



March 2012

Vol. 14, No. 3

<http://www.tgcfersoc.org>

**Next Regular Meeting: Sunday, March 18, 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,

I'm still in Chicago. It snowed last night and was in the low 20s when I left for work at 3:30am. It has been nice weather really for Chicago in the winter this year with most nights around freezing and the days between freezing and the low 50s. They say they can't remember when they have had such a nice mild winter. We have told them it is due to all the Texans who had to move to Chicago because of the Continental/United merger, they brought all our Texas warmth with them.

Unfortunately, I'm going to miss our March meeting as well. My job will still keep me out of town. This means I will not be able to get the next Osmunda fern to you for the plant of the month and we will have to wait until May to study the Osmunda family. I'm sorry about that. This should be my last out of town work schedule for some time. Joe is really happy about that, he is ready for me to be home.

I understand the talk that Joan gave on the horsetail ferns was excellent. I'm so sorry I missed it and the project that is planned for March should be a great follow up to last month's information. Again I'm sorry I'm going to miss it...

I will be seeing you on the field trip in April and then at the May meeting.

Take care and happy planting... it looks like spring is here for Houston.

Darla



A message from our Vice President:

The Ides of March and Other Legends

March 2012

Our meeting this month falls after the Ides of March and Saint Patrick's Day, however, we will make our own legend this month. Maybe not as grand as the historic date when Caesar was assassinated or as long celebrated as Saint Patrick is worldwide, but in our own quiet way we will create the legend of the "Bogged down Dish".

What seems as an oxymoron, bog - generally an area of wetland consisting of decomposing plant material and dish - being a closed bowl capable of holding the contents therein, when thrown together, is the perfect combination for this month's plant.

Last month, Joan Hudson enlightened us on Equisetum with her journey of the fern through the ages, uses, and sexual reproduction. Now we will have our own Equisetum to plant, in a dish or in the ground.

A dish garden is not very different from the terrarium in that there is no drain hole for excess water to escape. Thankfully our dwarf curly horsetail grows in moist to wet conditions and is well suited to our bog dish garden. A fern of legendary longevity, how long can you keep yours alive?

Bring your own dish or bowl to the meeting and for a boggy condition of wet planting medium, there will be baggies of sand and peat moss to purchase at a moderate price (I'll do the math after I buy the sand and peat moss). I will also have some soil in baggies for a moist, not wet, growing preference. Plants will be \$5.00 each.

Want to dress up your dish garden? I am an urban hunter looking for good bargains and I usually come up with some treasures, in this case little black frogs. I'll bring some.

April will be our Spring Field Trip to Huntsville. We will meet our host Joan Hudson at the Sam Houston Museum for a light lunch and tour of the ferns growing there. We will then car pool to the Sam Houston University field station with shovel and big plastic bag to (legally) dig up Equisetum growing in profusion!!! There will also be other ferns to find and admire with eye and camera. We will end our outing with a stop off for an ice cream, or is it yogurt? Either way, it is a nice ending to our day of foraging. More info about the field trip will be available at the March meeting.

Submitted by: Jessica Sheldon, Vice President



Up and Coming Attractions:

March 18: "Bog Dish Garden"
presented by Jessica Sheldon

April 15: "Spring Field Trip to Huntsville"
presented by Joan Hudson

May 20: "Osmunda - Hardy Ferns"
presented by Darla Harris

Submitted by: Jessica Sheldon, Vice President



2012 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: Noreen Tolman
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
Society Store: Larry Rucker
Hospitality: Jeanie Richardson
Welcoming at Door: Beth Ayer and Marcia Livingston



2012 Dues:

2012 dues are now being accepted. Please complete the membership form and return it with your payment to our Treasurer Terri Dolney or our Membership Chair Noreen Tolman at our next meeting or mail it to:

Noreen Tolman
15915 Pasadero
Houston, TX 77083

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.

Refreshments

Refreshments for February were generously furnished by:

Drinks: Ted Richardson
Savory: Jessica Sheldon
Fruits: Jeanie Richardson
Veggies: Noreen Tolman & Ken Gardner
Desserts: Larry Rucker
Service ware: Society

Refreshments for March will be generously furnished by:

Drinks: Patrick Hudnall
Savory: Terry Dolney
Fruits: Cecil Strange
Veggies: Donna McGraw
Desserts: Anne Hicks
Service ware: Society

Please let Jeanie Richardson know if you can help with the refreshments for future months. Email to: tedandjean@aol.com. Come out and enjoy some really delicious food!



Need Supplies?

Larry Rucker will be organizing a spring order of supplies through the Society Store so take an inventory, make your shopping (wish) list, and get with Larry at the next 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. If there is a particular book you would like to check out at the meeting, please contact Frank Lee at f.a.lee@sbcglobal.net or 281-999-8368 prior to the meeting to make sure it will be available.



**Texas Gulf Coast Fern Society
General Meeting – February 19, 2012**

A regular monthly meeting was held at the Houston Garden Center, Houston, Texas. The meeting commenced at 2:00 PM with Vice-President, Jessica Sheldon calling the meeting to order.

General: Jessica Sheldon led the discussion.

March Mart – Don't forget to sign up on the Mercer Arboretum website if you want to volunteer at March Mart.

Callie's Garden Circle – Discussion was held on joining the Calloway's and Cornelius Nursery program. This would require holding one meeting a year at one of the Cornelius Nurseries in Houston. The members present voted to join the program.

Parking – Jean Keiser informed the members that police could be hired to reserve a parking area in front of the Garden Center for our meetings at a cost of \$25 per hour. Approximately 4 hours would be required at each meeting. Patrick Hudnall will research options.

Nametags – Don't forget to bring your nametags to the meetings. An incentive program for remembering your nametag is being considered.

Library: Chair Frank Lee reminded all that the Library was open for checking out books and to please return books at the next meeting. Also, if there is a specific book you are interested in checking out, please let him know prior to the meeting so he can make sure to bring the book. Check the website for a listing of books. Not all library books are brought to every meeting.

Hospitality: Chair Jeanie Richardson reminded everyone to please sign up to bring refreshments for upcoming months. Members were reminded that each member should be prepared to bring refreshments at least 2-3 times per year.

Upcoming Programs: March program will be constructing a bog dish garden. Please bring a waterproof dish in which to plant your horsetail, the plant of the month. April will be our Spring Field Trip to Huntsville where Joan Hudson will lead us around the Sam Houston University field station hunting for horsetails.

Program: Joan Hudson presented a very interesting program on the history and reproductive methods of Equisetum. She showed fossils, pointed out the various parts of the plants using three horsetails belonging to Darla Harris, and discussed the various methods of reproduction for the plant.

Plant Raffle: Larry Rucker ran the plant raffle for five Equisetum "scouring rush" donated by Joan Hudson.

Attendance: 25 Members
2 Guests – Janice McGraw
Kathy Fellencamp

Meeting was adjourned at 4:00 PM.

Submitted by: Cherie Lee, Secretary



March Book Review

"Ferns of the Tropics" by Wee Yeow Chin

This book offers an introduction to the structure and life cycle of ferns, with clear illustrations and photographs. It also includes a step-by-step explanation of how to propagate and cultivate ferns successfully in a range of climates. It explores the habitats of ferns and gives a sampling of the range of fern species found in the tropics. Each species is illustrated in color and extended captions contain a wealth of information about the plant, including habitat, origin, usage, and tips on cultivation. There is also a chapter on the economic uses of ferns. It not only discusses the use of horsetail ferns for scouring and polishing and for clarinet reeds as Joan Hudson mentioned in her program last month, but it also tells of using Equisetum giganteum to brew a tea for treating kidney diseases in Costa Rica and Equisetum hyemale to treat the liver and the eye in China and to treat bruises, fractures and arthritis in Indonesia.

Submitted by: Frank Lee



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, 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 April Newsletter is March 30, 2012.

Cherie Lee, Editor, *TGCFs Newsletter*



Mercer Arboretum and Botanic Gardens
22306 Aldine Westfield Road
Humble, Texas 77338-1071

2012 March Mart Plant Sale

Friday and Saturday,
March 23 and 24

Friday: 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Saturday: 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Members Only Plant Sale
Thursday, March 22
VIP Shoppers: 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.
The Mercer Society Members: 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.



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.

Bromeliad Society/Houston Inc.
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 March 20, 2012

Spring Sale - March 24, 2012

9 AM – 3 PM

**Gethsemane First United Methodist Church
6856 Bellaire Blvd., Houston 77074
(east of the SW Freeway)**

The Houston Orchid Society, Inc.
www.houstonorchidsociety.org

Regular meetings are held the first Thursday of every month at 7:30 PM at the Houston Garden Center.

Next regular meeting is April 5, 2012.



*The Houston Orchid Society
2012 Show and Sale*

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

**April 21-22, 2012
Saturday 9AM to 5PM Sunday 9AM to 4PM**

**"Equisetum"
presented by Joan Hudson**

