



September 2020

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<http://www.tgcfersoc.org>

Due to COVID-19 restrictions our September meeting will be another “virtual” one – 2pm CDT, Sunday

A message from our President:

Hi Everyone,

We have had an exciting year this year!! I don't know about the rest of you but one year of this is going to do me a lifetime. The virtual meetings have been working out pretty well, but I know I'm ready to see each of you in person! Let's hope that happens soon.

Our speaker this month will be Garrie Landry who has had a long and distinguished career with ferns. Garrie grows ferns too, which not all botanists do. At the present time he is a Botanist for McIlhenny Company, Avery Island in Louisiana. He will be talking to us on some of the '*Rarest Fern and Fern Allies of Louisiana*'. It will be interesting to see what is growing in that neighboring state. A brief bio of Garrie follows this article.

It's that time of the year again when we choose a new slate of officers. I have appointed a chair, but we need to elect two helpers to complete this committee. The slate of officers for the 2021 year for our fern society will then be presented at the October meeting and voted on. So please take time to think about how you can help our society move forward this next year with some new people and new ideas.

Our speaker from Thailand will be rescheduled. Our October meeting will still be Jeff Benca from Washington State. He had planned to come to speak to us, but as we know, plans have gotten changed up a bit this year, so it will also be a virtual meeting. He will talk to us on Lycophytes, specifically huperzia the terrestrial type.

The November meeting will be announced next month. It does not look like we will be having our December Party either unless something changes between now and then. We will keep you posted.

I hope more will join in us with these virtual meetings. I'm here to help you and we can do a practice run so all can attend. So please get with me. You can join on a smart phone or your home computer, it really is easy once you do it a couple times. Call me if you'd like: 281-733-5564.

Let's hope the weather cools off some and the hurricanes stay out to sea! Happy planting!

Darla

Background Information on Garrie Landry:

1974-80 Research Associate. Teaching Assistant, Dept. of Botany, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, LA 1975-76 Field Assistant to Dr. Warren H. Wagner Jr., Department of Botany, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI. 1978-79 (Summer employment) Field assistant in wetland delineation, for Environmental Science and Engineers, Gainesville, FL. 1980-81 Environmental Quality Specialist, Jefferson Parish Development & Quality Control Department, Metairie, LA 1985,86,88 Summer field Assistant to Dr. John Mickel, New York Botanical Garden, in Trinidad, West Indies. 1981-2016 Instructor, Dept. of Biology, University of Louisiana, Lafayette, LA 2016-present Botanist for McIlhenny Company Avery Island, LA



2020 Membership Dues

Renewals for 2020 membership are still being accepted. Thank you to all of you who have already renewed. If you have not renewed, please complete the membership form and mail it with your payment and any changes noted to our Membership Chair, Beth Ayer:

Beth Ayer
5815 Portal Drive
Houston, TX 77096

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.



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/>



2020 Officers and Committees:

President:	Darla Harris
Vice Presidents:	Patrick Hudnall
Secretary:	Donna Williams
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Education Chair:	Darla Harris
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Library:	Ruth McDonald
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Newsletter:	Paul Geiger
Spore Exchange:	Patrick Hudnall
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Platycterium Hybrid P. ellisii x elephantotis 'Ellisotis' By: Darla Harris

First of all what is a hybrid? With *Platycterium*, the staghorn ferns, there are 18 species of them. When you make a cross between species you have a hybrid. The interesting thing about the staghorn hybrids is that they are not sterile like most fern hybrids turn out to be. So these will grow from spore and depending on the cross, most will put off pups too.

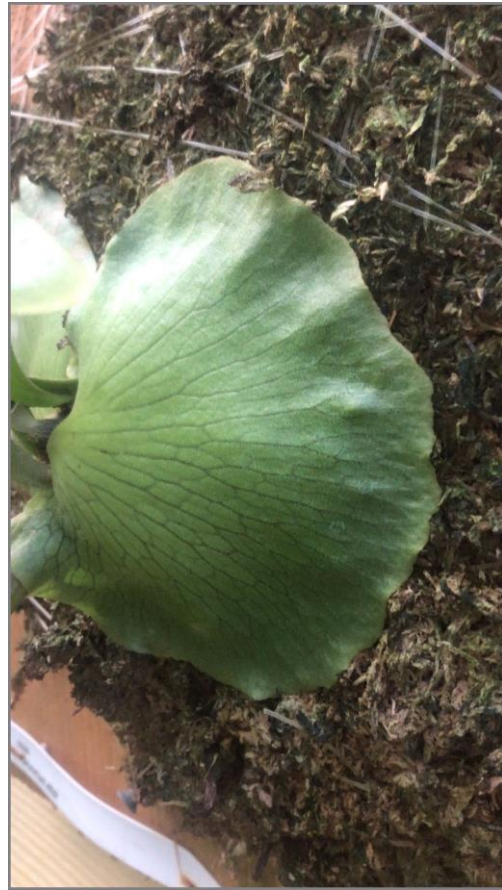
When you see a name with two species names and an ' X ' between them that shows you who the two parents were that were crossed to make the new hybrid. So in this case it was *P. ellisii* and *P. elephantotis*.

P. ellisii is a species fern from the east coast of Madagascar and is closely related to *P. alcicone african*. With a cupping type shield frond and the fertile fronds that are more triangular and then fork into two parts. The interesting thing about the shield frond is it overlaps but with a big gap. It is thought the reason was to keep itself from getting over watered, it does not store water behind it well at all. They feel it does collect a useable amount of moisture through the humidity.

P. ellisii is a rare fern in the trade and most find it to be a little difficult to grow. It does often put on the discoloration on its leaves that seems to just be a natural occurrence for it, it is not a fungus. It does well with high light and moist conditions. I have not found it that difficult due to the high humidity that we have here in the Houston area. It does pup well and grows pretty easily from spore.



P ellisii



P ellisii – Shield frond

P elephantotis is from west coast of Africa. Known for its entire frond margin that does not fork at all. It has raised veins and white hairs (not white scale) covering it adaxial or top part of the surface for the frond – see picture 3 below. This is where the name came from as it looks like an elephant ear. The shield frond grows tall forming a large basket top, and are entire as well with non-forking tops. The fern will grow out its shield fronds completely and then set to growing its new fertile fronds. The fern comes from a dryer climate area, but seems to like to stay moist. They do seem to be heat sensitive and will wilt down if too hot or too dry, they will normally perk back up once it is cooler.

This staghorn is easy to find in the trade. It pups easy and grows well from spore.



P elephantotis 1



P elephantotis 2



P elephantotis 3

So if you are crossing these two staghorns what does the offspring turn out to be? Well, the fertile fronds look much like an *ellisii* with the single fork. The shield frond is more of a cupping type but is very ruffled. The veins are very predominate on the shields but not as much as the *elephantotis*. (See the pictures below.) I find it to be easier to grow than either parent. It seems to take our heat well and our high humidity. Seems to like to be on the little bit drier side and likes medium to bright light. It also pups easy. I think it is a very attractive hybrid. This is defiantly worth adding to your collection. It is not easy to find, but ask me if you're looking for one.



All above pictures are by Darla Harris