lee
Spore Exchange: Patrick Hudnall
Ways and Means: Larry Rucker
- Raffle, Store, etc. Biruta Claunch
Web Master: Malcolm McCorquodale
Welcoming at Door: Beth Ayer and
Marcia Livingston



2017 Membership Dues

If you have not renewed your membership for 2017, please 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

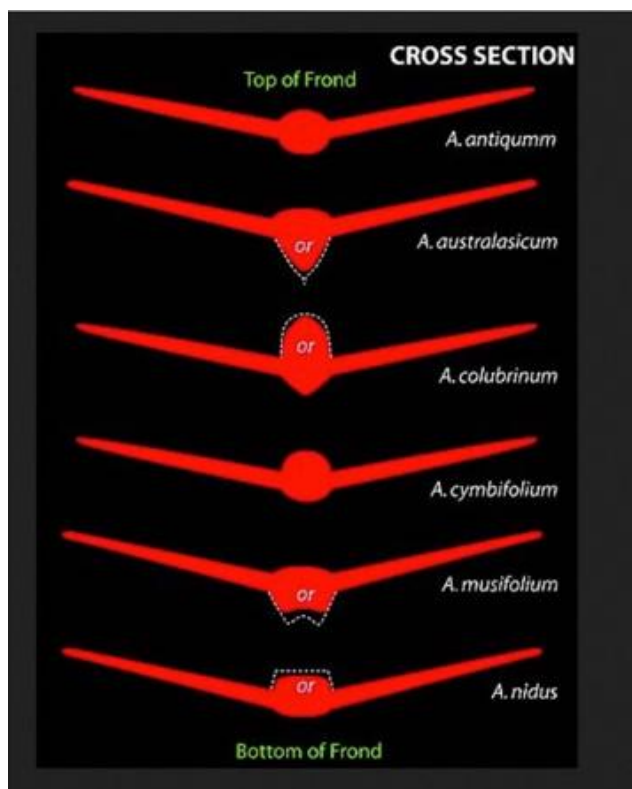
Please make your checks payable to Texas Gulf Coast Fern Society or simply TGCFS.



Bird's Nest Ferns: A Guide to Identification and Growing

Bird's nest ferns are part of a large group of ferns called *Asplenium* with more than 650 species. The nursery trade has been selling bird's nest ferns for years and most of us have grown or are currently growing them. The trade had sold most bird's nests as *Asplenium nidus*, but further investigation showed that was not a correct identification of them. There are three common bird's nests, *A. antiquum*, *A. australasicum*, and *A. nidus* and countless cultivars.

They have very similar shapes and at first glance sometimes seem difficult to tell apart. The following chart should help you. If you take your finger and feel the center of the frond, you can feel the shape of the midrib. This has several different shapes or keel and those shapes are what we will use to identify which type of bird's nest we have without needing to cut the frond and look at the vascular bundle.



Bird's nest ferns are relatively easy to grow if you keep in mind that in nature they grow as an epiphyte, attaching themselves to tree limbs. They use their funnel shaped basket to send water down to their root system. The base of the leaves acts like a sponge to hold the water until the roots take up the amount of water it needs. The rest of the water then will drain out and away from the plant. Even though most of the areas where they grow in nature have regular rain fall, the bird's nest does not want to be over watered. When left

to dry out, the leaves will wilt down and rejuvenate with a good watering.

Growing in an undersized pot, plaqued or even a hanging basket are all good ways to grow the fern. Use well drained potting mix, peat with perlite, when using an undersized pot. When buying a new bird's nest, if the fern is root bound, you can move up one pot size. Don't be tempted to put it in too large a pot. If you must then use lots of perlite and do not over water. Sphagnum moss is a good medium for wire baskets or plaqued.

A. antiquum 'Crissie'



A. antiquum 'Victoria'

There are a lot of colors and textures so they are prized ferns for collectors and those who just want one. So now you know the key, happy growing.



A. antiquum 'Victoria'



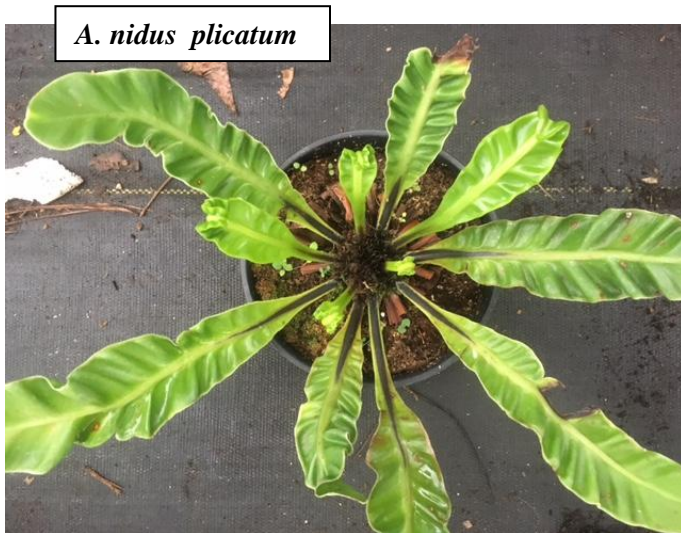
A. nidus plicatum



A. antiquum 'Leslie'



A. australasicum



A. nidus plicatum



A. nidus simonsianum

Submitted by: Darla Harris



**Texas Gulf Coast Fern society
General Meeting
May 21, 2017**

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 Harris opened the meeting and discussed the upcoming programs for June and July. She also reminded everyone that August would be our Summer Party and Plant Exchange at Malcolm McCorquodale's home. The Plant Exchange is limited to three plants per member.

Darla discussed the *Cheilanthes eckloniana* ferns that were provided by Casa Flora and our new member Michael Lorfing, President of the Dallas Fern Society. Each paid membership attending the May meeting was given one fern to take home.

Beth Ayer announced that the 2017 directories were available and she would be distributing them.

Program: Joan Hudson discussed the *Psilotum Nudum*, also known as Whisk Fern, and its life cycle and structure. It has no leaves or roots, just stems. Reproduction can be asexual by rhizomes or sexual by spores.

Attendance: 25 members attended

Raffle: \$70 raised selling raffle tickets

Submitted by: Cherie Lee
for Diane J. Hudnall, secretary



May Raffle Results:

Thank you to our Donors: Raini & Bret Cunningham, Pat & Diane Hudnall, Joan Hudson, Jan Kramer, Marcia Livingston, Dick & Abbye Owen, Jacqueline Smith, and Cecil Strange

Congratulations to the Winners: Joan Hudson, Cherie Lee, Ruth McDonald, Judith Neufeld, Abbye Owen, Fred Robinson, and Jacqueline Smith



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. If there is a particular book you would like to check out at the meeting, please contact Ruth McDonald at rmmcdonald0@gmail.com or 979-530-6186 prior to the meeting to make sure it will be available.



Editor's Comments

Deadline for the July Newsletter is June 27, 2017. Thanks.

Cherie Lee, Editor, *TGCFS Newsletter*



Upcoming Events in the Houston Area:

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:
June 20, 2017

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 meeting is:
July 6, 2017

**“*Psilotum nudum*:
Morphology and Reproduction”
by Joan Hudson**

**Our Speaker
Joan Hudson**

