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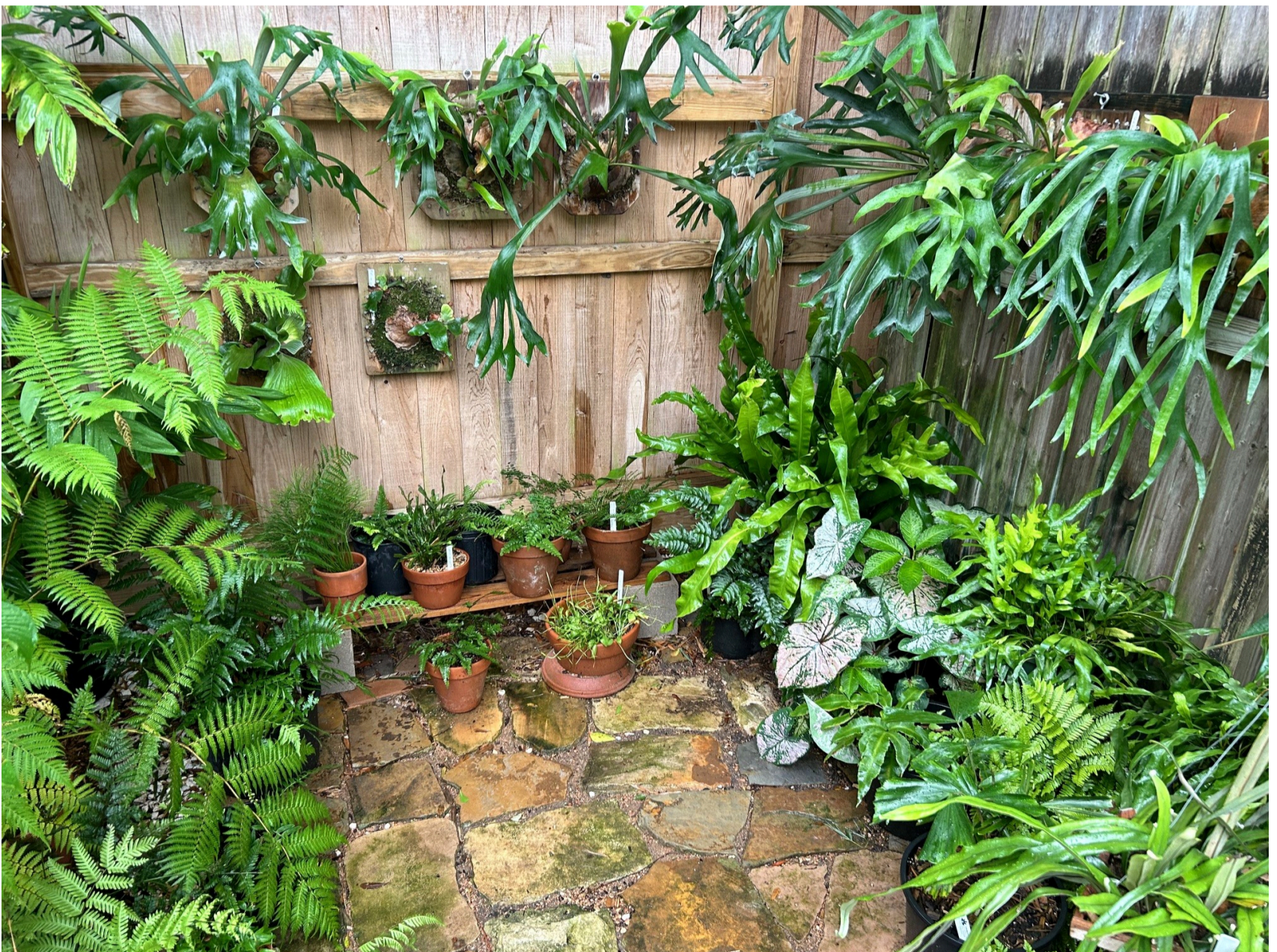
# The Texas Gulf Coast Fern Society

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Newsletter

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EDITION 05 | YEAR 2026





<https://tgcfersoc.org/>

2026 Officers and Committees:

- President: Darla Harris
- Vice President: Larry Rucker
- Secretary: Carolynne White
- Treasurer: Ceil Dow
- 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

Request for Photos!

Howdy everyone,  
 This is a quick note from the editor that as Spring continues and our plants begin to show real growth, I would love it if some photos of your plants would be sent my way so I can place them in the newsletter.  
 Having photos from our members' gardens would be a great addition to all months of our newsletter and it could be a great way to strike up a conversation at next month's meeting about that cool-looking fern you saw.  
 It also would be really helpful to have more contributions.  
 I made this request last month and if anyone sees their ferns having a good day, I'd love it if you would be willing to share a photo of them. I can't do this all by my lonesome and I know there are times where you walk by and admire your ferns.

## A Message from our President

Hi Everyone,

We would like to welcome all our new members that have joined over the last couple of months and encourage each of you to join our field trip this weekend!!

Spring has been lovely so far, with nice temperatures and enough rain to help nature out! This is by far my favorite time of the year!

We are going to get to enjoy the beauty of nature for this month's meeting with our Field Trip to Mercer Botanical Gardens. The gardens have been undergoing a lot of change since our last field trip there a couple of years ago. Nature has allowed them to move forward again, putting in new plants and trees and lots of ferns. Over the past few years with the floods and hard freezes they have spent a great deal of time just in recovery mode, but now they are moving forward and boy have they!!

We will meet at the Front Gate to enter the gardens together at 10:15am. For those that are not familiar with the Gardens, we will have a complete map later on in the newsletter to show where it is located and then where to meet. Jacob Martin will be guiding our trip, and he knows this garden inside out. He's been at the gardens for around 10 years now and is the Greenhouse manager and horticulturist. He has spoken to our group on several occasions and is a great speaker and extremely knowledgeable. This will be a lot of fun and time to get to know your fellow members even better. Normally some will go have lunch after the tour, so you might want to plan on that too.

If you have any questions, please give me a call/text – Darla: 281-733-5564

Next month in June will be our summer party and get-together. Malcolm McCorquodale has volunteered to host our party this year. He's inside the loop just off Westheimer. A map will be in next month's newsletter. Keep in mind that Father's Day is on our normal meeting date so we will be meeting on the following Sunday June 28th at 1P. So, plan on being there. He grows lots of different ferns, orchids, bromeliads, and a lot of other plants.

July we will be meeting back at the Juddson Robinson Community Center like normal at 2p. The meeting will be given by Ceil Dow and she will teach you how to have fun with ferns for indoor use by making coasters, with pressed fern and resin. The once-a-year fun topic will not disappoint.

See you at Mercer!!

*Darla*

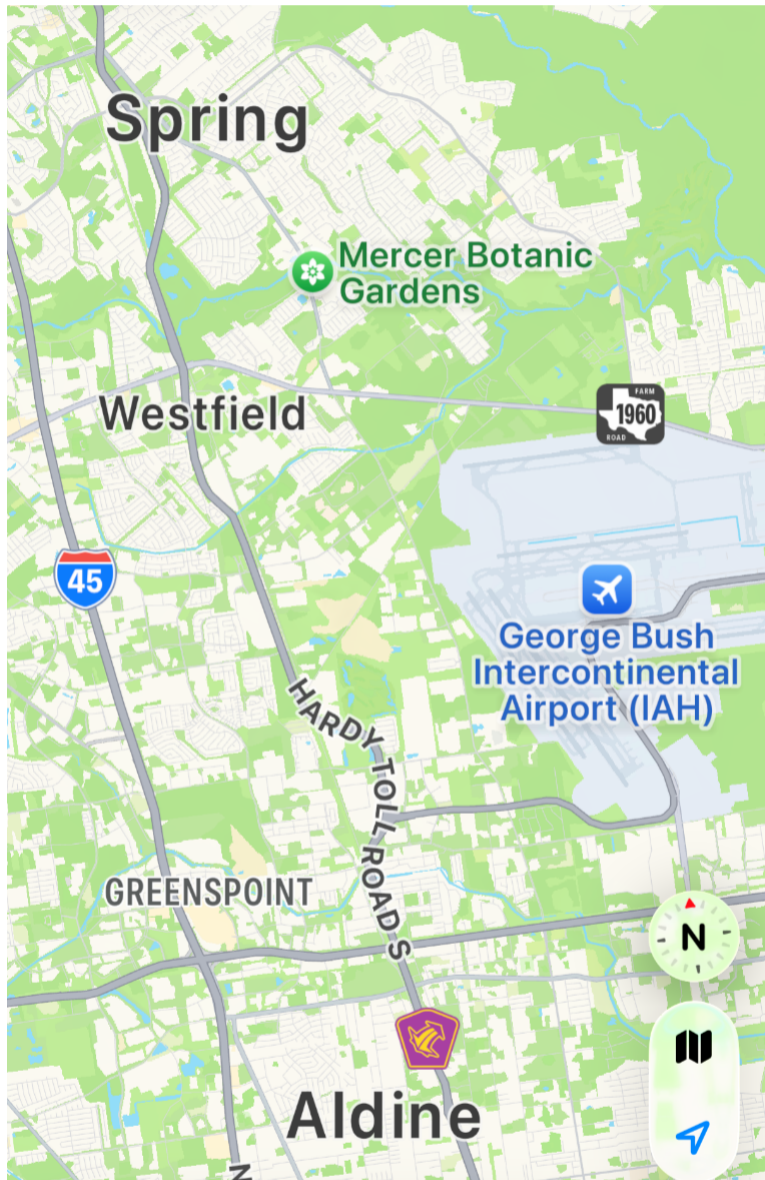
# Mercer Botanic Gardens Field Trip

22306 Aldine Westfield Road

Humble, Texas 77338

10:15am Meet Time

Darla's Cell: (281) 733-5564



# A Study of Platycteriums

## The Malayan-Asiatic Group

### *Platycterium ridleyi*

*Platycterium ridleyi* is a small-to-medium sized fern that grows in a more upright position like sitting on the upper side of the limb, not hanging off the side of the trunk. It also requires high light - not prefers it. It must have high light to live.

This is not considered an easy fern to grow but is sure worth the effort. It is a target for bugs, and I don't mean just scale. The grasshoppers love the new fronds as they emerge, and the shields must be really delicious. Your baby can look incredible today and well eaten tomorrow if you are not careful. Spring outdoors is challenging; however, the natural light is really what it wants.

The fronds set very upright and have deep grooves; that is how it waters itself, not from the base. The shield frond is tight against the tree so it does not fall off which makes watering from the bottom a challenge. It does like to get watered but can be over-watered very easily. The way the shield frond grows does not allow for much air circulation, so it does not dry out from the wind or exposure very much. So, you must learn your plant and adapt to it as it grows.

It does not like to be over potted. It does not like much moss. It will rot out if you get too much moss on the shields.

This is one of the most unique staghorn ferns in the way it grows and looks. It is a favorite of mine even though I have killed a lot of them learning how to take care of them. I will caution; you on mail order and especially out of the country. All the good reliable growers in Thailand will not ship these do to being brittle and no light sometimes for several days. The dipping process for bugs is hard on them. So just be aware.

This should be on the wish list at some point of your growing *Platycteriums*.





Pacific Maidenhair



Adiantum tenerum 'Peacock'



Adiantum hispidulum

### Minutes for the Texas Gulf Coast Fern Society Meeting April 19th, 2026

The meeting was called to order at 2:05pm at the Justin Robinson Community Center in Hermann Park.

Approximately 16 members were present. One person attended the "Go to Meeting" that was streamed to members who could not make it to the in-person meeting.

Darla Harris announced that the TGCFS membership booth needed additional members to man the table for the PlantCon to be held on April 25-26 held at NRG arena. There will be 500 vendors this year providing an array of unusual plants.

The next plant show where we will need volunteers is at the membership table at the Bulb Mart in October.

The May meeting will be held at Mercer Botanic Gardens & Arboretum in Spring. Jacob Martin, Greenhouse Manager, will lead the tour starting in the greenhouse complex and finishing with the gardens.

The summer party takes place in June. It will be held the weekend before or the weekend after Father's Day. We are still looking for someone to volunteer as hosts.

In July, Ceil & Rick Dow will present a craft project. We will make resin coasters with fern fronds similar to the fern resin tray that was made two years ago.

**"Maidenhair Ferns for the Greater Houston Area"** presented by *Darla Harris*

The most important ingredient in growing Maidenhair Ferns is to provide bright light. They often go dormant in the heat of the summer. If they do not get high humidity, then they will crinkle up & go dormant.

**Adiantum peruvianum (Silver Dollar)** – is the only fern in this genus that like acidic soil. This fern does not like temperatures below 40 degrees. It is native to Peru. Darla had her fern situated in her hot tub area. It went dormant for two years but then unexpectedly came back. It likes peat moss as its base soil because it likes acidity. It produces very large sori.

**Adiantum tenerum 'Ka Dong Dong'** – It comes from Asia. Very large leaves that look like Ginkgo tree leaves. Black stems.

**Question:** What potting soil should one use for this variety?

**Answer:** Use tons of perlite. A ratio of 60% perlite helps the soil drain well. Tall pots work well as well with Maidenheads. Put large rocks in the lower pot to help with drainage. One can also use Styrofoam peanuts in the bottom of the pot. Coffee filters or a screen can be used to cover the hole in the bottom of the pot. Darla waters then waits until these ferns dry out before watering again. Water once a week in summer unless it is super hot. Only when temperatures get very hot will she water twice a week.

**Adiantum formosum (Giant Maidenhair)** is a large, hardy New Zealand native fern with delicate, triangular fronds on black stems that grows up to 3'-4' tall. It thrives in sheltered, moist, shady woodland areas, spreading via creeping rhizomes.

**Adiantum raddianum** – is one of the easiest Maidenheads to grow in the garden or in a pot. They grow very well in our area in the ground. It is very cold hardy and comes back easily after dormancy. It likes alkaline soil. It has very tiny leaves.

**Adiantum micropylum 'Little Lady'** - is a compact, delicate maidenhair fern featuring tiny, ruffled, bright green fronds on wiry black stems. Height gets to 12"-15" tall but stems fall over when it gets to full height.

Mercer grows **Adiantum micropylum** outside. If it gets too much sun, it will go dormant. If grown under an awning, it does like the stagnant air circulation. It appreciates lots of air flow.

**Adiantum raddianum ultragracillimum, "Dwarf Maidenhair Fern"**– does not fall over as easily as Adiantum micropylum 'Little Lady'.

**Adiantum capillus-veneris (Southern Maidenhair Fern)** – Grows very easily in the ground. The fern spreads by short, creeping rhizomes and prefers moist, humus-rich, alkaline soil in bright shade.

Planting Maidenheads around sidewalks, steppingstones, cement ponds, cement birdbaths can help the plant draw out the cement's alkalinity.

**Adiantum raddianum 'Snowflake' (Variegated Maidenhair Ferns)** - This stunning cultivar of A. raddianum actually has variegated foliage! As the fronds harden off and mature, they begin to show striations of white.

**Adiantum caudatum (Walking Maidenhair Ferns)** - are delicate, tropical ferns known for their ability to propagate by "walking" or making new plantlets where the long frond tips touch the soil. They grow well in high humidity with bright indirect light and grow well in hanging baskets or shady gardens.

**Adiantum hispidulum (The Rosy Maidenhair Fern)** - is a delicate-looking fern featuring distinct hand-shaped fronds that emerge with a pinkish-red, "rosy" hue that matures to a deep green.

**Adiantum raddianum 'Fritz Luthii'** – has distinct, large triangular shaped blade. The pinnae are larger and more deeply lobed than on the cultivars.

**Adiantum tenerum 'Peacock'** – is a small fern with the new fronds emerge a deep pink then slowly change to green.

PROBLEMS GROWING MAIDENHAIR FERNS: People tend to grow them in water instead of NEXT to the water. Also, some people like to grow them in bathrooms but bathrooms still lack the humidity & bright light that they prefer.

Respectfully submitted By Ceil Dow



*Adiantum macrophyllum*



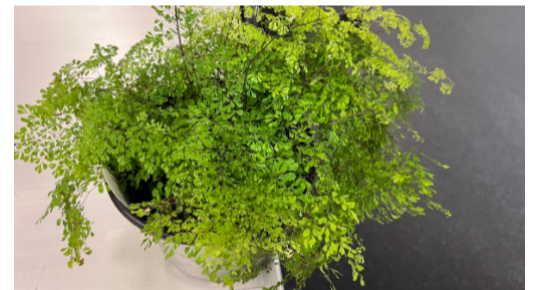
*Adiantum formosum*



*Adiantum peruvianum* (Silver Dollar)



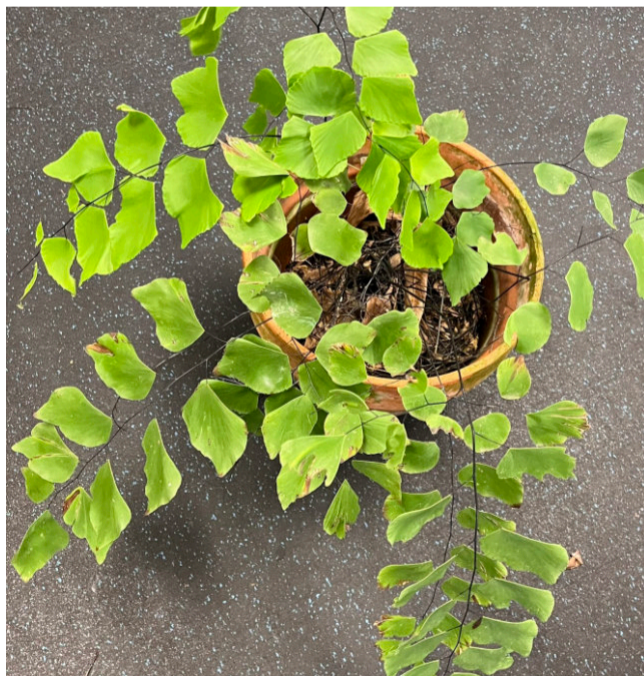
*Adiantum tenerum* 'Ka Dong Dong'



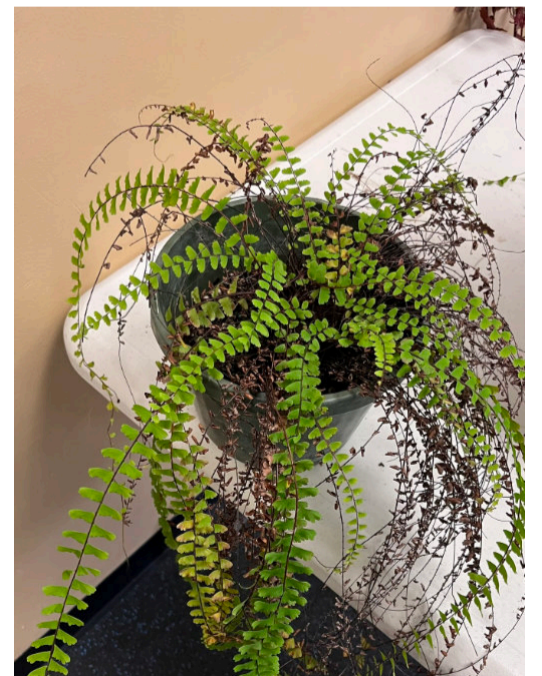
*Adiantum raddianum ultragracillimum*



*Adiantum tenerum* 'Ka Dong Dong'



*Adiantum peruvianum* (Silver Dollar)



*Adiantum caudatum* (Walking Maidenhair)

## Door Prize



Ceil Dow wins the door prize, an *Adiantum raddianum* 'Fragrans'



A great photo from David Morris

# 2026 Calendar

Date	Topic	Speaker
May 17 <sup>th</sup>	Field Trip - Mercer Botanical Gardens & Greenhouses	Jacob Martin
June 28 <sup>th</sup>	Social	Malcolm McCorquodale
July 19 <sup>th</sup>	Project - Coasters to Match our Serving Trays	Ceil Dow
August 16 <sup>th</sup>	Tree Ferns	Dan Yansura
September 20 <sup>th</sup>		
October 18 <sup>th</sup>		
November 15 <sup>th</sup>	Ferns of Jalisco	Adam Black
December	Social - Date TBA	



## From the Library:

*Gardening With Ferns*; by Rex E. Mabe; Greensboro, NC: Potpourri Press; 1973; 46 pages; illustrations by Rebecca Gabriel; softcover  
By **Bob Swanson**

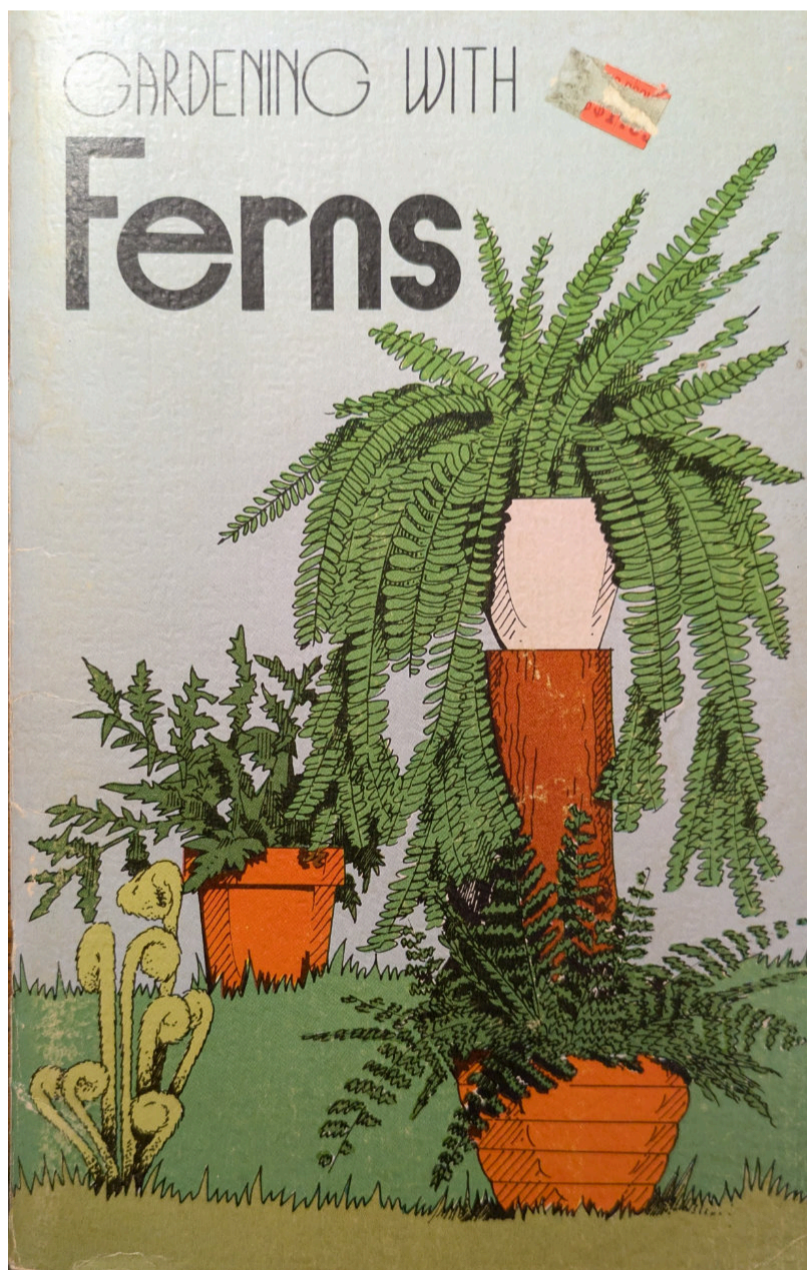
It has been a busy and complicated month, so I read a very short book for this issue's review.

"Gardening with Ferns" is only 46 pages long. It has a very period 1970s feel to it. The focus is on indoor ferns and how to care for them.

As usual for a general fern book, it starts with a general section on the care of ferns. More space than usual is devoted to humidity and keeping it up in heated or cooled apartments.

The second section is descriptions of selected fern. These are the common ferns of the era. Not surprisingly, there's no attempt at comprehensive coverage in this short work. What is different here is the focus on Boston fern variations. Fully eleven pages of this little book are spent on those.

I bought this one cheap at a used book store. If you stumble across it, it's worth adding to your library, even just for the vintage cover.



# Texas Gulf Coast Fern Society 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 with previous issues available online at <https://tgcfersoc.org>, 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.**



*Athyrium niponicum* 'Godzilla'

## 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/>



## 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](mailto: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).



*Acrostichum danaeifolium*