



December 2017

Vol. 19 No. 12

<http://www.tgcfernsoc.org>

**Holiday Party: Sunday, December 10, at 1:00 p. m. – Mary McConnell’s Home,
6218 Wister Lane, Houston, TX 77008 - Phone: (713) 880-2530 (H), (281) 536-1559 (C)**

A message from our President:

Hi Everyone,

What a year this has been! Our Fern Society has really grown over this last year. We have 114 members and a regular meeting attendance of 30 or more. We have members from coast to coast because we all share that love of ferns. **I want to welcome all our new members and remind all of our old members that it's time to renew your membership.**

Looking over the list of topics we covered this past year, we have really been exposed to ferns from the science to the horticultural side and also just fun fern projects. Larry Rucker has another great line-up for us this coming year. With over 12,000 ferns in the world, we could never cover all of them but we will try! This coming year, Larry wants us to learn a bit more about ferns themselves so he is going to talk about different aspects of ferns, some of the terminology that is so unique to ferns, and growing tips along with our great programs. Larry is a fun and gifted speaker having taught biology for years. Who better to give us these quick little lessons? I hope everyone will enjoy these mini talks.

Our raffle tables have been full all year and that is thanks to you! Bringing items and plants for the raffle and purchasing tickets for the chance to win some of these awesome plants has made this happen. We plan on including a silent auction from time to time this coming year. This is to help support our society so we can continue to have great programs and projects at low to no cost to the members. Cherie Lee has agreed to take the lead on this and we will provide you with more details as this takes effect. So think about what you might have that our members may want to bid on as well as our monthly raffle.

Our meeting in November was another successful project. Thank you to Jan Kramer for taking the time and effort to get all the supplies and materials together to present this to our group! As you could tell from her

presentation on using ferns on canvas, she has a knack for the crafty. For everyone who shared your ferns that we pressed in September with those who had not been at that meeting, thank you! Everyone seemed to have a great time. I know I did just watching everyone with their ferns, glue, and canvas. What beautiful treasures you created. What a way to preserve a special plant that a friend or loved one may have given you. There are so many possibilities to be creative with this craft.

December for our society means "Party Time". Meeting at one of our member's home where we can eat and talk is a great way to get to know each other. I looked at the signup sheet and I know our hospitality people are worried about how we will feed everyone. I know we always have more than enough food but it really helps them to get the categories filled if they have an idea who is bringing what. Please send them an email so they will know! Mary McConnell has graciously offered her home for our party this year, thank you Mary. Remember you can bring your spouse or significant other along with you. We would love to meet them. For our members who have missed a few meetings this year, this party will give us a chance to catch up so please try to come to the party. Don't forget the gift exchange. If you'd like to participate, please bring a wrapped a fern/plant or plant/garden related item valued around \$15-\$20. This is always fun. We will draw numbers for determining the order for selecting gifts so it is a random order. This is a nice way to share something special with our friends. If you don't want to participate however that is ok too.

I would also like to thank Cherie Lee, Beth Ayer, and Lisa George for working on our slate of officers for our 2018 year. I want to thank Diane Hudnall for serving as our secretary for the past two years and to Terry Dolney for serving as board member-at-large last year. To our new officers, Donna Williams taking on the secretary role and Jacqueline Smith for being our new board member-at-large, thank you both as this is

your first time serving in our Society. Also, a big thanks to the members who decided to serve another year for us, Larry Rucker as vice-president, Beth Ayer as treasurer, and Johnny Williams as board member-at-large. Cherie Lee will stay on as board member-at-large for outgoing president. On a personal note, thank you for asking me to serve as president for another year. This will be another great group of leaders to help keep our society growing and fun!

Looking forward to another year of ferns and fern friends!

Take care my friends and see you at the party!

Darla



Up and Coming Attractions:

2017:

Dec 10: Holiday Party – 1 PM
at Mary McConnell’s home

2018:

Jan 21: “*Selaginella*”
short talk by Lisa George
“Mounted *Selaginella* ‘Gold Tips’ Project”
by Larry Rucker

Feb 18: “Bird’s Nest Ferns”
short talk by Darla Harris
“Mounted Bird’s Nest Project”
by Larry Rucker

Mar 17/18: Field trip to Austin Zilker Botanic Garden
and Fern Viewing in Field West of Austin

Apr 15: “*Platyceriums*”
by Don Callard

Submitted by: Larry Rucker, VP



November Raffle Donors:

Thank you to our Donors: Ruby Adams, Biruta Claunch, Darla Harris, Ruth McDonald, Rodolfo Reyes, Cecil Strange, Ken Warren, Johnny Williams, and anyone else who forgot to sign up.



Please Welcome Our New Members

Connie Ames and Janice McIntosh



2018 Membership Dues

Renewals for 2018 membership are now being accepted. Thank you to the 54% of our members who have already renewed. 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.



Refreshments:

Refreshments for November were generously furnished by:

Ruby Adams, Beth Ayer, Bret & Raini Cunningham, Diane Hudnall, Cherie Lee, Judith Neufeld, Glenda Perry, Betsy Robinson, Larry Rucker, Cecil Strange, Donna & Johnny Williams, Brenda Wilson, and anyone else who may have forgotten to sign the list.

December will be our Holiday Party. Ruth McDonald and Raini Cunningham are organizing the feast so please let them know what delectable dish you plan to bring.

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!



Tips on Collecting Ferns by Robbin Moran

Techniques for collecting ferns differ little from those for seed plants, but a few points should be kept in mind. The most important is to collect the rhizome. This structure bears two characters helpful in distinguishing taxa. The first is its habit, whether erect, decumbent, or creeping, and if the latter, whether short- or long-creeping. Rhizome habit should always be recorded in field notes and stated on the herbarium label. The second is the kind of rhizome indument, whether of hairs or scales, and the particular characteristics of these, such as color, habit, margin, and kind of attachment. It is often impossible to identify a fern to species using a key if rhizome characters are absent. If a rhizome is too large or bulky to be conveniently mounted on a herbarium sheet, it should be cut longitudinally through the middle. Besides reducing bulk, this exposes the scales at the apex, making them easier to observe. If still too thick, the rhizome can be cut longitudinally again. A quartered rhizome is better than none at all.

In general, collect specimens with fertile leaves. Several characteristics of the sori are helpful in identification such as their shape and position and the presence or absence of an indusium. Also, the fertile leaves of some ferns are dimorphic; that is, they have a different form and appearance than the sterile ones. In such cases, it is important to collect *both* fertile and sterile leaves. When the fertile leaves are mounted on a herbarium sheet, be sure that the side bearing the sori is displayed up. Actually, both sides of the leaf can be important in identification. Sometimes it's necessary to see the upper (adaxial) surface to check for the presence or absence of hairs or the structure of the rachis-costa juncture. If possible, collect a fragment that can be mounted to show the upper surface.

Although fertile leaves enhance the specimen's value, some ferns can be identified to species without them. This is the case with *Elaphoglossum*, one of the largest fern genera. Its taxonomy is based largely on rhizome habit, leaf shape, and scale characteristics. Therefore sterile collections make acceptable specimens. Of course, the problem is that you have to know before-hand which fern genera can be collected in sterile condition. It is probably best to collect a fern you are uncertain about rather than pass it by because sori are absent.

Collecting tree ferns and other big ferns (i.e., ones with leaves over two meters tall) presents a problem. Pressing the complete leaf is impractical and time-consuming, and the redundancy of parts (pinnae, pinnules) provides little extra information for botanists

studying the specimen. How much of the leaf should be collected? For large ferns, collect the following three parts: 1) the petiole base and basal pinnae, 2) the medial pinnae, and 3) the apex. Each part should go into a separate newspaper, and the newspaper should be labeled that they are from the same leaf. These three parts provide different information about the plant. The petiole base often bears scales or hairs or spines for identifying species, and the basal pinnae, by their size, give an idea about how much reduced the lamina is toward the base. The medial pinnae give an idea of the degree of cutting and how wide the blade is. The apical portion is important because it can either be gradually tapered to the tip, abruptly tapered, or "conform", that is, having more or less the same shape as the lateral pinnae. Be sure to get all three parts. Also, take notes on the length and width of the leaf, diameter of the trunk, and any other pertinent observations that cannot be seen on the collected material. The notes should be added to the herbarium label.

Submitted by: Darla Harris



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



Texas Gulf Coast Fern Society General Meeting – November 19, 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 opened the meeting introducing the project today, “Mounting Pressed Ferns on Artist Canvas”.

Nominating Chair Cherie Lee proposed the new board members for 2018: President – Darla Harris, Vice President – Larry Rucker, Secretary – Donna Williams, Treasurer – Beth Ayer, and Board Members at Large – Johnny Williams and Jacqueline Smith. The proposed 2018 officers and board members were approved by the membership present.

Darla discussed the Holiday party and asked people to sign up for food on the sheets on the back table. The party will be December 10 at 1:00 pm. An email will be sent to members with what people have signed up to bring prior to the party. Please let Ruth McDonald and/or Raini Cunningham know what you plan to bring. Larry Rucker mentioned that there will be a gift exchange at the party. If you wish to participate, please bring a wrapped plant related gift in the \$20 range.

Beth Ayer mentioned that she is accepting 2018 dues. January is the deadline for dues with a grace period until March.

Darla discussed the planned field trip to Austin the third weekend in March (17-18). She mentioned a concern had been raised that the field trip would interfere with March Mart, however next year the society will not be participating in March Mart because Mercer is planning on a very small invitation only event due to the damage from Hurricane Harvey. The field trip will be a 2-day trip. Saturday will be a visit to the Austin Zilker Botanic Garden and the Herbarium with Sunday being a walking tour near Llano, TX. The walking tour will not be difficult or physically

demanding. Jerry Noerager will research the possibility of a county bus transportation option for the society. During the January meeting attendees will be firmed up, hotel options discussed and decided, and meeting places and times announced.

Program: Jan Kramer presented the project – “Mounting Pressed Ferns on Artist Canvas”. She showed many beautiful examples and talked about issues she has encountered making these pieces of art. She stressed using ferns that would not fade and the importance of ensuring the entire canvas was covered. She walked around during the project and helped all.

Attendance: 36 members and 2 visitors attended.

Both visitors joined.

Raffle: \$76 raised selling raffle tickets

Meeting adjourned at 3:30 PM.

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. 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 January Newsletter is January 2, 2018. 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:
January 16, 2018

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:
January 4, 2018

**November Program
“Mounting Pressed Ferns on Artist Canvas”
by Jan Kramer**



Our speaker Jan Kramer







