



# Texas Gulf Coast Fern Society

April 2011

Vol. 13, No. 4

<http://www.tgcfersoc.org>

**Next Regular Meeting: Sunday, April 17, at 10:00 a. m. – Little Thicket Nature Sanctuary,  
2001 FM 945 South, Cleveland, TX**

## A message from our President:

Hi Everyone,

Even with our parking problem, we had a good turnout for our February meeting and the food...outstanding!!! Thank you ALL!!!

We did have some confusion over the Field Trip as to whether it is on or off.... **It is ON!!!** We are off to the Piney Woods. I do hope we have a good turnout to see nature at its 'Ferny Best'. It should be a treat for any plant lover and there are provisions for those who cannot walk long distances. So, if you would like to go but have a concern, please give me a call so we can make sure all who want to participate will get the most out of the trip. Read more on the details in Jessica's article on the trip.

We are still looking into the parking issue at the Garden Center and trying to come up with a good solution for all. Our membership hails from all over the Houston metro area and we have tried to keep our meeting location as centralized as we can. There are some parking alternatives later in the newsletter, like at the museum and the little side spot some of us have parked at the last couple of meetings. Please keep your Pink 2011 parking pass on your windshield to be able to use these benefits. For those who missed the meeting, the parking passes will be available at the field trip and the May meeting. Another thought that was discussed to alleviate the parking problem was to change the meeting location during the Herman Park busy season. Mercer Arboretum was suggested as an alternative location since it does not have a parking issue and this would split the gas burden for members by swapping sides of town for the meeting. We have not checked with Mercer to see if this is a viable plan but we will keep everyone posted on all that we learn about this parking issue.

I would like to thank Donna McGraw for heading up the 'Fern Expert' participation at the Mercer Arboretum March Mart this year. She was able to hand out Society information so let's hope this will stir more interest in ferns and new membership for the Society. Remember Mercer has asked our Society to start participating in the Fern Garden and that will really enable us to show off to the public just how special ferns are! We are working with them, and now that March Mart is over for this year, they will be setting up their agenda. We will keep you informed as plans develop.

Marcia Livingston was elected to be Board Member at Large, replacing Sharon Banister who had to resign due to personal issues. Thank you Sharon for your participation on the Board over the last several years and welcome Marcia!

Jean Keiser is heading up a new article in our Newsletter on 'Garden Tips'. We all have run across something that was so simple or worked so well that you wonder why you didn't think of it before! Please share these tips with our membership via Jean. She needs your tips. You can either write it up yourself and email it to her or send her a quick note or give her a call and she will write it up for you!

Larry Rucker and Patrick Hudnall have volunteered to write some advice and discovery type articles for the Newsletter, sharing their wealth of knowledge. We would also like to hear from the rest of our members who have their own wealth of knowledge from which we can all learn. Our Newsletter editor would love to have an index of informational articles to include on a monthly basis in the Newsletter.

Jean Richardson has graciously agreed to head up our Hospitality Committee for this year, so please let her know your specialties and if you are someone she can call, on short notice, if we have a last minute change. It is wonderful to share this bounty at the meetings but we don't want it to be a burden on anyone either. We have half the year left to fill up with treats, so pick your month(s) and dish(s) and let her know. (Thank you Jennie.)

My Garden is calling....so that's all folks!!!

See you soon and always take care!!

Darla



## A message from our Vice President:

Furtity Farer Fere Fiddlehead Fickle Foray April, 2011

The above is not some ancient, foreign, or even made up language, it is our April meeting. "Do tell", you say. "Do read on", I say.

There is an air of mystery concerning our April meeting. First clue, it is not at the Garden Center. That much I'm sure you gathered if you paid attention at all during the March meeting, read your Newsletter from last month, or read your

emails. If you haven't done any of those, you can redeem yourself now, read on...

Furtivity: On April 17<sup>th</sup>, we will gather at the gate (sounds like a Gospel song, given it is Palm Sunday I think I like the idea, maybe we will sing as we Farer) of the Little Thicket Nature Sanctuary. I have never been there. I close my eyes and imagine 655 acres of wilderness with trails, flowing creeks through quiet forests of huge magnolias, towering pines, holly and dogwood, which should now be in bloom along with bluebells. Among all this, surely a picture worthy of the cover of Texas Magazine! Who will take such a picture? I'm going to bring my camera.

Farer: We will travel to this wooded Shangri-La by car. Please see the map in this Newsletter to navigate your way out of the city and into the land that Houston forgot.

Fere: Those of you who want to meet at the Conroe Outlet Mall and then caravan the rest of the way together, we will meet in front of Subway at 8:45 am. Get caffeinated and sugared up: Starbuck's, Hostess HoHo's, or Shipley's apple fritter (my personal favorite when ample amounts of sugar are required) ought to do it. Subway will not be open, but there are restrooms in case the coffee has to, well you know, make room for more. We will leave the Mall no later than 9:00 am.

Fiddlehead: We are so fortunate to have in our Society someone who is intimately involved with the trails and ferns of the Little Thicket. Walt Hesson is one smart cookie and he will guide us through the woodlands, creeks and dells (do we have dells in Texas?) in search of Fiddleheads and Ferns. Bring your guide books, loupes, and to the tune of Julie Andrew's "My Favorite Things" from "The Sound of Music", we will look for our favorite things: "Ophioglossum crotalophroides, Botrychium dissectum, Lygodium japonicum, and Asplenium platyneuron, these are a few of my favorite ferns.....la la la". I won't sing the whole song, luckily for you. There will be a handout of the ferns available. There is also a wonderful book written by Charles Peterson and Larry Brown aptly titled "Vascular Flora of the Little Thicket Nature Sanctuary, San Jacinto County, Texas". They are Walt's friends and might join us on our trek.

I can't sing Walt's accolades, there are too many. Walt, you might be too shy to sing, but know we all benefit from your knowledge and willingness to share this experience with us.

Fickle Foray: These two words have to go together to make sense for the puzzle.

Are you curious as to the cryptic message for the article? Since you read through the article, good for you, here it is:

The future (Furtivity) traveler (Farer) with companion (Fere) for ferns (fiddleheads) on safari (Fickle Foray- a no raiding, no plundering, no collecting expedition).

Congratulations! You are on your way to Fern Shangri-La.

Reminder: There will be a tractor trailer to ride on for those who otherwise might not be able to walk the trails. Those walking, wear long pants, hiking boots or sturdy shoes. Bring water. There is **No** running water at the Little Thicket (there are rest rooms though). Bring your own lunch. And bring your sense of Adventure!

Submitted by: Jessica Sheldon, Vice President



### April Field Trip:

We are privileged to have Walter E. Hesson to guide us on our adventure through the Little Thicket. Walt is a retired Engineering /Construction Project Manager and was President of Texas Gulf Coast Fern Society for two years from inception of the Society. He has also been a member of the American Fern Society since 1991. Walt has made many presentations to nature groups, garden clubs, etc and we are very lucky to have him as a member of our Society and our guide for this foray.

- When: April 17<sup>th</sup>, 2011  
Where: Little Thicket Nature Sanctuary- see map, about a 1 ½ hour drive north of Houston  
Wear: Hiking boots or sturdy walking shoes, long trousers - hiking 2-3 miles, plan to have a tractor trailer to ride on if needed  
Bring: Drinking water, brown bag lunch, maybe insect repellent.  
Facilities: Rest rooms are available, but there is no running water.  
Rules: **NO COLLECTING**  
Time: 10 am to 3 or 4 pm

If you would like to caravan as a group to the Little Thicket, be at the Conroe Outlet Mall in front of the Subway by 8:45 am. We will leave there no later than 9:00 am.

Submitted by: Jessica Sheldon, Vice President



### Up and Coming Attractions (some details still being worked out)

- May 15: Workshop vertical gardens  
June 18: **Saturday**, John Ferguson on the Soil Food Web and why feeding the soil is feeding your ferns.  
July 17: Open  
August 21: Summer Party at Mary McConnell's home  
Sept 18: Annual Plant Exchange - get those plants growing and potted before the Sept meeting



### 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, there 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.



**Statement of Income & Expenses  
January 1, 2011 to March 31, 2011**

**INCOME**

Membership dues	\$ 220.00
Raffle Income	135.00
Plant Re-imburement	539.00
Miscellaneous	91.00
Petty Cash	172.29
Bank Interest	<u>0.69</u>
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$1,157.29</b>

**EXPENSES**

Cost of Plants	\$ 437.97
Project Supplies	0.00
Lecturer's Fees	50.00
Lecturer's Gifts	0.00
Miscellaneous	<u>481.79</u>
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$ 949.75</b>

<b>Bank Balance 12-31-2010:</b>	<b>\$5,516.13</b>
<b>Bank Balance 3-31-2011:</b>	<b>\$5,877.46</b>
<b>Petty Cash 3-31-2011:</b>	<b>\$ 81.90</b>
<b>Outstanding Checks</b>	<b>\$ -203.40</b>
<b>Net Profit 3-31-2011:</b>	<b>\$ 239.33</b>

Submitted by: Terri Dolney, Treasurer



**2011 Dues:**

2011 dues are now being accepted. If you haven't paid for 2011, please complete the membership form and return it with your payment to our Treasurer Terri Dolney or our Membership Chair Mary McConnell at our next meeting or mail it to:

Mary McConnell  
6218 Wister Lane  
Houston, TX 77008

**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.



**2011 Officers and Committees:**

President:	Darla Harris
Vice President:	Jessica Sheldon
Secretary:	Cherie Lee
Treasurer:	Terri Dolney
Board Members at Large:	Marcia Livingston, Donna McGraw, and Lulu Leonard
Membership Chair:	Mary McConnell
Ways and Means:	Ted Richardson
Special Projects:	Larry Rucker
Web Master:	Malcolm McCorquodale
Newsletter:	Cherie Lee
Library:	Frank Lee
Raffles:	Larry Rucker
Spore Exchange:	Patrick Hudnall
Hospitality:	Jean Richardson
Welcoming at Door:	Beth Ayer and Marcia Livingston



**Refreshments:**

Refreshments for March were generously furnished by:

Drinks:	Mary McConnell
Savory:	Faye Stansberry
Fruits/Veggies:	Jessica Sheldon
Desserts:	Cherie Lee
Service ware:	Cecil Strange

Refreshments for May will be generously furnished by:

Drinks:	Cecil Strange
Savory:	Noreen Tolman
Fruits/Veggies:	Terri Dolney
Desserts:	Mary McConnell
Service ware:	Martha Burg

Please let Jean Richardson know if you can help with the refreshments for future months: [tedandjean@aol.com](mailto:tedandjean@aol.com). Come out and enjoy some really delicious food!



**Editor's Comments:**

As most of you are aware, the Newsletter is posted on the TGCFS website at the same time as it is mailed out to the members. In an effort to save money on mailings, it has been suggested that email notification be sent that the Newsletter has been posted on the website instead of mailing the Newsletter. Members can then visit the website to view the Newsletter and print it for themselves if they wish. **If you have not done so already, please let me know if you are willing to accept the email notification and forgo the mailed Newsletter.** You can contact me by calling 281-999-8368, emailing [cherie.d.lee@sbcglobal.net](mailto:cherie.d.lee@sbcglobal.net), or let me know at the next meeting. If I don't hear from you, you will continue to receive the Newsletter as usual. Thanks.

**Deadline for the May Newsletter is April 29, 2011.**

Cherie Lee, Editor, *TGCFS Newsletter*



## Resurrection Fern

**Family:** [Polypodiaceae](#)

**Genus:** [Pleopeltis](#) plee-oh-PEL-tiss

**Species:** [polypodioides](#) pol-ee-pod-ee-OY-deez

The commonly called Resurrection fern is a Texas native epiphyte. This is one of those truly fun ferns. I was looking up at my Walnut tree and all the branches are covered with these seemingly dead ferns. I went and got my camera for this article because it was supposed to rain the first part of the week. I thought this would make a good before and after shot. We did not get any rain though, so I had to cheat and turn on the sprinkler.

This should be one of the many ferns we see on our field trip to the Little Thicket.

*Epiphyte is like an air plant, it grows on something (a tree) but does not get any nutrients from the host. So it does not harm the tree it only uses the tree to live on, not to live.*

Many of us remember this fern as *Polypodium polypodioides*. That was so much fun to say!!

This polypodium is extremely drought tolerant, it will turn brown and curl up its leaves and retreats into a little cluster. When the rain comes, it is able to rehydrate itself by the underside of the leaf sucking in the water, swelling, and then folding back out to burst open. The green chlorophyll in the leaves rejuvenates and you have a beautiful carpet of ferns growing up the trunk of a big hardwood tree and down its branches. The resurrection process takes about 24 hours. Here in East Texas, it is very common to see Spanish moss growing in the same tree. This makes for a very beautiful combination of plants growing in the forest.

Experiments have shown that the fern can lose up to 97 percent of its water or be dormant for 100 years and still be resurrected with a good soaking from Mother Nature. With our humidity, how could it ever lose that last 3 percent of water when we have almost liquid air?

How to grow this fern outside of nature? That is a good question. I have not had the best luck with this, but then I have not tried very hard since we have them in most of our trees here at the house. When we have lost limbs off a tree that have the fern all over it, I will bring it up to the house and enjoy it, but it seems to only last about a year for me when left on the limb and not doing anything to change the growing medium.

While I was researching for this article, I found information on how to grow it as a house plant. It said to use a clay pot and very coarse sand, no soil and no sphagnum moss. Water it in the Spring and Fall and let it dry out over Summer and Winter. It did suggest high humidity and we know with our air conditioners we lose that in the house, so place in a saucer with pebbles to keep the fern from losing 100 percent of its moisture. This might be something we try for a work shop.... I have the plants.

Did you know that this fern was taken into space as part of a NASA experiment to watch its resurrection in zero gravity?

Pretty special!!!



Submitted by: Darla Harris



## April Book Review

“Ferns for American Gardens” by John Mickel

Written by the curator of ferns at the New York Botanical Gardens, this reference describes more than 400 types of ferns and many subspecies, varieties, and cultivars. Each entry explains the habit, frond size and color, hardiness zones, ease of cultivation, and includes suggestions for the best use of the plant in the garden. Soil preparation, garden maintenance, and propagating ferns are also discussed.

Submitted by: Frank Lee



### Texas Gulf Coast Fern Society Board of Directors Meeting March 20, 2011

Meeting held at the Houston Garden Center, Houston, Texas with President Darla Harris presiding and calling the meeting to order at 1:50 PM.

**Members Present:** Darla Harris – President  
Jessica Sheldon-Vice President  
Cherie Lee – Secretary  
Terri Dolney – Treasurer  
Lulu Leonard

**Board Vacancy:** Darla Harris stated that Board Member at Large Sharon Banister had resigned from the Board due to personal reasons. Darla suggested that the Board appoint Marsha Livingston to replace Sharon pending approval by the membership at the March meeting. The Board members present unanimously agreed.

**Plant Purchases:** Jessica Sheldon discussed the cost to purchase and ship the plants for the members to purchase at the meetings. She suggested a sale price per plant of \$5 to cover the costs. At that price, 40 plants must be sold to break even. If only 30 plants are sold, the Society will lose \$50. If all the plants are sold, the Society would make \$100 to use on future plants, projects, etc. The Board members approved the proposal.

Meeting adjourned at 1:55 PM.

Submitted by: Cherie Lee, Secretary



### Minutes of General Meeting, March 20, 2011 Texas Gulf Coast Fern Society

A regular monthly meeting was held at the Houston Garden Center, Houston, Texas. The meeting commenced at 2:05 PM with President, Darla Harris, calling the meeting to order.

**General Meeting:** Darla Harris informed the membership that Sharon Banister had resigned from the Board due to personal reasons and that the Board had selected Marcia Livingston to

replace her as Board Member at Large. No other nominations were made from the floor. Jean Kaiser motioned to approve Marcia as Board Member at Large, Cecil Strange seconded the motion, and the membership unanimously approved the motion.

**Parking at the Garden Center:** Darla Harris attended the Federation Meeting held Saturday, March 19<sup>th</sup>, where the parking situation at the Garden Center was discussed. The only suggestions given by the Garden Center to help alleviate the problem were to change the meeting time (possibly to Sunday AM before the crowds arrive at the Park) or hire security to reserve parking places costing between \$80 and \$300 a meeting depending on hours worked.

Darla stated that several other meeting locations have been or are being considered. The Robertson facility where the January meeting was held was checked into but would cost \$60 a meeting for a room half the size as the one in we had in January plus the Society would have to pay for security. Malcolm McCorquodale stated that members may be able to use the HAL-PC facilities. He will check on it. Mercer Arboretum was also discussed as an option but concern was raised that the Society lost about half its membership when it was tried in the past. Perhaps this could be an option during busy Park months.

In the meantime, if parking is not available in front of the Garden Center, you should be able to park in the Health Museum garage behind the Garden Center for \$3 (go inside the museum to pay) or in the Garden Center’s employee parking area west of the building. Entrance to this parking is opposite the Museum of Natural History’s garage entrance. See the map on page 8 of this Newsletter.

**Upcoming Programs/Meetings:** VP Jessica Sheldon announced that the April meeting would be a field trip to the Little Thicket in East Texas. Information and logistics on the trip are included in the Newsletter.

The June meeting is currently scheduled for Sunday, June 19<sup>th</sup>, Father’s Day. Jessica is investigating having the meeting on Saturday, June 18<sup>th</sup> instead to eliminate the conflict and also since the speaker she is considering is not available on Sundays.

**Sale or Auction:** Darla stated that a sale or auction is still being considered but would probably not be until first quarter 2012 at the earliest. Possible timing could be holding it with the Spring Home Show.

**Program:** Darla Harris and Larry Rucker presented a program and workshop on bird’s nest ferns. Darla showed photographs of beautiful ferns from her trip to Pohnpei. Both Darla and Larry brought numerous varieties of bird’s nest ferns to show and Larry supervised a workshop on repotting our newly acquired “Chrissy” crested bird’s nest fern. Ted Richardson prepared a plant data sheet for members to add to their notebooks.

**Plant Raffle:** Larry Rucker ran the plant raffle with many plants finding new homes.

Meeting was adjourned at 4:15 PM.

Submitted by: Cherie Lee, Secretary



March 20, 2011 TGCFS Meeting  
Bird's Nest Ferns



Larry Rucker and Darla Harris





**Upcoming Events – Other Societies in Houston Area:**

If you have the time and would like to expand your horticultural activities, take note of the following announcements by the Houston Bromeliad and Orchid Societies.



Chrissy



Lulu Leonard potting up Chrissy

**Bromeliad Society/Houston Inc.**  
[www.bromeliadsocietyhouston.org](http://www.bromeliadsocietyhouston.org)

Regular meetings are held the third Tuesday of every month at 7:30 PM at the Houston Garden Center.  
Next regular meeting is April 19, 2011.

**BS/H Show and Sale**  
**“Ruby Jubilee”**  
Mercer Arboretum  
April 29<sup>th</sup> through May 1<sup>st</sup>

Plant Sales	Friday	noon to 5 PM
	Saturday	9 AM to 5 PM
	Sunday	11 AM to 4 PM
Show	Saturday	2 PM to 5 PM
	Sunday	11 AM to 4 PM

**The Houston Orchid Society, Inc.**  
[www.houstonorchidsociety.org](http://www.houstonorchidsociety.org)

Regular meetings are held the first Thursday of every month at 7:30 PM at the Houston Garden Center.  
Next regular meetings are April 7, 2011 & May 5, 2011.

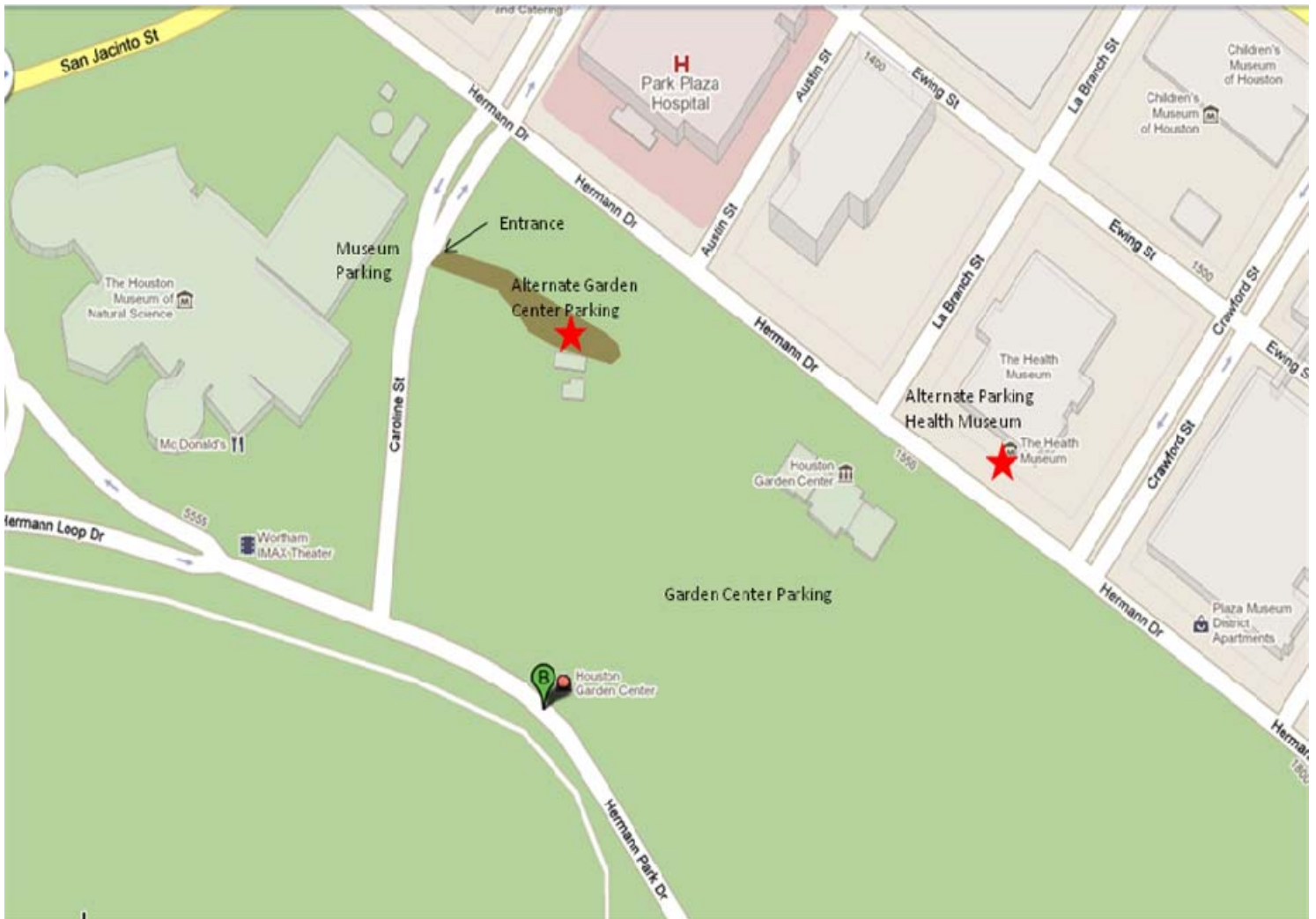


**The Houston Orchid Society**  
**2011 Show and Sale**

**Houston Museum of Natural Science Main lobby**  
**5555 Hermann Park Drive**  
**Houston, Texas 77030**

**April 16 - 17, 2011**  
**Saturday 9AM to 5PM      Sunday 9AM to 4PM**

## Alternate Parking for the Garden Center



If parking is not available in front of the Garden Center, you should be able to park in the Health Museum garage behind the Garden Center for \$3 (go inside the museum to pay) or in the Garden Center's employee parking area west of the building. Entrance to this parking area is opposite the Museum of Natural History's garage entrance.



Texas Gulf Coast Fern Society

Fern Foray @ Little Thicket Nature Sanctuary

April 17, 2011

Fern Checklist

*Ophioglossum crotalophroides*



Bulbous Adder's – tongue



*Botrychium dissectum*

Cutleaf-Grape Fern



*Lygodium japonicum*

Japanese Climbing Fern

*Osmunda Cinnamomea*



Cinnamon Fern

*Osmunda regalis*

Royal Fern



*Pleopeltis polypodioides*



Resurrection Fern

*Polystichum acrostichoides*

Christmas Fern



*Pteridium aquilinum*



Bracken Fern

*Thelypteris kunthii*

Southern Shield Fern



*Asplenium platyneuron*



Ebony Spleenwort

*Athyrium filix-femina*

Lady Fern



*Woodwardia aerolata*



Netted Chain Fern

*Onoclea sensibilis*

Sensitive Fern



*Woodwardia virginica*



Virginia Chain Fern

## April Field Trip to the Little Thicket Nature Sanctuary (LTNS)

2001 FM 945 South, Cleveland, Texas



### Directions to the sanctuary

(GPS at entrance gate: N 30° 32.141' W 95° 13.564')

#### Route 1 — US 59 via Cleveland

Take US Highway 59 north to Cleveland; turn left on FM 2025; go five miles and turn left on FM 945. Go 11 miles to the entrance on your right.

#### Route 2 — I-45 via Willis

Take I-45 north to Willis; turn right on FM 1097 to SH 150; go approx. 9 miles to FM 945 South; turn right. Go two miles to the entrance on your left.

#### Route 3 — I-45 via New Waverly

Take I-45 north to New Waverly; turn right on SH 150; go approx. 17 miles to FM 945 South; proceed as above.