



April 2018

Vol. 20 No. 4

<http://www.tgcfersoc.org>

**Next Regular Meeting: Sunday, April 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,

What a lovely spring we have had this year. The Spring Equinox arrived a little late this year and I think it shows in the slowness of the plants popping back after winter. Everything seems to be taking its time to reemerge after the hard winter. It has been great to see what is coming back and is even larger than last year. I hope you're having the same results in your yard. This is by far my favorite time of the year.

Our field trip to La Grange was fun! The weather could not have been better, just a bit of coolness to the air. Nature was just waking up. The spring wild flowers were popping and the spring blooming trees were blooming. The ferns however, were not as far along. We were able to see three different ferns for sure, maybe a fourth. We did not key it out. We saw a lot of these ferns but not the variety we had hoped to see. We need to stick with an April field trip month so more ferns are up and showing themselves. It was a pleasant day to walk, wander, and visit with the 12 of us who ventured out. This is a very unique part of Texas that looks so different than the Houston area. I would encourage you to make the journey yourself one weekend.

This month we have guest speaker Don Callard from the San Diego area. Don is one of the best staghorn growers in southern California. We normally have a big crowd for talks on *Platyceriums* so come early. We will be in the projection room. Remember, with additional guests, we need to beef up our refreshments to make sure everyone has something to drink and to snack on. So please surprise us with something for the refreshment table.

Our May meeting will be lead by our very own Patrick Hudnall. Patrick, for those who know him, is a real plant nerd and an excellent grower. If it is odd, rare, unusual, he knows the plant and has already grown it up and most likely given it away so he can

have the fun all over again with a new plant. Patrick will be talking to us on his way to grow from spore. I know we have had some very mixed results on growing from spore the last couple times we have tried. What has been a fail proof way for some has not worked out very well for us here in the Houston area. Patrick has had very good success growing ferns from spore for the last 20 years that I have known him. So he has agreed to walk us through his process. We will do this as a project so everyone will be able to try to grow from spore using his method. It will be fun to see what ferns he chooses for us to try. Half the battle is having fresh spore, good light, and proper water. So let's hope for success!!

Board members, we will be having a board meeting after the May project so please let me know if you're not going to be able to attend. I will follow up with more details of the agenda in next month's newsletter.

We are hoping to have the rest of the speakers for this year lined out soon. We are still working on dates with two speakers and then we will be able to let you know what is happening each month. We would like to thank Jere Noerager for volunteering to host our Summer Social in August. His home is centrally located off Memorial Drive. I'm excited to see Jere's yard as I know he has nice taste in ferns and grows them well. This will be a nice treat for us. So start thinking about what you would like to bring to the party!

We have such a good group of members. I always look forward to seeing you at the meetings!

*Darla*



## April Program

### “*Platyneriums*” by Don Callard

Hello fern buddies,

I wish more of you could have made it to La Grange for our field trip. We missed you. The twelve of us who were able to venture out to the Monument Hill State Historic Site found it exhilarating. It is both beautiful and challenging since it sits on a high bluff overlooking the city. Adam Black took us on a trail deep into a valley where we saw many blooming trees, grasses, and three ferns, yea. The breadth of his knowledge of plants is amazing.

I was a little exhausted after trekking back up the trail to our cars. We left the site and had an enjoyable lunch at Sealand Seafood. Having said our goodbyes we made our way back to Houston with another great field trip under our belts.

This month’s meeting is on *Platyneriums*. This plant is what got me interested in ferns and caused me to join the fern society. A short review will help us to be ready for this meeting. *Platyneriums* are epiphytes and have two types of fronds. The shield is a flat frond which covers the roots and stems and eventually turns brown. The fertile fronds are leafy and extend out from a growing point called the bud. These fronds are antler shaped and are the source of their common name, staghorn fern.



Photographs  
courtesy of  
Don Callard



This month’s speaker is a world class grower of *Platyneriums*. Don Callard hales from Del Mar, California, and we are privileged to have him speak to us. He is the past president of the San Diego Fern Society and has been growing ferns for numerous years. His mentor was his grandfather whom he watched plaque stags when he was a boy. Don grows many species and cultivars and has seen them growing in southeastern Asia. Don has always been willing to share his growing experiences and this is what helps us all become better growers. I am excited to have him in Houston once again. Please make an effort to hear this world class speaker on *Platyneriums*. Hope to see you there.

Submitted by Larry Rucker



## Up and Coming Attractions:

### 2018:

- Apr 15: "Platyceriums"  
by Don Callard
- May 20: "Growing from Spore"  
by Patrick Hudnall
- June 17: TBD
- July 15: TBD
- Aug 19: Summer Party  
at Jere Noerager's home

Submitted by: Larry Rucker, VP



### 2018 Membership Dues

Renewals for 2018 membership are now being accepted. Thank you to all of you who have already renewed. If you have not 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 April will be generously furnished by:

- Drinks: Beth Ayer
- Food Items: Ruby Adams, Marcia Livingston,  
Brenda Wilson
- Service ware: Raini Cunningham

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 2018. Come out and enjoy some really delicious food!

## 2018 Officers and Committees:

President:	Darla Harris
Vice President:	Larry Rucker
Secretary:	Donna Williams
Treasurer:	Beth Ayer
Board Members-at-Large:	Jacqueline Smith 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: - Raffle, Store, etc.	Larry Rucker Biruta Claunch
Web Master:	Malcolm McCorquodale
Welcoming at Door:	Beth Ayer and Marcia Livingston



## Statement of Income & Expenses January 1, 2018 to March 31, 2018

<u>INCOME</u>	
Membership dues	\$ 295.00
Raffle Income	151.00
Projects	130.00
Silent Auction	30.00
Donations	50.00
Bank Interest	0.41
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$ 656.41</b>

<u>EXPENSES</u>	
Program Expenses	\$ 559.71
Newsletter	33.60
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$ 593.31</b>

<b>Balance 12-31-2017:</b>	<b>\$9,283.77</b>
<b>Balance 3-31-2018:</b>	<b>\$9,346.87</b>
<b>Net Gain Loss for 1st Qtr:</b>	<b>\$ 63.10</b>
<b>Net Gain Loss for 2018:</b>	<b>\$ 63.10</b>



## *Serpocaulon attenuatum* 'Falax'

The *Polypodium* genus is a very large and diverse group of ferns from all around the world with about 100 species, with the tropical areas being the most diverse. The genus gets its name from its rhizome, the Poly- means 'many' and the podion-means 'little foot' from the Ancient Greek. To just look at some of the ferns that are in this genus, you would never know they are in the same family. Their leaves look so different from each other. This group has both terrestrial and epiphytic growing habits.

I got my first 'Falax' from Barbara Joe Hoshizaki as a *Polypodium triseriale*. This fern has a very crested and finely divided fern leaf. A few years later, it was introduced into the nursery fern trade so I got several of them. As often is the case with plants in the trade, this fern got dropped for the new fern of the year and has not been out in the trade for several years. Then this year to my delight, it is back in the trade again. However, after doing more research for this article, I have found that not to be the case.

Ferns, as well as a lot of other plants, are undergoing a lot of DNA testing and in doing so, they are finding that ferns thought to belong in the same genus are not as closely related as their morphology would have suggested. So they are going back to some old names on some ferns and others are getting totally new names. This is going to be a big undertaking just learning the new names.

In the case of the 'Falax', it is still in the *Polypodiaceae* family but now is in the genus of *Serpocaulon*. The story gets even more complicated. Like many ferns, we have two ferns that look very much alike, the *Serpocaulon triseriale* and the *Serpocaulon attenuatum*. To make it even worse, the trade has put the name 'Falax' on both of them. According to the expert, Dr. Alan Smith of Berkley, only by examining DNA and the sori pattern on these two ferns can you really tell them apart.

*Serpocaulon triseriale* has sori in 2-3 rows on each side of the costae, whereas the *Serpocaulon attenuatum* has a single row. In nature, Dr. Smith said that the *Serpocaulon triseriale* has more adnate pinnae, but he was not sure how that may translate in sports in the horticultural variants. He thought it would be interesting to know if the variants breed true or revert.

So the question remains, which fern do I have or do I have them both? Should we drop the 'Falax' as the cultivar name? I will let you know as the sori develop later into the year. Regardless, both ferns are worth growing making large leaves on tall erect stems, suitable for either a pot or a hanging basket. I have found the stems do not take high wind very well so I

protect mine. They like partial shade and the trade suggests they are heavy water ferns but I have found mine to be somewhat drought tolerant, at least the *S. triseriale*. I'll let you know on the other. It is fairly cold tolerant. Mine got to 33 degrees with a cover from frost and did not suffer any leaf damage, so I was happy.

No matter what the true name is, it is a lovely fern!



*Serpocaulon attenuatum*



Submitted by: Darla Harris



**Texas Gulf Coast Fern Society  
March 18, 2017 Field Trip**

The March Field Trip was to Monument Hill & Kreische Brewery State Historic Sites in La Grange, Texas. We all met up at the park a little after 10 AM. We first toured the old Kreische house and then Adam Black guided us through the trails looking for ferns and pointing out other plants of interest along the way. It was a wonderful hike and very enjoyable day. Thank you Adam.

**Attendance:** 12 members were present.

Submitted by: Cherie Lee  
for Donna Williams, 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](mailto:rmmcdonald0@gmail.com) or 979-530-6186 prior to the meeting to make sure it will be available.



**Editor's Comments**

**Deadline for the May Newsletter is May 1, 2018.  
Thanks.**

Cherie Lee, Editor, *TGCFS Newsletter*

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**Upcoming Events in the Houston Area:**

**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 West Gray Multi-Service Center 1475 W. Gray St., Houston, TX 77019

Next regular meeting is:  
April 17, 2018

**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:  
May 3, 2018

**Bromeliad Society/Houston, Inc.**

*Spring Bromeliad Sale*

**Saturday, April 14, 2018  
9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.**

**METROPOLITAN MULTI-SERVICE CENTER  
1475 WEST GRAY • HOUSTON, TEXAS 77019**

**COME EARLY FOR BEST SELECTIONS**

For more information please visit the BSHI website:  
[www.bromeliadsocietyhouston.org](http://www.bromeliadsocietyhouston.org)  
or call Allyn Pearlman at 713-858-3047

*We want to go electronic, please send your name and email address to [deliboys@comcast.net](mailto:deliboys@comcast.net)*

**March Field Trip**  
**“Monument Hill & Kreische Brewery State Historic Site”**  
**Guided by Adam Black**



**Kreische Home**





*Pleopeltis polypodioides* var. *michauxiana*  
Resurrection Fern



*Cheilanthes*  
*alabamensis*



Old Kreische Brewery





**Our Guide Adam Black**

***Adiantum*  
Maidenhair Fern**

