



Texas Gulf Coast Fern Society

January 2007

Vol. 9, No. 01

<http://www.tgcfersoc.org>

Next Regular Meeting: Sunday, January 21, at 2:00 p. m. – Houston Garden Center in Hermann Park, 1500 Hermann Drive, Houston, TX 77044 – Phone: (713) 529-3960

A message from our President:

Hi Everyone and "Happy New Year"!! I hope all of you have a *wonderful* year to come.

We had a Great Party at Laura Lee's in December. The day could not have been better if we had put in a direct order. The food and drink was wonderful! (Needless to say our members know how to put on a spread). The best part as always was getting to know each other better. We have some really great members and it is so nice to just talk together. To those of you unable to attend, please be sure that you were missed. It's not the same without each of you.

I'm so excited to talk about our upcoming involvement in the Houston Orchid Society's Plant Show. **The dates on this are March 16, 17 & 18, 2007.** We had great participation from all our members last year. We will need your help again this year. So please get your show plants ready. Our Treasurer has informed me it's time to bring in some income so this year we are planning on having a couple of sales tables as well. If you have some extra ferns to donate, we need them. We will need help at both the display area (for membership drive) and the sales area. I will have a sign up sheet at the next two meetings, so sign up early to get the times that work best for you. If you will be able to help but cannot attend our meetings, please let me know by e-mail or telephone. **We need everyone's help with plants and/or time!**

This month Larry has planned another hands-on project for us. Our plant to be mounted on a plaque is an *Asplenium nidus Victoria*, a curly edged birds-nest fern (see below for more on this fern). But even if you joined in last time, this will be a different fern than before. Larry would also like those that still have their birds-nest from the last time, to bring it and show everyone how well they have done. This is always a great learning and fun experience. We also would like any of you who have a cordless drill to bring them charged up and fitted with a "phillips head" screw driver. You will be taught how to place the screws for tying on your fern. This is a member's exercise and any non member will be charged \$10 to participate.

Dues are due! Mary McConnell is our new Membership chairperson, so dues and any update on your address, telephone numbers, email, etc. should be given to her as soon as possible. She will be forwarding this information to our *Newsletter* editor, Paul Geiger, for correct mailing and to Laura Lee who will be putting our membership book together for us this year.

Laura has been e-mailing everyone for whom she had an email address, requesting information updates along with a picture. For our family members, a couples picture would be nice. If you don't have a picture, Laura is planning on bringing her camera to the meeting and getting a digital shot. This is a great idea. Sometimes we know people by face but forget the name. We would like to have this done by the March meeting for an early distribution of the directory.

Note to Board Members: We will be having a short Board of Directors meeting at 1 pm to discuss the 2007 budget.

I'm looking forward to seeing everyone on the 21st,
Darla



DUES ARE DUE

If you haven't paid your dues for 2007 yet, this is a reminder – **please don't forget!**

Dues amounts:

Individual: \$10.00

Family: \$15.00

Student: \$5.00

Our Treasurer will be available to collect them at the next meeting or you may mail your payment to:

Mary McConnell
6218 Wister Lane
Houston, TX 77008

Please make your checks payable to Texas Gulf Coast Fern Society or simply TGCFs.

Members: - Spread the word – encourage someone you know to visit us - we always have room for more!



Officers and Committees:

President:	Darla Harris
Vice President:	Larry Rucker
Secretary:	Patsy Geiger
Treasurer:	Susan Peacock
Board Members at Large:	Ted Richardson & Cecil Strange, Jr.
Membership Chair:	Mary McConnell
Newsletter:	Paul Geiger
Library:	Patrick Hudnall
Raffles:	Jean Keiser
Hospitality:	Jessica Sheldon
Welcoming at Door:	Emma Lee Payne



**Texas Gulf Coast Fern Society
Statement of Income & Expenses
January 01, 2006 to December 31, 2006**

INCOME

Membership Dues:	\$605.00
Sale of Plants:	\$101.00
Raffle Income:	\$495.00
Sale of Books:	\$25.00
Interest Income:	\$27.15
Outstanding Checks:	\$0.00
Total:	\$1,253.15

EXPENSES

Program Expenses -- Materials:	\$1,070.16
Program Expenses -- Lecturer:	\$433.00
Member Education:	\$20.00
Field Trip Expense:	\$60.00
Newsletter:	\$144.20
Cost of Plants Sold:	\$15.00
Garden Center Room Fee:	\$20.30
Bank Charges:	\$0.00
Total:	\$1,762.66

CHECKING ACCOUNT

Cash Balance, January 01, 2006:	\$5,476.84
Cash Balance, December 31, 2006:	\$4,845.13
2006 Net Income:	(\$631.71)



Meeting Refreshments

Jessica Sheldon, our Hospitality Chairperson wants to remind everyone that we now have several categories of refreshments each month to encourage more participation from our members. The categories are: **Drinks** (sodas, ice tea, water); **Snacks** (chips, dips, crackers, cookies); **Fruit or Veggie Tray** (seasonal foods); **Desserts** (bought or yum, homemade); **Service Ware** (plates, cups, plastic ware, napkins). And for those who would like to express their culinary talents, think outside the usual and surprise us with your own creation!

January Refreshments:

Refreshments for our next meeting will be furnished by:

Lee Murdock
Gary Wooldridge
Judith Neufeld
Laura Lee

Come out and enjoy some really good and delicious food!



Society Tee Shirts

We're making an order for TGCFs tee shirts. If you don't have one and intend to work at the Orchid Society Show they would be nice to have and wear. Maybe you have one and would like another color or need a replacement – whatever the reason now is a good time to order. Call Darla at 281-733-5564 or send an email to: darla@fernplantation.com to place your order for color, size and quantity.



Library

We encourage you to take advantage of the great resource of information available in our library. At each meeting there are take-home sheets that contain a brief review of available books. Also at each meeting is a wide variety of books and videos available for immediate checkout.

Don't forget to visit our web site (see link in header, page 1) and click on **Library** to see the current list of books available. There you will see some pictures of the books we have and links to reviews at Amazon and elsewhere.



Asplenium nidus victoria

More on the plant we will be mounting this month:

See also pictures on a following page.

Asplenium (A·splen'·i·um) || < Greek splēn for spleen || is the *genus* of over 650 ferns. The name derived from a Greek physician that thought that the ferns of this genus cured diseases of the spleen -

Nidus (ni'·dus) || Latin word for nest || is the *species* name.

Victoria is the *variety*.

Native to the Tropics of the eastern hemisphere, mostly epiphytic growing high in the tree tops. Looking like a giant bird's nest. This is a spectacular fern in part because of its glossy green leaves, that have a neat rosette spreading of fronds, making it funnel shaped.

Giant Bird's-nest ferns can have fronds more than 6 feet long. Being from the Tropics it is a tender fern. It grows best at 60F or warmer, though my personal plants have been down to 32F and I have not seen any damage. This fern is slow growing and likes lots of water, but well drained moss or soil. If given too little water the fronds will wilt down, but if watered soon after that I have seen no resulting damage.

This fern has a simple entire leaf with an erect rhizome. The rachis is prominent and shiny black. When you cut the stipe you will find two vascular bundles. The sori linear making a herringbone pattern forming parallel rows on either side of the rachis. Spores are numerous and propagation is relatively easy.

Pests: this Bird's-nest is susceptible to snails and slugs on young plants and tender new growth. Scale, both brown and the tiny white ones are a problem. I have found mayonnaise spread over the leaves front and back with a soft cloth, will kill the scale, and will keep them wiped away.

These plants do well in hanging baskets and on plaques. Planting in a pot is possible (I've done it as shown in the pictures on the following page) but is the most difficult way to grow these ferns because you have to make sure you do not over pot them. That can result in over watering and that will kill a birds-nest quicker than anything.

- Darla



New! – Theme Crossword Puzzle

This month we have a crossword puzzle (page 4) that you should be able to solve with the information above or with a teeny bit of research – e.g., Barbara H's book. I hope you enjoy this feature.

- Darla



Pictures of *Asplenium nidus*:



Spore Pattern
Photo by: Darla Harris



Two Vascular Bundles
Photo by Darla Harris



Asplenium nidus in Clay Pot – It can be done, but be careful
Photo by Darla Harris

