



June 2023

Vol. 25 No. 6

<http://www.tgcfernsoc.org>

**Our meeting this month will be our Summer Party at the home of Claudia Leffle, 11502 Advance Dr. Phone: (281)-469-6769 (See map at end of Newsletter)**

**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!!

It’s Party Time!!!! The summer party is on the 18<sup>th</sup> of June at 1pm. I would like to thank Claudia Leffle for allowing us to come to her home for our Party! She is a big plant collector and has a big corner lot that she has taken advantage of with her plants. She is a collector of Staghorn ferns and has a wide variety of them to show off! We have a map at the end of the newsletter. Please leave a message on Larry’s home phone to let him know what you would like to bring 713-649-3535. Remember those that have a single membership you can be a plus one to our parties. So, bring a friend or someone special; they are welcome too!

I hope everyone enjoyed the project last month. I know I enjoyed myself, watching everyone mount their *Platycerium veitchii Lemoneae* to a cedar post. Betsy Robinson took several photos of the meeting so you can see what we did again.

Our July meeting will be one last Staghorn meeting. We discussed knowing how they grow in nature helps you to have better success with your plants. So, we have asked Darryl Ruprecht the author of the *King of Ferns*, to speak to us from Australia. This will be a virtual meeting. We could not ask for a better source as the *P. bifurcatum*, *P. superbum* and *P. vetchii* all are native to Australia. He is also going to give our group a huge discount on his book if you would like to order one for yourselves. He is not researching for his latest book on *P. wandae* that grows near by in New Guinea. Darryl has been growing staghorn ferns for many years and will be able to answer most questions for you, so please plan on attending.

Ceil and Rick Dow will be giving our August presentation project on prehistoric stepping stones. We did this several years ago and have been asked several times to do a repeat on this fun project. Plan on wearing work cloths, we will be working with cement and fern fronds.... More in upcoming newsletters.

Thank you for all the refreshments and congratulations to Fred Robinson for winning the door prize: a Silver brake fern *Pteris argyraea*.

Take care everyone and happy gardening!

Darla



**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](mailto:beth.ayer@yahoo.com) or 713.729.0994 (landline; you may leave a voice mail message). 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<br>Ken Warren |

Education Chair:	Darla Harris
Hospitality Chair:	Larry Rucker
Library:	Fred Robinson
Membership Chair:	TBD (Beth Ayer, temporary))
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



## Minutes of Blended Meeting via “GoToMeeting” and In-person

May 21, 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.

The meeting was called to order at 2:10 pm by Darla Harris. Approximately 22 members present in person. TGCFS Party is in June and Claudia Leffle has offered to host. She has a lovely wooded, well planted, shady piece of property near the 1960/Jones Rd. area. It is a corner lot. Please enter the side door because the walkway to the main door is a little uneven.

TGCFS still needs a membership chair. Please consider volunteering for this important position.

The December party needs a host.

### FERN OF THE MONTH –

*Anemia mexicana*, the Mexican flowering fern, is a fern species in the genus *Anemia*, sometimes called flowering ferns which are It is a Texas native. It stays small at 18” high. It is hardy to Zone 8. Darla lost hers in 2021 when temperatures fell to 7 degrees. It gets its common name from its dimorphic frond (two different looking fronds) that look like grass flower spikes with their yellow and golden-brown spore structures that jut out from the apex of their leaves; hence the name, flowering fern. They do like to be moist, over too dry. It is a clumping fern not a spreader.

### How to Mount a Staghorn Fern by Darla Harris & Larry Rucker

When mounting ferns onto boards, use Cedar or Redwood. Do not use treated Pine. Staghorn Ferns can also be mounted on drainage cells. Ferns do well on drainage cells that do not like overwatering. Perfect for ferns that prefer good drainage. *Platynerium superbum* & *P. grandis* prefer drainage cells because they like the extra air circulation.

Staghorns can be mounted on driftwood or even orchid crates. Darla brought in a *Platynerium Willinckii* mounted inside an upside down, 4’ tall, wire candle holder. It was

really gorgeous and an ingenious way to display the *Platynerium*.

When mounting a Staghorn, use a single specimen because the shield is mature and can easily be mounted on the side of a board or post. If multiple plants have been growing in a pot, mount on top of post or board, because the shield cannot put flush on the side of a board or post. To divide *Platynerium bifurcatum*, Take care of the growing tip. Do not damage it.

Larry Rucker showed his method of dividing a mature *Platynerium*. He cut around the shield that he wanted to remove with a large serrated knife. As he cuts, he feels the fishing line that held the shield in place for many years. Sawing thru the filament, Larry saws downward not sideways. Roots are grown directly behind the shield so that is why you saw downward to prevent damaging the roots.

Darla demonstrates how she removes the plant from a board. She takes the big serrated knife and takes the entire fern off the board. Slide the knife sideways, behind the moss until the fern is lifted off the board. If a pup grew on the board without moss, then you can remove it the same way.

Gently, take the old filament off the plant. A cross section of the fern shows old shields act like a sponge. Take old moss off the back of the shield. Remove old shields, either by carefully pulling them off or delicately cutting them away. Be watchful not to remove the roots behind the growing tip. *Platyneriums* do not have a lot of roots.

Make sure to cup the new shield in your hands. Pile moss onto back of shield so the entire back is cushioned with moss. Then place shield/moss onto a pad of moss on the boards. Moss can be soaked in rooting hormone before proceeding with the mounting project.

Adjust *Platynerium* so that it is positioned exactly as it was growing on the previous board; fronds up not down.

To separate *Platynerium* ferns if they have been growing in a pot, take the fern out of pot. Cut the soil part in half horizontally. Growing medium is soil not moss when fern is grown in a pot. Pull shields apart gently by hand. Do this behind the shields as not to hurt the growing tip. If the plant becomes damaged, place it back in pot. Cut away damaged fronds. Keep plant from moving so fronds can stabilize and start to grow its shield back.

Mounting on a Cedar Log:

\*Need: 2’ tall Cedar Log, single staghorn fern, Sphagnum moss, eye screw & filament (fishing line).

\*Center eye screw into top of log and hammer it in lightly. Screw it in.

\*Add wet moss to middle or lower part of log.

\*Take 4-6 screws and screw them in around the pad of moss which has been laid on the log.

\*Take extra soil off fern shield.

\*Cup shield in your hand and add a little bit of moss to the back of the shield.

\*Lay fern shield with the bit of moss on the back of it onto the pad of moss on the log.  
 \*Take filament and wrap around shield and moss. Be careful not to damage or lay filament onto the growing tip.

Respectfully submitted by Ceil Dow.



**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!).



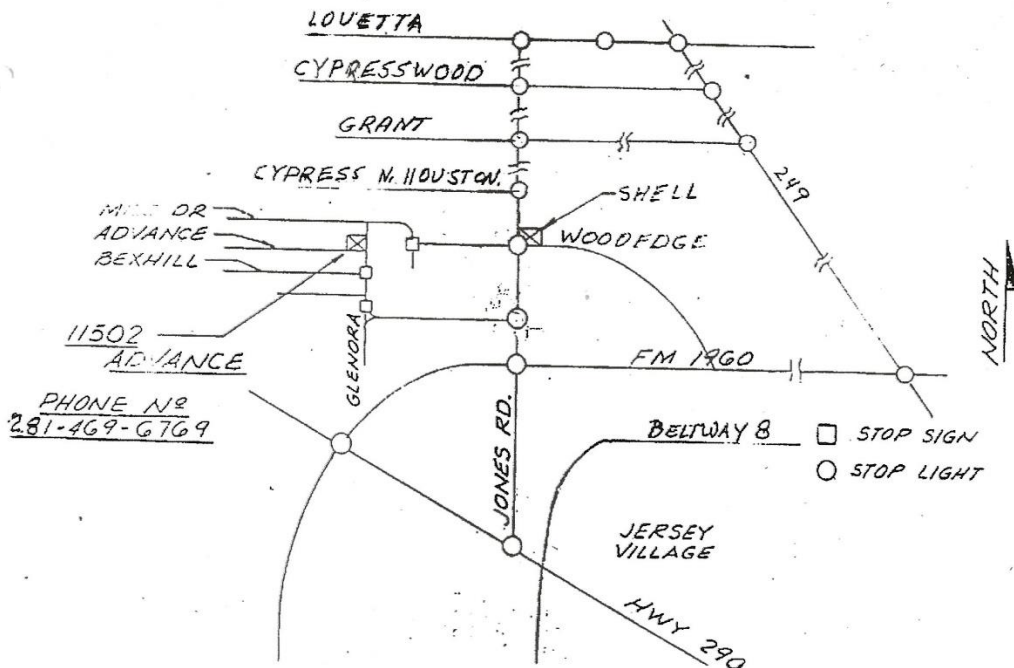
**May 2023 Door Prize**

Congratulations to Fred Robinson for winning the door prize: a Silver brake fern *Pteris argyrea*.



**Map to Claudia Leffle's House**

**NB: Claudia advises her house is on the northwest corner of Advance and Glenora and heavily wooded. Mailbox is on the OTHER side of the street which sometimes makes folks go to neighbors across the street. So, please be observant.**



**(Just) A Few of Pics from May Workshop**

