



November 2025

Vol. 27 No. 11

<http://www.tgcfernsoc.org>

Our meeting this month will be “blended” by meeting in-person at the Judson Robinson, Jr. Community Center (2020 Hermann Dr., Houston, 77004) and/or via GoToMeeting – member’s choice.

TGCFS MISSION STATEMENT

Organized in 1998 by a group of fern enthusiasts (a.k.a. fern lovers, fernies, pteridologists), to cultivate, foster, and promote interest in ferns and fern allies, the TGC Fern Society presents educational programs including “how to” sessions, presentations by local, national and internationally known fern experts, and field trips and tours-thus providing a forum for fern enthusiasts to visit, learn, share plants, ideas, information, and have a good time. A very informative monthly newsletter is published for members, and special events include presentations to other groups, fundraiser events, and a year-end holiday season party. **Doors open at 1:30pm and regular meetings begin at 2:00pm on the 3rd Sunday of each month at the Judson Robinson Jr. Community Center, 2020 Herman Drive, Houston, TX, 77004. (713) 284-1994.**

A message from our President:

Hi Everyone,

I hope all are getting their plants all ready for winter. They say drier and milder, but we will see! Plan for the worst and hope for the best.

I would like to thank the nominating committee on the slate of officers that was passed unanimously at the meeting. Darla Harris as President, Olivia Carmo as Vice President, Ceil Dow as Treasurer, Carolynne White as Secretary, Christopher Goodgame and Anne Swanson as Board at large. I would like to extend a thank you to Larry Rucker for serving as Treasure for two years!

We have had a change in the November meeting; Jacob Suissa, our scheduled speaker, has had to reschedule until March (we think). So, we will be doing an impromptu meeting on “Fern mounting/pots and thinking outside the box”. Knowing your fern and its growing habit and requirements will help you pick some unique displays. This will be a show and tell, so please join us in the discussion on epiphytic ferns that can be displayed in so many ways! I will be doing this program so please join us!

The December Party will be on the 14th of December at 1p at the Hudnall’s home. All the information will be in the December newsletter. The food signup list will be at this meeting.

The By-Law change that was proposed in the October Newsletter will be voted on at this meeting. The board feels like we should put in a check and balance on the funds of the Society’s Tresurey from a single signature to a two-signature requirement on sums of \$500.00 or

more to protect both the officer and the society. The other signing person per our by-laws is the President. It was also added the Treasurer and the President could not be married/partners. If that occurs, we will need to add a third signer for the term of that year.

The raffles have been wonderful! Thank you to all that is participating, both in bringing raffle items and the ones purchasing a ticket.

Thank you for all the wonderful food we have enjoyed at the meetings.

Take care and see you at the meeting!

Darla



Dues!

Dues for 2026 are currently being collected. If you have any questions about the status of your dues, please contact Ruby Adams at radams13@sbcglobal.net

Your dues may be paid in person at a meeting or sent by mail to: Ruby Adams, 3906 Woodmont Circle, Houston, TX 77045-3514

Checks should be payable to: Texas Gulf Coast Fern Society (TGCFS).



November - December 2025 TGCFS Calendar

Date	Topic	Speaker/Host
11/16/25	Fern Mounting/Potting, and thinking outside the box	Darla Harris
12/14/25	Winter Party (1pm)	Patrick and Diane Hudnell



Door Prize:



Monty McGraw wins the door prize, a *Microsorium* sp.!



Treasurer's Report:

TREASURE REPORT			
Ending balance last statement	Ending balance this statement		
747.46	1,022.46	JULY	
13,482.38	13,482.49		
\$14,229.84	\$14,504.95		
Ending balance last statement	Ending balance this statement		
1,022.46	672.46	AUGUST	
13,482.49	13,482.61		
Ending balance last statement	Ending balance this statement		
672.46	672.46	SEPTEMBER	
13,482.61	13,482.72		
\$14,155.07	\$14,155.18		
Ending balance last statement	Ending balance this statement		
672.46	745.14	OCTOBER	
13,482.72	13,482.83		
\$14,155.18	\$14,227.97		



The African -American Group

A Study of *Platycerium*s

By Darla Harris

Platycerium stemaria

This is a medium to large fern that is native to Africa. It has a very similar habit to *P. elephantotis*. Both ferns for our area seem to prefer to dry out between waterings. Water well and let dry out. Good air circulation is a must.

This is a good pupping fern and has at least four forms, from long fronds to those that get wider, more like a bow tie look.

I would put this fern in the middle range for difficulty growing. It likes high light but not direct sun.

I do not find this fern to be as easy to get in a non-collector world, but it is worth growing when you find it.



Platycerium stemaria



Platycerium stemaria spore patch



P. stemaria pups



P. stemaria, mounted

The October Meeting

October 19, 2025

Texas Gulf Coast Fern Society

The meeting was called to order at 2:18pm at the Judson Robinson Community Center in Hermann Park.

Approximately 20 members were present. The “Go-To Meeting” was streamed to members who could not make it to the in-person meeting.

Business Meeting was held first:

There will be a change in officers at the first of the year.

Vice President: Olivia Carmo

Secretary: Carolynne White

Treasurer: Ceil Dow

Members-at-Large: Anne Swanson & Christopher Goodgame

- Olivia Carmo is studying to get a PhD in Botany. She hopes to get presenters from the University of Houston botany program.
- Larry Smith motioned to accept the slate of officers. Larry Rucker seconded the motion. The motion unanimously passed by all the members present.
- A big thank you to Larry Rucker for being treasurer for the past 2 years.

- We need to discuss a by-law change. We have been the Texas Gulf Coast Fern Society for 28 years. To protect the organization, if a check is written in the amount of \$500 or more then two signatures will be required. However, the caveat to this by-law is that the 2 signatures cannot be from the same household, partnership, or family. We will need to publish this change for one month and then vote on it in the November meeting.
- Diane Hudnall has finished the TGCFS directory. 35 members accidentally got dropped but have now been added as members.
- If anyone needs to get re-imbursed, then see Larry Rucker.

“Hardy Ferns for the Greater Houston Area” presented by Darla Harris.

Darla was asked last year to present a program on fern hardiness. The biggest help to any gardener is to refer to the USDA Hardiness Zone Chart if you are in doubt. If a plant is supposed to be hardy to 28 degrees but the 28 degrees lasts for 3 days, then the fern will have a hard time surviving the cold for that long a time.

Aspleniums:

Japanese Bird's Nest Fern – It is very cold hardy. Hardy to 17 degrees.

Victoria Bird's Nest Fern – Very cold hardy to 17 degrees. Darla's did die when it got down to 7 degrees.

'Leslie' Bird's Nest Fern – is NOT cold hardy. Will die if temperatures get below freezing.

'Nidus' Bird's Nest Fern – Needs to go in when temperatures go down to 40 degrees.

Flowering Ferns (*Anemia*) – are native to Mexico. Darla's lived through a freeze. Yet the Texas native (native to Pecos) did not survive a freeze. Just because it is a Texas native does not mean it can survive a freeze.

East Indian Holly (*Arachniodes simplicior*)– It is a slow grower. If frozen back, it can take years to grow back to its pre-freeze size.

Autumn Fern (*Dryopteris erythrosora*)– This fern withstood 7 degree cold. It is one of the best ferns for cold hardiness.

Fortune Holly (*Cyrtomium fortune*)– is cold hardy.

Question: What can you do to help a fern recover from a hard freeze?

Answer: Let nature take its course. Make sure it is not too wet and to fertilize when leaves start to emerge.

Japanese Holly Fern (*Cyrtomium falcatum*)–not very cold hardy.

Silver Lady Pteris (*Pteris quadriaurita*)–Came up before the Holly Fern even after withstanding 7degree freeze. This was her biggest surprise after the big 7degree freeze.

Cretica (*Pteris cretica*)–Carolynne White has this fern over winter well inside the loop. Darla lives 30 miles away and this fern does not do well outside during the cold winters.

Lace Fern (*Microlepia strigose*)–This fern loves morning sun. Some clumps went down and some clumps in the garden never did.

Korean Rock Fern (*Polystichum luctuosum*)– This little fern never gets taller than 12". Half of the stand was killed when temperatures got down to 7degrees. The other half took a long time to recover.

Dryopteris 'Shiny Shield' (*Dryopteris erythrosora*)– Grows to 3' tall. It did not go down when it was 28 degrees for 3 days.

Coontie (*Zamia integrifolia*)– a Texas native. Goes down in a freeze but comes back once the weather warms up.

Macrothelypteris sp.– Does not like being cold.

Dwarf River Fern (*Thelypteris kunthii*)– Comes back after a freeze.

Leather Leaf Fern (*Rumohra adiantiformis*)– Should be hardy but it freezes down and does not come back.

Hammock Fern (*Blechnum occidentale*)–It is not evergreen and did not come back after a hard freeze.

Sensitive Fern (*Onoclea sensibilis*)– When cold weather arrives, it goes down and comes back in March.

Vegetable Fern (*Diplazium esculentum*)–This fern is quite cold hardy. It likes the soil a bit drier when it gets cold. It is a spreading fern. Very Pretty. It is a statement fern.

Arborvitae Fern (*Selaginella braunii*)–Heat and cold tolerant.

Gold Tip Fern (*Selaginella kraussiana*)– This moss takes full morning sun. It can also take the heat and cold. It is a spreader. Likes to be in the ground.

Selaginella 'Peacock Blue' (*Selaginella uncinata*)–Only a few sprigs of this moss survived the deep freeze.

Southern Maidenhair Fern (*Adiantum capillus-veneris*)– It is just coming back after the heat of the summer. Not all Maiden hair ferns recover after the heat.

Silver Dollar Maidenhair Fern (*Adiantum peruvianum*)– Doesn't like heat or cold.

Rosy Maidenhair (*Adiantum hispidulum*)–Never been hardy for Darla. Does not like our winters.

Walking Maidenhair (*Adiantum caudatum*)–It will fill a flower bed. It is not hardy for Darla but some say it is hardy in Kingwood.

Kangaroo Paw Fern (*Microsorium diversifolium*)–Usually grows in hanging baskets. Can be grown in the ground. It

looks good in a waterfall rocky area. If grown around rocks, the rhizomes will freeze and die.

White Rabbit Foots Fern (*Davallia tyermanii*)- It can be ground in the ground. It is cold hardy to the upper 20's.

Mahogany Fern (*Didymochlaena truncatula*)-It is not cold hardy. Must bring it inside.

Crocodyllus Fern (*Microsorium musifolium*)-It will get leaf damage if it is left out when temperatures get to 40-50 degrees. Great Houseplant.

Blue Star Fern (*Phlebodium aureum*)-The tops of the fronds freeze but it can take a lot.

Macho Fern (*Nephrolepis biserrate*)-Needs protection because it does not snap back if frozen.

Polypodium – The straight leaf variety is not cold hardy.

Blechnum 'Silver Lady' (*Blechnum gibbum*)- This tree fern can take summer heat. It likes morning sun. It is not cold tolerant.

Japanese Tongue Fern (*Pyrrosia lingua*)-takes the summer heat well. It can also take a freeze.

Cooper's Tree Fern (*Sphaeropteris cooperi*)- Can take temperatures down to 20 degrees. Reasonably a fast grower. Below 20 degrees, you must protect the crown.

Tasmanian Tree Fern (*Dicksonia antarctica*)-Goes down to 14 degrees. Very slow grower. Takes summer temperatures pretty well. Needs shade.

Platyceriums have 18 species. Some species cannot go below 60 degrees. Some species cannot go above 80 degrees. Protect with frost cloth and incandescent light bulbs if temperatures get super cold. If temperatures go down in to the teens , they will get burned.

Staghorn Fern (*Platycerium veitchii*)- Is pretty cold hardy.

Discussion:

- A lot of **Wood Ferns** are cold hardy especially Texas native wood ferns.
- Larry Rucker noted that *Arachniodes* went down in 2023 and back twice its original size.
- *Lemmaphyllum* is from Japan and is cold hardy.
- Rabbit's Foot Fern does pretty well but rhizomes will freeze if it touches concrete or is exposed on

top of rocks . White Rabbit Foot Fern are super fast growers.

- Ostrich Ferns cannot take our hot summers.
- Painted Ferns go down in our summers.
- Godzilla Lady Ferns do not go down in our summers.

Respectfully submitted By Ceil Dow



Drynaria rigidula







From the Library:

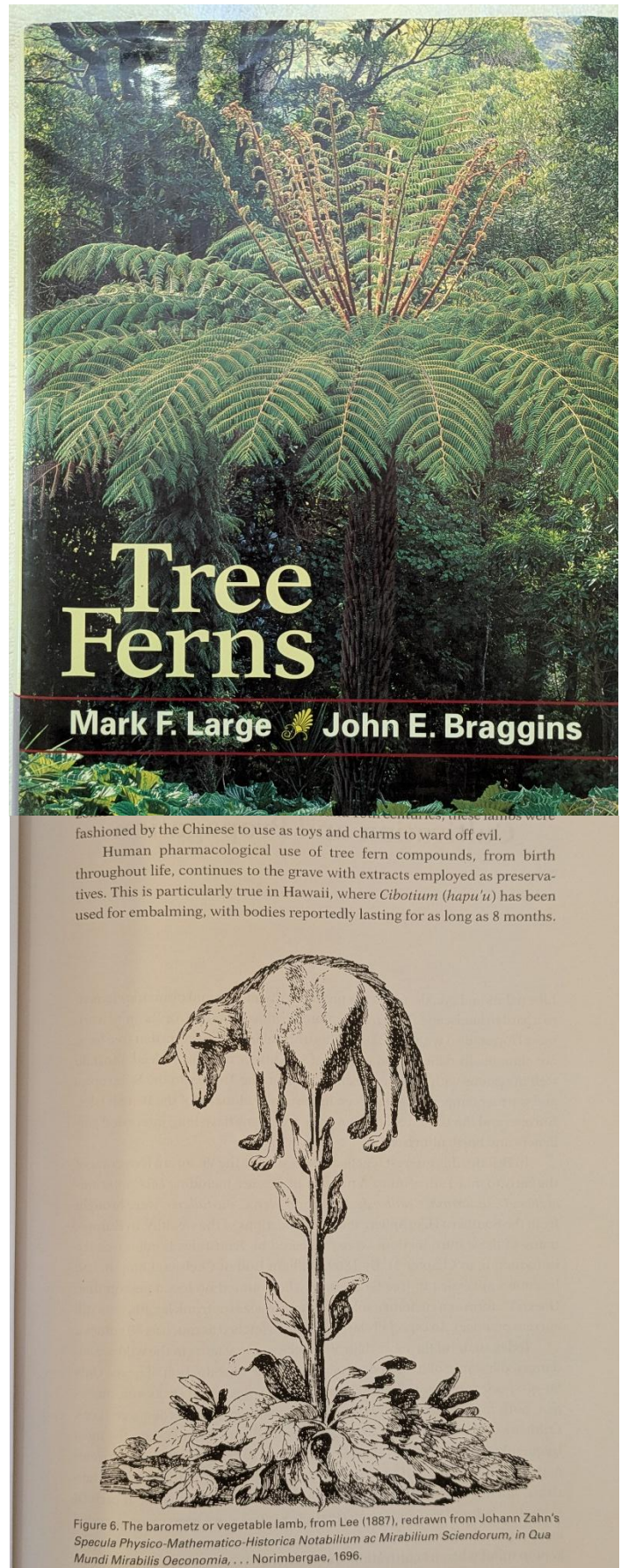
Tree Ferns; by Matt F. Large and John E. Braggins;
Timber Press; 2004; 359 pages; photo illustrations
by **Bob Swanson**

Let's get one thing out of the way first. Chapter Three of this book is a monster. 262 pages of descriptions of every tree fern you could ever think of and hundreds more. That's what you buy this book for.

The first part of the book sets the stage with chapters on habitat, evolution, and conservation, which are interesting. You get a sense of how tree ferns fit into ecosystems and why they've survived for so long. There's also a section on ethnobotany that touches on how humans have used tree ferns over time, which adds a nice cultural layer. The cultivation and propagation chapter is especially handy if you're thinking about growing one yourself—there's solid advice on soil, light, pests, and even how to reproduce them.

In addition to line drawings scattered throughout there are 131 very nice color plates.

So, what odd thing did I learn in "Tree Ferns"? In medieval times many people believed in odd creatures in faraway lands. Some of these were half plant, half animal. One of these was the vegetable lamb. A lamb that grew from the stalk of a fern. In this case, the *Cibotium barometz*. Barometz is a Tartar word for lamb.



fashioned by the Chinese to use as toys and charms to ward off evil.

Human pharmacological use of tree fern compounds, from birth throughout life, continues to the grave with extracts employed as preservatives. This is particularly true in Hawaii, where *Cibotium (hapu'u)* has been used for embalming, with bodies reportedly lasting for as long as 8 months.



Figure 6. The barometz or vegetable lamb, from Lee (1887), redrawn from Johann Zahn's *Specula Physico-Mathematico-Historica Notabilium ac Mirabilium Sciendorum, in Qua Mundi Mirabilis Oeconomia, . . . Norimbergae, 1696.*





2025 Officers and Committees:

President:	Darla Harris
Vice President:	Carolynne White
Secretary:	Ceil Dow
Treasurer:	Larry Rucker
Board Members-at-Large:	Anne Swanson Christopher Goodgame
Education Chair:	Darla Harris
Hospitality Chair:	Anne Swanson
Library:	Fred Robinson
Membership Chair:	Ruby Adams
Newsletter:	Christopher Goodgame
Spore Exchange:	Patrick Hudnall
Ways and Means:	Larry Rucker
Raffle, Store, etc.	Rick Dow
Web Master:	Malcolm McCorquodale
Welcoming at Door:	TBD



The American Fern Society (AFS)

The American Fern Society is over 120 years old. With over 900 members worldwide, it is one of the largest international fern clubs in the world. It was established in 1893 with the objective of fostering interest in ferns and fern allies. It exchanges information and specimens between members via their publications and spore exchange.

AFS non-professional membership (\$20) includes access to the Spore Exchange and subscription to the Fiddlehead Forum.

Professional membership (\$40) includes the benefits above plus access to the American Fern Journal.

Please note that donations to the AFS are not tax deductible.

To find out more about the Society and/or join, visit <https://www.amerfernsoc.org/>