



April 2023

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<http://www.tgcfersoc.org>

Our meeting this month will be “blended” by meeting in-person at the Judson Robinson, Jr. Community Center (2020 Hermann Dr., Houston, 77004 and/or via GoToMeeting – member’s choice.

TGCFS MISSION STATEMENT

Organized in 1998 by a group of fern enthusiasts (a.k.a. fern lovers, fernies, pteridologists), to cultivate, foster and promote interest in ferns and fern allies, the TGC Fern Society presents educational programs including “how to” sessions, presentations by local, national and internationally known fern experts, and field trips and tours-thus providing a forum for fern enthusiasts to visit, learn, share plants, ideas, information, and have a good time. A very informative monthly newsletter is published for members, and special events include presentations to other groups, fundraiser events, and a year-end holiday season party. **Regular meetings are held at 2:00 P.M. on the third Sunday of each month at the Judson Robinson Jr. Community Center, 2020 Herman Drive, Houston, TX, 77004. Phone (713) 284-1994.**

A message from our President:

Hi everyone!

I hope everyone is getting a chance to get out in their gardens and get some of the spring cleanup and repotting done before summer arrives with a bang. We need some rain. Let’s hope we get enough to help, but not too much. We don’t need a flood.

I hope everyone enjoyed the March meeting on Maidenhair ferns. They are a beautiful group of ferns and I hope you will be able to grow them easier than maybe you have before. For those of you that have tried growing them in pots with less success, you will find in-ground is much easier, but both can be done. The tropical ones really need to stay in a pot to survive our unpredictable weather.

This month April, we will have a speaker, Justin Miller, talking to us about *Platyceriums* aka Staghorn ferns. Please take a look at his bio later in the newsletter. He is quite familiar with our crazy weather having lived here in the past before moving to Northeast Florida. Still in a similar zone for temperatures, he is growing all the species; many cultivars and hybrids. He grows from spore and divisions so he is a very broad grower with lots of knowledge of the problems they can have and how to overcome them and grow beautiful plants. Using his knowledge, you can start growing some others of the 18 species. They are all beautiful to say the least and look so different from each other. We will try to bring a few in so you can see some of them in person. Otherwise, they will be viewable in his PowerPoint presentation.

Our membership drive at both the John Fairly and Mercer Botanical Garden and Arboretum went very well we are happy to welcome five new memberships, both single and family memberships. All have actively grown ferns and

will bring their growing experience with them to our society!

Refreshments need to be addressed. Larry will not be bringing his normal large amount of food and drink. So, all categories need to be covered. We will have the paper goods.

Don’t forget to bring raffle plants too!! This is our society fund raiser for our projects later this year. We are planning the prehistoric stepping stones and how to mount a staghorn to a cedar log. So, raffle money helps cover the cost of these programs.

We will be announcing the field trip information at the meeting set for May.

We need a volunteer for the June Party! Please let us know so we can let everyone know where we will be getting to know each other. This is always a fun event! Looking forward to seeing everyone at the meeting. Remember the doors open at 1p and the meeting starts at 2p CDT. 3p EDT and 12noon for PDT.

Happy gardening,
Darla



**Sunday’s Topic:
Platyceriums aka Staghorn Ferns and How to Grow them**

By: Justin Miller



Bio of Justin Miller

Justin Miller is a plant enthusiast, a *Platycerium* focused individual, and has an overall keen eye for everything botanical. He’s traveled to many counties worldwide in search of animals and plants. At a young age he started work

at his first nursery at the age of 15. He's worked in all parts of the nursery industry, including retail, production, and landscaping.

Justin majored in Microbiology with Emphasis in Molecular Biology for his undergrad. He's currently working on his graduate studies in Data, Economics, and Policy Development. He plans to develop and test economical principals (the study of scarcity) in wildlife conservation research in West Africa, where he's spearheaded ex-situ and in-situ conservation research of several critically endangered animals. He's a strong advocate for developing and supporting in-country leadership of conservation efforts, including with unlikely groups such as leaders in traditional medicine healers and hunters.

He currently maintains approximately 120-130 Platycerium varieties, hybrids, localities, and species. His focus is developing cold tolerant Platycerium hybrids. He has also developed dozens of tropical plants such as bromeliads, Passiflora, aroids, and orchids. His first commercial produced varieties will be found in nurseries nationwide, in the USA, within a couple years.

Justin currently resides in North East Florida.



Dues!

Dues are payable for 2023.

Your dues may be paid in person at a meeting or sent by mail to: Beth Ayer, 5815 Portal Dr., Houston, TX 77096.

Checks should be payable to: **Texas Gulf Coast Fern Society (TGCFS)**.

If you have any questions about the status of your dues, please contact Beth Ayer at either: beth.ayer@yahoo.com or 713.729.0994 (landline; you may leave a voice mail message) or Alicia Baker – See attached Membership form for further information.



2023 Officers and Committees:

President:	Darla Harris
Vice President:	Patrick Hudnall
Secretary:	Ceil Dow
Treasurer:	Beth Ayer
Board Members-at-Large:	Ruby Adams Ken Warren
Education Chair:	Darla Harris
Hospitality Chair:	Larry Rucker
Library:	Fred Robinson
Membership Chair:	Alicia Baker
Newsletter:	Paul Geiger
Spore Exchange:	Patrick Hudnall
Ways and Means:	Larry Rucker
Raffle, Store, etc.	Rick Dow

Web Master: Malcolm McCorquodale

Welcoming at Door: TBD



1st Quarter 2023 Treasurer's Report January 1, 2023 to March 31, 2023

Income:

Dues:	\$260.00
Raffle:	\$59.00
Donations:	\$74.50
Interest:	\$5.08

Expenses:

Program Expense:	\$212.58
Plants/Books:	\$75.00
Bank charges:	\$32.00
Balance on 03-31-2023:	\$14,834.46
Balance on 12-31-2022:	\$14,691.46
Net gain for 1Q23:	\$143.00
Net gain/Loss for 2023:	\$143.00

Beth Ayer



Minutes of Blended Meeting via "GoToMeeting" and In-person March 19, 2023

Texas Gulf Coast Fern Society

Meeting was held at 2:00pm at the Justin Robinson Community Center in Hermann Park. Members unable to attend the in-person meeting could still participate through the "GoToMeeting" app.

President, Darla Harris, called the meeting to order at 2:10 pm. She thanked all those in attendance both in person and online.

Darla stated that there was a good turnout at John Fairy Gardens and our information booth attracted one new member. Next weekend will be March Mart at Mercer. The TGCFS will have a membership table/information booth set up there also. Brochures have been printed up for those interested. Volunteers are needed to help.

Darla thanked Larry Rucker for managing the hospitality table and thanked all those who contributed.

Membership Chair, Alicia Baker, said that we now have 65 paid members and are hoping that more will renew their memberships.

Darla then passed around samples of the Plant of the Month which is Doryopteris. This is a dimorphic plant meaning that the sterile and fertile leaves look different. The leaves on the plants also look different from other ferns and there are often plantlets that form on the leaves. They can be propagated by division and by spore. They are mostly grown as house plants but can be grown outdoors in warmer climates with good protection from the cold. The samples she passed around were Doryopteris cordata (Antenna Fern) and Doryopteris nobilis (Arrowhead Fern). There is much more good information on these ferns in the March newsletter.

Program:

Darla gave the program on Maidenhair Ferns (*Adiantum*). The name “maidenhair” comes from the stems which resemble stiff hairs. She brought a great many plants and gave information about each one as she focused on it. Many of these were for sale at the conclusion of the program. Some of these included the Southern Maidenhair, Silver Dollar Maidenhair, Half Southern Maidenhair, fragrans (many different cultivars), Rosie Maidenhair, Trailing Maidenhair, Peaches and Cream Maidenhair, Ocean Spray or Pacific Maidenhair, etc. These are all mostly in the trade. Non-trade Maidenhairs include *Adiantum formosum*, Diamond, and *Adiantum tenerum*.

In general, Darla said that most ferns don't need a lot of fertilizer and that when it is used it should be a lighter ratio. In these ferns the spore (sori) are only right around the edges and the sori folds over at the tip so is called a “false indusium.”

Darla showed a couple of very good books on ferns: The FERN GROWER'S MANUAL by Barbara Joe Hoshizaki and Robbin C. Moran is a huge but immensely informative book. The other was a beautiful book in Thai with lovely pictures of ferns.

Next month's meeting will be on Staghorn Ferns.

The meeting was adjourned for door prize and the raffle.

Door Prize:

This was a Cobra Fern (*Polypodium polycarpon grandiceps*) and was won by Cecil Strange.

Attendance:

There were approximately 16 people present at the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Williams for Ceil Dow, Secretary



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/>



Library

Please be reminded about the very nice collection of books in our library. It's easy to borrow a book for your use and home study. Please contact Fred Robinson, our Library Chairperson. And please remember to return the books in a timely manner to allow others equal access.

If you're looking for our book on Tree Ferns, it is still out on loan and will be returned shortly (hopefully!).



March 2023 Door Prize

Cecil Strangel was the lucky winner of a Cobra Fern (*Polypodium Polycarpon Grandiceps*)

Congratulations, Cecil!



New TGCFS Members

It is a pleasure to announce three new members of our Society.:

Jeff Davis

Anthony Rose

Chuck Schlesinger

Fellow members, at your first opportunity, please extend them a hearty welcome.





Fern of the Month - April 2023
Lemmaphyllum microphyllum
(lem-ma-Fil-lum my-kro-Fil-um)
Submitted by Darla Harris
(Pictures by Darla)

This is a cute tiny fern native to Asia, specifically Japan, South Korea, China and Taiwan. A small group of ferns with only 6 species. Growing only an inch tall, but is a rhizome that crawls along and spreads into a nice mat of fern. In nature I have observed it growing on treefern trunks. It is a semi-hardy fern and can go down to about 20F. It is dimorphic with its fertile fronds being much larger than the sterile fronds. Easy fern to grow, don't over water, just moist. Can be grown in a terrarium, but does not need to be. Makes a nice hanging basket and will grow into a treefern basket or the coconut liner or moss and cover the basket. It does grow on a cedar limb if you like. So, there are several ways to enjoy this small fern. Grown in more light (**Not Sun**) you will have more of the fertile fronds so show they two types and makes it very interesting to look at.

I will bring some examples and a few extras for anyone that wants to try this fern in their collection.

