



July 2021

Vol. 23 No. 7

<http://www.tgcfersoc.org>

Due to COVID-19 restrictions our meeting this month will be another “virtual” one.

A message from our President:

Hi Everyone,

Well, if I get any later on getting these newsletter articles sent to Paul, you will be getting them the day of the meeting. It has been a very busy year for me and I don't even know where all the weeks have gone to. I do hope this finds everyone well or as well as you can be at the moment. We all go through ups and downs in our lives, and it's how you deal with them that really show what you are made of! Our group is made of some really good strong stuff!!!

Our meeting last month was very well attended and for those that missed it Ceil Dow takes copious notes. I love reading her minutes of the meeting. So please take the time to look them over even if you attended the meeting. She catches nearly everything. Thank you!!

For those that have not been to the U.S. Botanical Garden Mary Dee Beall sure showed us we need to put it on our list to see. I know everyone appreciated her taking the time to speak to our group. She is such a nice lady and really showing that with participation you can really grow your fern knowledge.

Our speaker on Sunday will be David G. Hill the General Secretary for the British Pteridological Society and a keen amateur naturalist with a particular passion for Lycophytes. By day he works in a technical college with teenagers, evenings are split between being Honorary General Secretary of the British Pteridological Society and Director of the North Wales local record center, and weekends are spent escaping into the mountains for some solitude and to look at ferns, or even more rarely fishing! **He will be talking to us on the Lycophytes and Ferns of Snowdonia Natural Park in Wales.** I'm very excited to hear about this topic for I have not been to this part of Wales. So please plan on attending.

We have not heard anything else on being able to meet in person at the Juddson Robinson Community Center yet. I'm still hopeful that we will be able to do so by September, but if not, we will have another virtual meeting.

We want to take a moment to say how much we will miss Biruta Claunch as she has moved east and will not be attending our meetings anymore and will not be our raffle person once we start having our meetings again. We wish her well, but will miss her just the same! Good luck!

Everyone stay safe, enjoy the cool weather the rain has given us to cool July down. Let's hope we get some rain in August too.

Talk care everyone!! See you Sunday.

Darla



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/>



2021 Officers and Committees:

- President: Darla Harris
- Vice President: Patrick Hudnall
- Secretary: Ceil Dow
- Treasurer: Beth Ayer
- Board Members-at-Large: Cherie Lee (Past Pres),
- Outgoing Board Members at Large: Jere Noerager, Ken Warren
- Education Chair: Darla Harris

Hospitality Chair: Larry Rucker
 Library: Ruth McDonald
 Membership Co-chairs: Beth Ayer and
 Marcia Livingston
 Newsletter: Paul Geiger
 Spore Exchange: Patrick Hudnall
 Ways and Means: Larry Rucker
 Raffle, Store, etc. TBD
 Web Master: Malcolm McCorquodale
 Welcoming at Door: Faye Stansberry



Minutes of Virtual Meeting via “GoToMeeting”

June 20, 2021

Texas Gulf Coast Fern Society

A virtual meeting was held due to COVID-19.

Darla called the meeting to order at 2:00.

There were approximately 25 members in attendance.

Presentation: “Ferns from the U. S. Botanic Garden in Washington D. C.”

By Mary Dee Beall

The TGCFS acquired 3 new members in the last 2 months.

Next month’s presentation will be held virtually. The presentation will be narrated by a member of the British Pteridological Society.

There will be a GCFS party in August at Patrick Hudnall’s home. Hopefully, the Juddson Robenson Community Center will be available in September.

Mary Dee Beall started in 1964 as a Congressional intern. Her first correspondence with the Conservatory was to ask them to send over plants to decorate the Congressional offices. She visited the Conservatory the next summer but rarely spent time there when living in Washington. Ms. Beall retired 20 years ago, and started to volunteer in the Fern Conservatory.

The U. S. Botanic Garden is one of the oldest federal institutions. The Founding Fathers wanted to establish an area of unique plantings. In 1816, a think tank started in Washington called The Columbia Institute. They desperately wanted a national garden so in 1820, they convinced Congress to establish a national garden. The gardens flourished under the supervision of The Columbia Society. Eventually The Columbia Society went extinct due to financial problems.

In 1836, Congress established expeditions to acquire plants from around the world but had no place to put them. In 1842, a glass conservatory was built and the original plants went there. Eventually the collection expanded needed a bigger greenhouse. The expansion included a tall palm house in the center of an assemblage of greenhouses.

The National Mall needed to expand so the Conservatory moved across from the Congressional offices. In 1926, the gardens were relocated and the new gardens were more

conducive to growing plants. By the 1970’s, the buildings had deteriorated. In 1996, they replaced the glass in the greenhouses, plumbing and removed lead paint. The big dome houses the tropical collection. Different areas are dedicated to different growing environments.

Huperzia squarrosia – Tassel Fern- Epiphyte. Native to Australia. Spores develop from end of fronds. Bright green fuzzy fronds.

Selaginella kraussiana ‘*Brownii*’ – Pincushion Moss – Native to the Azores, Canary Islands and East Africa. Lycophyte not a fern. Compact, mounding, bright green fronds. Grows to 18” tall and 24” wide. Good plant for a terrarium.

Selaginella wildenovii – Native to tropical Asia & Indonesia. Lycophyte not a fern. Erect frond like growth. Iridescent sky-blue when grown in full shade.

Selaginella brauni – Braun’s Arborvitae Fern - Native to China. Dark green, lacy fronds. Grows to 18”.

Psilotum nudum – Whisk Fern – Pantropical/Subtropical. Ancient Fern with no roots or leaves. Repeatedly forked stems. Sporangia on upper branches.

Angiopteris evecta – Mules’s foot, Giant or King Fern – Native to Malaysia through Polynesia. One of the most primitive species. Fronds grow from stipules at base. One of the largest ferns with fronds to 20 feet.

Angiopteris fokiensis – Native to the Old World Tropics. Likes a dark shady forest, sandy or clayey soil. Reproduces primarily from stipules. Grows to 6-12 feet.

Helminthostachys zeylanica – Flowering Fern – Native to East Asia, Australia and New Guinea. Very primitive fern. Shiny, unfern looking fronds. Spores appear from a separate cylindrical stalk. Rare and endangered. It is used as food. Has medical and fiber uses.

Colysis wrightii – Native to South China, Jaan, Indochina and Taiwan. Dark green, entire fronds with small depressions, visible veins. Climbs on rocks. Grows 8” – 10” tall. Good for terrariums.

Lemmaphyllum microphyllum – Green Penny Fern – Native to Asia. Slow growing, vining fern. Fronds ½” (sterile) to 2” (fertile). Epiphytic and grows on tree trunks. Great for terrariums.

Asplenium antiquum – Birdsnest Fern - Frond edges are neat & firm. The mid-rib is rounded and the stipe is short and visible. The sori are less than half and appear on the upper fork of vein. Native to China, Japan, Korea and Taiwan. Fronds are thick and firm and neatly outlined. Short visible stipe and rounded rachis. It is epiphytic and grows on cliffs, on tree trunks in dark forests. It is the hardiest of the Birdsnest ferns. Grows to 2’ – 3’ tall.

Asplenium australasicum – Crow’s Nest Fern - The frond edges are crinkly and soft. The mid-rib is keeled. The stipe is short & inconspicuous. The sori are more than half and appear on the upper fork of vein. Native to Australia. Prominent rachis. The underside is keeled, not rounded.

More cold hardy than *A. nidus*. It is epiphytic. Grows to 2' tall and 8' wide.

Asplenium nidus – Bird's Nest Fern - The frond edges are wavy and soft. The mid-rib is rounded. The sori are less than half and both forks of the vein. Native to the Old World Tropics and Hawaii. Short inconspicuous stipe and rounded rachis. It is epiphytic and grows on cliffs, on tree trunks in dark forests. Grows to 5' tall.

Goniophlebium tomsanum – Caterpillar or Grub Fern – Native to China, Japan and Taiwan. Soft, bright green fronds to 12". Glaucescent rhizome. Epiphytic. Formerly known as *Polypodium formosanum*.

Lecanopteris crustacea – Ant Fern – Native to Malaysia. Light green fronds with a flat scaly rhizome. It is an epiphyte and lives high in the canopy. Likes high humidity and light. Grows to 12" – 14" fronds. Rhizomes look like potatoes. Ants live in the fronds to protect its nest against invaders.

Aglaoomorpha heraclea – Native to Sumatra, Malaysia, Philippines and New Guinea. Vase Shaped. Wide frond bases dry out and collect detritus. Textured fronds. Orange sori. Enormous fronds grow to 6'.

Campyloneurum phyllitidis – Long Strap Fern – Native to North, Central & South American tropics. Leaf thick and firm. Small stipe. Epiphytic. Grows on cliffs, dark forests and tree trunks. Grows to 2' – 3' tall.

Microlepia speluncae – Limpleaf Fern – Pantropical. Soft, pale green papery fronds. Wilts easily. Not common in the trade. Fronds can grow as long as 10'.

Microsorium musifolium – Crocodile Fern – Native to Japan. Glossy green fronds with "crocodile" skin. Blades are firm but translucent. Fronds grow to 3'. Epiphytic. Hardy if grown indoors.

Niphidium crassifolium - Graceful Fern – Native to Central & South America. Large, dark green entire fronds. Primarily epiphytic. Fronds grow to 18". Can tolerate some frost. Does well when grown in the San Francisco area. Good to grow on stumps. Last year at the San Francisco Fern Society meeting, Dan Yansura brought spores from his *N. crassifolium* for everyone to try out.

Platynerium grande – Endemic to the Philippines. Appearance similar to *P. superbum*. Has two spore patches on fertile fronds. Upright, wide sterile fronds form "nest" to 4'. Drooping fertile fronds to 6'. Rare in U.S. trade. Epiphytic.

Platynerium bifurcatum – Staghorn Fern – Native to New Guinea & Australia. Twice forked sterile fronds grow to 24". Forms pups generously. Epiphytic.

Sphaeropteris cooperi – Lacy Tree Fern – Native to Eastern Australia. Light green fronds form canopy. Golden to brown scales on stipes and rachis. Bright light to full sun. Grows quickly to 50' tall. 20' fronds. (Formerly *Cyathea cooperi*)

Cibotium schiedeii – Mexican Tree Fern – Native to Mexico. Drooping fronds, elongated pinnae. Slow growing to 16'. Wider than tall and looks like a bush not a tree.

Blechnum gibbum – Dwarf Tree Fern – Native to New Caledonia and the South Pacific Islands. Swirling fronds form a rosette. New growth is bright green and darkens as it ages. Short trunk to 4'. Grows like an umbrella.

Blechnum brasiliense – Red Dwarf Tree Fern – Native to Brazil. Bright pink new growth. Small trunk. Vase shape. Can grow a 6' trunk.

Sadleria cyatheoides – Amaumau or Rasp Fern – Endemic to Hawaii and can become invasive. First plant to colonize on cooled lava flows. Emerging fronds are bright pink. Grows small trunk to 60".

Over the years, most of the 65,000 plants in the USBG's collection have acquired through donations or sharing with other institutions.

Other plants find their way to USBG (or other collecting institutions) after being confiscated for violation of Customs or CITES laws. (The abbreviation CITES stands for the Convention on the International Trade of Endangered Species of Fauna & Flora.)

The first USBG plant collecting trip after the 1838 Exploring Expedition was 2017 expedition to the Philippines. The highlight of the trip was discovery of a new species of *Amorphophallus*, the Corpse Flower, which has become a popular attraction when in bloom.

USBG celebrated its 200th anniversary in 2020 with many special exhibits, educational programs and two more collecting trips to Palau for orchids and the US Southwest for cacti.

Staff of 69 includes 30 full time botanists and horticulturists for the Conservatory and outdoor gardens. It also has approximately 200 volunteers.

USBG has 12 acres of growing space which includes the Conservatory and outdoor gardens.

The 85,000 sq ft greenhouse in Anacostia opened in 1993 and houses most of the collection. Plants are swapped in and out over the course of a year, showcasing blooms and filling in for special exhibits.

The National Botanic Garden is under the "Architect of the Capital" administration.

Questions & Answers

Jere Noerager asked who decides which ferns are acquired for the NBG. Unfortunately, Ms. Beal did not know the answer to that question.

Patrick Hudnall asked if there were still massive Dicksonias in the Golden Gate Park in the Fern Garden. She said they are still there and are still gorgeous. Patrick also noted that the Houston Botanic Garden has a new Director of Horticulture, Francisco Javier de la Mota Daniel. He is from Madrid, Spain. HBG has added new ferns. They have broken ground for working greenhouses. HBG finances are all from non-profit donations.

Patrick also noted that the Centennial offices at Hermann Park host the Plumeria Society. Darla noted that they do not like meetings held on the weekend.

The meeting adjourned at 3:20 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Ceil Dow



2nd Quarter 2021 Treasurer's Report

April 1, 2021 to June 30, 2021

Income:

Dues: \$100.00

Donations: \$54.50

Interest: \$0.35

Expenses: None

Balance on 12-31-2020: \$15,082.53

Balance on 06-30-2021: \$15,267.72

Net gain for 2Q21: \$154.85

Net gain for 2021: \$185.19



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A special note from Beth Ayer:

(Received July 10, 2021)

This is to thank all of you who use Amazon Smile with the Texas Gulf Coast Fern Society selected as your charity.

We have received a donation of \$54.50 from your purchases.

