



Texas Gulf Coast Fern Society

February 2008

Vol. 10, No. 02

<http://www.tgcfersoc.org>

Next Regular Meeting: Sunday, February 17, 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.

We have good news!! Laura Lee has accepted the open position of *Society* Vice President. She will be ably assisted by Jessica who will head up her work committee. Let's all congratulate Laura and Jessica and give them any support they may need. I know they will work hard for us.

This month Donna and Monty have planned another hands-on project for us. They will be leading a workshop on fabricating a lighted plant shelf. **The Society will furnish all materials so it is very important that we know who will be in attendance - we don't want to over-buy! Note: we will supply materials on a one-per-family basis. If you are planning on being present at this meeting and want to make a plant shelf, please call Donna at: 281-376-2923 or e-mail her at: donnamcg@swbell.net.**

Reminder: Dues are due! Please make sure Mary McConnell has your dues and any update to your address, telephone numbers, email, etc. 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 again this year. This year you will have an option on hardware: Book form or CD - Please be sure to let Laura know which you prefer.

I'm looking forward to seeing you all on Sunday.

Darla



DUES

If you haven't paid your dues for 2008 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.



Officers and Committees:

President:	Darla Harris
Vice President:	Laura Lee
Secretary:	Terri Dolney
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



Meeting Refreshments

Jessica Sheldon, our Hospitality Chairperson is always looking for member volunteers to provide meeting refreshments or utensils and wants to remind everyone that we have several categories to choose from. The categories are: **Drinks** (sodas, ice tea, and 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!

February Refreshments:

Refreshments for our next meeting will be furnished as follows:

Midge Gorman: Drinks

Darla: Snacks and Veggie or Fruit Tray

Cherie and Frank Lee: Dessert and Service ware

Come out and enjoy some really good and delicious food!



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.



Members Talk about Ferns:

An Overview of the Polypodiums

Submitted by Donna McGraw

Polypodium (pāl'i pō' dē um) is just one genus out of 20 that are currently recognized as members of the Polypodiaceae family. Others you might be familiar with include Aglaomorpha (ag' lä o mōr' fea), Goniophlebium (go nē ō flē' bē um), Microsorium (mī' krō sōr' um), Phlebodium (flē bō' dē um), Platycerium (plat' ə si' rē um) and Pyrrosia (pi rō' zhə). Currently there are about 125 to 150 recognized species in this genus, most of which are found in the Americas. Most of the species are epiphytes in nature but adapt to pot or garden culture as long as good drainage is provided. Some tell-tale characteristics that, taken together, set Polypodiums apart from other ferns are the round, yellow sporangia (the dots on the back of leaves that produce the spore) with no indusial (covering), leaves that fall off cleanly when old, two rows of fronds on the top side of the long creeping rhizome, and fronds that are pinnatifid (very deeply lobed but not divided into leaflets) to once pinnate (divided into leaflets on either side of the rachis [the central stem running the length of the leaf itself]).

Here in the Houston area we are probably most familiar with the Resurrection fern – *Polypodium polypodioides* (pāl'i pō' dē oy' dəs). This species is one of the smallest in the genus.



Picture courtesy of Sue Olsen - 'Encyclopedia of Garden Ferns'

Some of our members grow (or are at least familiar with) the *Polypodium formosanum* (fōr mō' san um), a very pretty fern with distinctive green rhizomes. This fern is best grown in a hanging basket so that its pretty frosted green "feet" can be seen. Don't be surprised when this fern loses its leaves suddenly – it's deciduous as are several of the North American and European Polypodiums. I saw some small plants of *P. formosanum* at *Another Place in Time* earlier this month.



Picture from the American Fern Society website

British hobbyists have kept alive some of the wild and crazy cultivars developed in the Victorian era. The picture below was taken from Martin Rickard's 'Pathfinder's Guide to Garden Ferns'. The book is available from our library – check it out for more incredible pictures. These cultivars are hardy and at least some of them may grow for us. I'm going to try to find some of these plants to purchase – I'll keep you posted

