

August 2019

Vol. 21 No. 8

<http://www.tgcfersoc.org>

**Summer Party: Sunday, August 18, at 2:00 p. m. – Lucy and Rafael Melara’s Home,
7722 Hopewell Lane, Houston, TX 77071– Phone: (713) 728-1626**

A message from our President:

Hi Everyone,

Thank you everyone who was in attendance at the last meeting. John Ferguson gave an excellent presentation on mulch and the dos and don'ts of putting it down and what type to use for our area. It had been several years since he spoke to our group so it was a great time for a refresher. We had another big raffle with lots of plants. I think everyone who bought a ticket got something. Thank you to those who contributed and those that bought tickets. The proceeds from the raffle go towards our projects so we can cover most or all the cost of supplies. The refreshment table was also well stocked. We need to be sure that each of us does our part in bringing food. Larry Rucker only has a couple people who tell him what they are bringing ahead of time. He needs to know by the Friday before the meeting please!

It is time for our Summer Party! Can you say **'Italiano'**? This will be another fun event for us. There are so many choices from a Caesar salad, pasta cold salads, warm dishes, manicotti, Italian sausage, garlic bread, tiramisu, etc. Please tell Larry Rucker what you plan to bring. There is a map to Lucy and Rafael Melara's home on the last page of the newsletter. They live at the end of a cul-de-sac so if you know someone who would like to car pool, this would be a great time to do that. We had the party at their home in 2014 and everything worked out great. Dress for inside/outside. They have a very nice yard which is full of all kinds of plants. There are things tucked away everywhere so it's almost a scavenger hunt to see it all. Plan on arriving around 2 pm so you have an opportunity to walk around some before we eat at 3 pm and then you can continue exploring afterwards. There will be some wine and beer that Lucy is providing but if this is what you prefer to consume, please bring your own alcohol. Sodas etc

will be provided. **Please let Larry know what you will be bringing!**

September will be a busy meeting for us. We will be electing our nominating committee who will be responsible for selecting a slate of officers for 2020. The election of officers will occur at the October meeting. We revised our bylaws last year to elect our officers a month earlier to give them additional time to prepare for their new roles in January. So please consider being on the committee and/or being an officer.

Jacob Martin, the manager for the greenhouses at Mercer Arboretum, will be giving us a presentation on growing ferns from tissue culture in September. A lot of ferns in the trade are grown this way from a single stock plant. It is a clone so when you get that one really cool fern that does not reproduce that same look when grown from spore, you can grow it like a test tube baby. This should be an interesting presentation. You will be able to see why doing this brings down the price tag on a lot of really rare ferns as opposed to growing them from spore. You can use both ways for different reasons in reproducing new ferns. We will give you a little more information in next month's newsletter.

October will now be our Plant Exchange month! So start thinking about which plants you may want to bring. Remember, you may bring up to 5 plants or plant related items per member to swap! We will talk more about this in the upcoming newsletters.

Sounds like a great end of summer for our Society. See you at the Party!

Darla



Please Welcome Our New Members

Meredith McMillian & Derinda Saucier



Summer Party

Don't forget our Summer Party at Lucy and Rafael Melara's home August 18th. This is pot luck and the theme is 'Italiano'. If you'd like some ideas of dishes to bring, please contact **Larry Rucker**. **Also, please let Larry know what you will be bringing to the party so he can make sure everything is covered.** herbie39L@att.net / 832-453-2992 cell, 713-649-3535 home.



2019 Up and Coming Attractions:

- Aug 18: Summer Party
Lucy Melara's home
- Sept 15: "Mercer's Tissue Culture Trials"
by Jacob Martin
- Oct 20: Plant Swap
- Nov 17: "Looking for Ferns in All the Wrong Places"
by Panayoti Kelaidis
- Dec: Holiday Party
Date & Location TBD

Submitted by: Jere Noerager & Fred Robinson, VPs



Meeting Raffle:

Thank you to our July Raffle Donors: Beth Ayer, Ceil Dow, Darla Harris, Cherie & Frank Lee, Ruth McDonald, Jim Migliavacca, Jere Noerager, Marc Ace Pamisa, Faye Stansberry, Ken Warren, and anyone else who forgot to sign up made for a spectacular raffle. A special thanks goes to Jim Migliavacca for once again donating multiple flats of plants for our regular raffle. Thank you all for your generosity.

Do you have some really special plant or horticultural related item that you'd be able to part with for a very good cause? Well, I've got just the place! Our very own society!! We've been making some nice money to bolster our treasury with the wonderful speakers, projects etc. that we support. Think about something that you yourself would be willing to pay extra for i.e. the special raffle. If you would like to donate an item, please call me at 832/541-5242 to coordinate so I will be prepared to sell tickets etc. Thank you.

Submitted by Biruta Claunch



2019 Officers and Committees:

President:	Darla Harris
Vice Presidents:	Jere Noerager Fred Robinson
Secretary:	Donna Williams
Treasurer:	Beth Ayer
Board Members-at-Large:	Jacqueline Smith Johnny Williams Cherie Lee (Past Pres)
Education Chair:	Darla Harris
Hospitality Chair:	Larry Rucker
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.
Web Master:	Malcolm McCorquodale
Welcoming at Door:	Faye Stansberry



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.



Refreshments:

Refreshments for July were generously furnished by: Beth Ayer, Ceil Dow, Darla Harris, Cherie Lee, Ruth McDonald, Jim Migliavacca, Fred & Betsy Robinson, Larry Rucker, Donna & Johnny Williams, and anyone else who forgot to sign the list.

Please let Larry Rucker, herbie39L@att.net / 832-453-2992 cell, 713-649-3535 home, know if you can help with the refreshments in September and what you plan to bring so he can make sure everything is covered and we don't have a lot of duplicates. It will make his job much easier. Come out and enjoy some really delicious food!



Platycerium ridleyi

Family: [Polypodiaceae](#)

Genus: [Platycerium](#) plat-ee-SIR-ee-um

Species: [ridleyi](#) rid-LEE-eye

Platycerium ridleyi is listed with the Malayan-Asiatic species of staghorn fern and is from parts of Southeast Asia including Myanmar, Malaysia, Singapore, and Indonesia. It's also found in the southern part of Thailand. This species of *Platycerium* is listed as one of the hardest to grow but I think that is partly due to the lack of information available on this fern. It was known where it came from and that it was home to ants. It was thought at one time the reason that it was so difficult was because the aspects of ants in the ferns people were trying to grow. It also seems to have a dormant season so the home grower was not sure how to allow that to happen. The other thing that was in the older books was it was difficult to grow from spore. So let's start exploring this fern.

I personally had tried to grow *P. ridleyi* a couple times and I had started each of those times with a healthy 4" pot from Charles Alford. The longest I kept one alive was about 2 months. When I was visiting with Charles a year or so ago, I told him I had had no luck with them. He asked what I had done with them once I bought them. As they were small plants I had left them in his mix in the pot they had been growing in. He told me that was my problem. He used a very acid mix and Reverse osmosis system to make the mix be more neutral. With my well water it made it too acid for the plants to survive in. So there is something to be said for putting your new plants in something that has been working for you.

My second problem was the books said dry mix. Charles was growing his very dry so that is what I did. I found for me that did not work very well. I just could not keep them happy. So I bought my 3rd 4" pot from Charles, brought it home, took all his soil off and put mine in sphagnum moss but I decided this time to grow it wetter. So I wickered it and placed it in a west window because it likes high light. Bingo!! I have had it about a year and a half now and it is growing great! I have since gotten four more that were really small from other sources and they are coming along



very well too with this method for me, and No Ants, haha.

I left mine potted because in nature it really grows on the top or flat side of the limb not on the side like on the trunk. So I can get that more upright orientation going. If you look at the fronds themselves they have a deep channel that works like a funnel for the water to run straight to the root via the growing tip. The fronds grow straight up and have several very deep lobes and then the spore patch comes off at the base of the fronds. The back shield hugs the pot, or in nature the limb, and has deep ridges that make it very attractive. The natural enemies to this fern are grasshoppers. They love the new growth. That has been a bit of a challenge growing outside so I have been growing inside.



Next for me is to put down some more spore, mine is almost ripe. I had been given some but they did not take at all so too old or too immature but they did not make at all. It is said they grow fast and can have sellable babies in a year. Wish me luck!

Submitted by Darla Harris



Photos by Darla Harris and Cherie Lee

**Texas Gulf Coast Fern Society
July 21, 2019**

The July meeting of the Texas Gulf Coast Fern Society was held at the Judson Robinson Jr. Community Center, Houston, Texas. The meeting was called to order by President Darla Harris.

Due to some technical difficulties we began this meeting with our raffle. Larry sold tickets and members began to win some very beautiful plants. Raffle donors were extremely generous and there were a lot of plants to choose from.

Darla and Larry thanked everyone for attending and for donating food and raffle plants. A sheet was available to sign up to bring food for our summer party which will be held at Lucy and Rafael Melara's home on August 18. Details will follow in the next newsletter. Lucy and Rafael have a beautiful home and equally beautiful garden. It should not be missed!

Darla mentioned that there has been a change in the programs for September and October. Mr. Jacob Martin will give his program on "Tissue Culture" in September and our plant swap will be in October. This information will be in the next newsletter. Also, Darla asked that all Board members stay for a Board meeting following our regular meeting today.

Program: Our program today was given by **John Ferguson** and it was on "**Mulch – The Secret Weapon of Successful Gardeners**". Mr. Ferguson is the founder and owner of **Nature's Way Resources**. His PowerPoint presentation listed all the benefits of good mulch. It also listed many, many mulches that cause more harm than good. His talk was very interesting and quite scientific, explaining in detail why mulches fall into this beneficial versus harmful description. He showed pictures of the points he was discussing and passed around examples of some of the things he was explaining. He said that native mulches are superior and should be considered.

The address for the **Nature's Way Resources** website is: www.natureswayresources.com. Mr. Ferguson also suggested that some may like to sign up for the *Lazy Gardener and Friends Newsletter*.

This was a very interesting and thought-provoking program and one that should make all of us think seriously about the mulches we use on our plants.

Following the presentation, we resumed our raffle. The meeting was adjourned at approximately 4:25 p.m.

Attendance: There were 29 members and 2 guests present.

Raffle: The raffle brought in \$115.

Respectfully submitted by Donna Williams, Secretary



**Texas Gulf Coast Fern Society
Board Meeting – July 21, 2019**

The July Board Meeting was held at the Judson Robinson Jr. Community Center, Houston, Texas. The meeting was called to order at 4:27 p.m. by President Darla Harris.

Board members present were Beth Ayer, Darla Harris (President), Cherie Lee, Jere Noerager, Fred Robinson, Jacqueline Smith, Donna Williams, and Johnny Williams. One member, Larry Rucker, was also present.

Darla asked for discussion on two items:

1. Our society sharing expenses with or giving a donation to Peckerwood for two shared speakers.
2. Our speaker for September has asked that a donation be made to the Mercer Society in lieu of a speaker's fee.

Beth handed out a copy of our current budget for members to review and discussion began. Jere suggested we give a donation of \$200 per speaker. Cherie stated that this is the speaker's fee in other societies she is in. Donna said that donations in lieu of speaker's fees are often done in the African Violet Society. Our budget allows \$1500 annually for speaker's fees (per the January 2019 Board Meeting) so it was decided that \$200 per speaker would be quite reasonable.

Cherie made the motion that we give Peckerwood a donation of \$200 for each of the two speakers, totaling \$400 and that we give a donation of \$200 to Mercer in lieu of speaker's fees for Jacob Martin's presentation in September. The motion was seconded by Johnny. A vote was called and passed by a show of hands.

Darla mentioned that some members are incurring expenses for the society and not turning in receipts for reimbursement. She suggested that these should be turned in to Treasurer, Beth, so that no member takes on these expenses personally.

Larry asked about the party next month at Lucy Melara's home. There was some discussion and Larry will check with Lucy to see if she wants a theme. Alcohol was also discussed and it was determined that members who want alcohol should bring their own. This information will be in the next newsletter so members can decide what dishes they plan to bring. Maps and other details will be provided in the newsletter as well.

Darla then asked that we all be sure to keep her informed prior to sending out group emails or group information. Everyone agreed.

Darla adjourned this meeting at 4:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Donna Williams, Secretary



2019 Membership Dues

Renewals for 2019 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.



Editor's Comments

Deadline for the September Newsletter is August 26, 2019. Thanks.

Cherie Lee, Editor, *TGCFS Newsletter*



Support Our Society Using Amazon Smile

AmazonSmile is a way for you to support our society every time you shop with Amazon.

At smile.amazon.com you will find the same Amazon items that you know and love, with the added bonus that Amazon will donate a portion of the price of eligible purchases to the Texas Gulf Coast Fern Society.

Signing up is easy!

Here's how to signup and shop at AmazonSmile:

1. Visit smile.amazon.com
2. Sign in with your Amazon username and password.
3. Then either go to "Your Account", and under the box "Shopping programs and rentals", select the option to "Change Your Charity"; or you can also hover your mouse over the small arrow next to the charity you are currently supporting and click Change.
4. Type Texas Gulf Coast Fern Society into the search and the click select.
5. Start shopping! You can add a bookmark for smile.amazon.com to make it even easier to return and start your shopping at AmazonSmile.

Upcoming Events in the Houston Area:

Bromeliad Society/Houston Inc.

– www.bromeliadsocietyhouston.org –

Regular meetings are held the third Tuesday of every month at 7:00 PM at the West Gray Multi-Service Center 1475 W. Gray St., Houston, TX 77019

Next regular meeting is:
August 20, 2019

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:
September 5, 2019

**“Mulch – The Secret Weapon of Successful Gardeners”
by John Ferguson**



**Our Presenter
John Ferguson**

A Wonderful Raffle



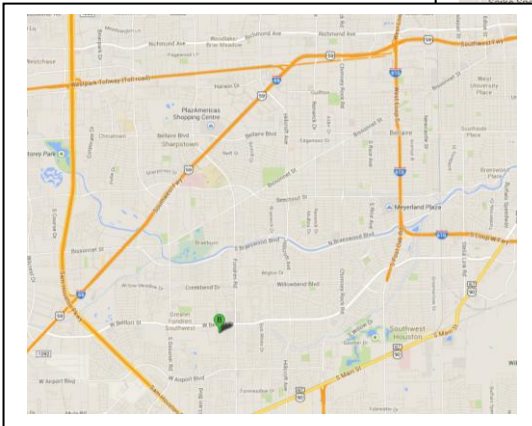
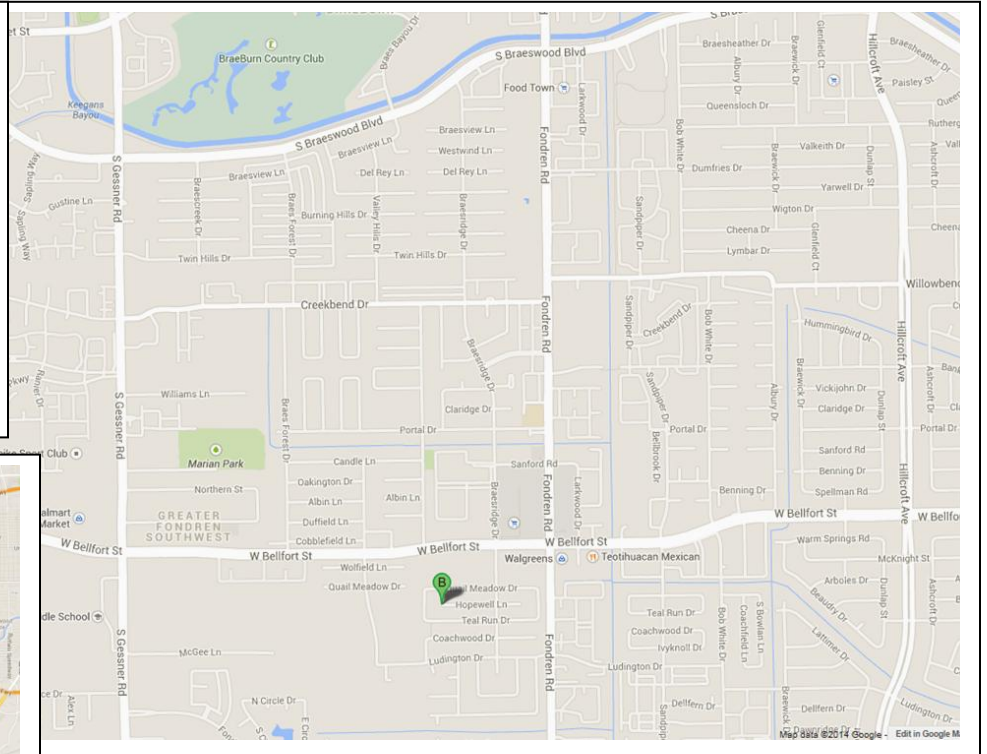
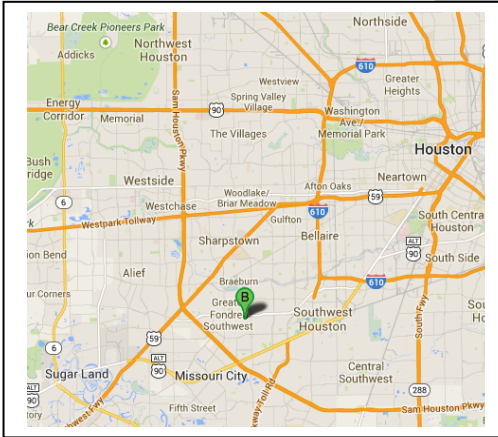
**Exceptional Spread
of Goodies**

Photos by Cherie Lee

The Summer Party at Lucy and Rafael Melara's Home

7722 Hopewell Lane, Houston, TX 77071

713-728-1626 (home) 713-899-0882 (cell)



Southwest Houston

Off of W. Bellfort St.:

Turn south on Braesridge Dr. (just west of Fondren Rd.)

Turn right (west) on Hopewell Lane.
House at end of street.

Off of Frondren Rd.:

Turn west on Ludington Dr. (just south of W. Bellfort St.)

Turn right (north) on Braesridge Dr.
Turn left (west) on Hopewell Lane.
House at end of street.

