



Texas Gulf Coast Fern Society

July 2025

Vol. 27 No. 07

<http://www.tgcfernsoc.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. **Doors open at 1:30pm and regular meetings begin at 2:00pm on the 3rd Sunday of each month at the Judson Robinson Jr. Community Center, 2020 Herman Drive, Houston, TX, 77004. (713) 284-1994.**

A message from our President:

Hi Everyone,

This has been a very sad 4th of July in Texas! I know I speak for everyone in wishing condolences and comfort to all those affected in the Hill Country floods. Nature can be so brutal when it’s angry.

I would like to thank Bob and Anne Swanson for their hospitality in hosting this year’s summer Fern Society party. They have a lovely home and a very nice selection of ferns for us to admire. We had a nice turnout and as always plenty of food. For those that weren’t able to make the party, we missed you!

This month’s meeting will be given by Dan Yansura in a virtual format and will be both in person meeting and on GoTo Meeting, so please plan on joining us. His talk will be on Filmy Ferns and how to grow them. This is a special class of ferns that is normally grown in terrariums or palladiums here in the Houston area. There are several genera that fit into this type of fern. They are only one cell thick and are normally found in rain forest environments.

We have the rest of the talks lined up for the remaining part of the year so please look at the calendar on page 4 so you will have the date and topic at hand. These will be both fun and entertaining! If you have any suggestions for next year’s meetings, please get with me and we will see what we can make happen.

We are midway through the year, and I want to remind everyone that the board elections will be coming up in October. So, please get with me if you would like to

take on one of the board positions. We will elect our nomination committee at the September meeting.

Stay safe everyone,

Darla



Dues!

Dues for 2025 are currently being collected. If you have any questions about the status of your dues, please contact Christopher Goodgame at:

chris.goodgame@protonmail.com.

Your dues may be paid in person at a meeting or sent by mail to: Christopher Goodgame, PO Box 66116, Houston, TX 77266

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



Filmy Ferns: What Are They?

Filmy ferns make up over 300 hundred ferns mostly around the tropical equator. They are easily identified by the fact they are only one cell thick. This means in nature they grow in very high humidity areas. For us to grow them they do require a terrarium. This is going to be a exciting program for those that have never seen or heard of them before. For those that have heard of them, this will still be a very informative talk, many beautiful plants and even more in the trade so they can be enjoyed by many.

We will have examples and a dissecting scope to looking at these unique ferns.



2025 Officers and Committees:

President: Darla Harris
Vice President: Carolynne White
Secretary: Ceil Dow
Treasurer: Larry Rucker
Board Members-at-Large: Anne Swanson
Christopher Goodgame
Education Chair: Darla Harris
Hospitality Chair: Anne Swanson
Library: Fred Robinson
Membership Chair: Christopher Goodgame
Newsletter: Christopher Goodgame
Spore Exchange: Patrick Hudnall
Ways and Means: Larry Rucker
Raffle, Store, etc. Rick Dow
Web Master: Malcolm McCorquodale
Welcoming at Door: TBD



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/>



The June Party







July – December 2025 Program Calendar:

Date	Topic	Speaker
July 20 th	Filmy Ferns	Dan Yansura
August 17 th	The Giant Four Platycerium	Darla Harris
September 21 st	Building a Birdbath (hands on)	Ceil Dow
October 19 th	What ferns need winter protection	Darla Harris
November 16 th	Fern Terrarium (hands on)	Darla Harris/ Ceil Dow
December 21 st	Winter Party 1p	Patrick and Diane Hudnell



Name Change:



The Australian tree fern that most of us are familiar with has changed its Botanical name. Update your name tags!

From: ***Cyathea cooperi***
To: ***Sphaeropteris cooperi***



From the Library:

Indoor Ferns: Caring for Ferns - A Wealth of Evergreen; by Boy Altman; Rebo Productions; 1998; 144 pages; photo illustrations by the author.

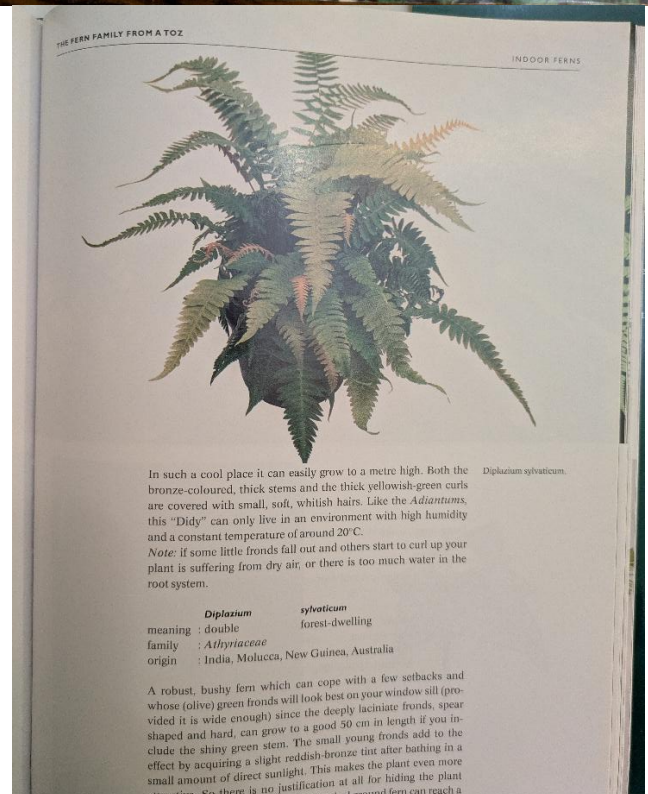
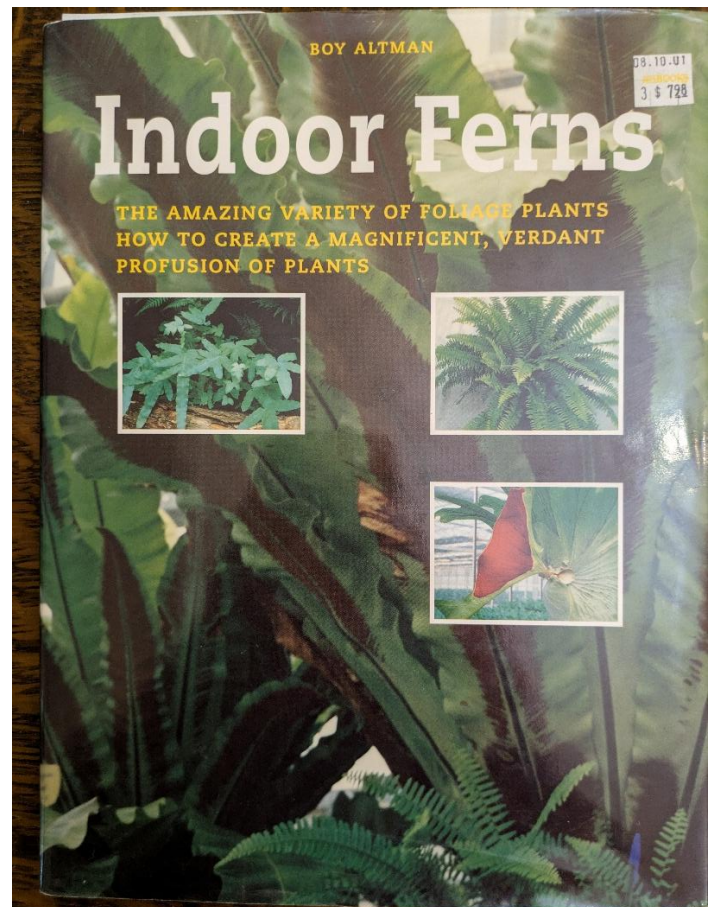
by **Bob Swanson**

Although pretty much all of my ferns are outside I did pick up this book a while back. Altman gives you a lot of information about how to grow ferns indoors. Which makes sense when you find out that this book was written for readers in the Netherlands.

Like so many books on ferns "*Indoor Ferns*" is divided into two sections. The first, about fifty pages, covers fern biology, history, propagation, and care. This section includes detailed information about various types of ferns and advice on how to keep them healthy and thriving indoors. He takes special care to highlight the needs of epiphytic ferns. Altman offers practical advice, addressing common mistakes like relocating a struggling fern too frequently. There are plenty of quality photos which effectively illustrate the author's explanations.

The second part of the book covers descriptions of 91 commonly available fern types in the Netherlands. That's not really a problem though, since almost all of these are available in Houston. The descriptions are very detailed, down to what types of pots to use, what soil mixes to use, and watering schedules. There is a separate chapter on tree ferns.

Overall, "*Indoor Ferns*" is a good addition to anyone's library.



The Giant Four Platyceriums

By Darla Harris

Platycerium wandae

The Queen Fern

Platycerium wandae is the largest of the all the staghorns. It is native to Papua New Guinea (PNG). The habitat where you would find it growing is the lowland rainforests. It is not cold hardy and prefers to be 60F or higher. It can take some dips into the 50s but gets very unhappy fast.

The watering on these is moist to dry, I have found dry to moist works best in the Houston area. It is prone to fungus if it gets over watered.

Like the other three giants, you get two fertile fronds and two shield fronds a year, so you want to insure they stay healthy. As with the other staghorns, it does get white scale very easy and needs to be treated as a regular part of its maintenance.

Being the largest of the group, you can expect 6' long fronds and 6' wide fern once it has grown up. The nice thing about this fern is you get fertile fronds at a young age, unlike *P. superbum* that can take two or three years to get a first fertile frond.

One of the easy to see differences is in the fronds - *wandae* puts out a large frond that has two different lengths to the frond and they both will put on a spore patch. The other side will do the same thing, so you get 4 spore patches on the *wandae*.

This is really a fast growing staghorn compared to *superbum* or *grande*. *The main thing is no cold weather and don't overwater.*



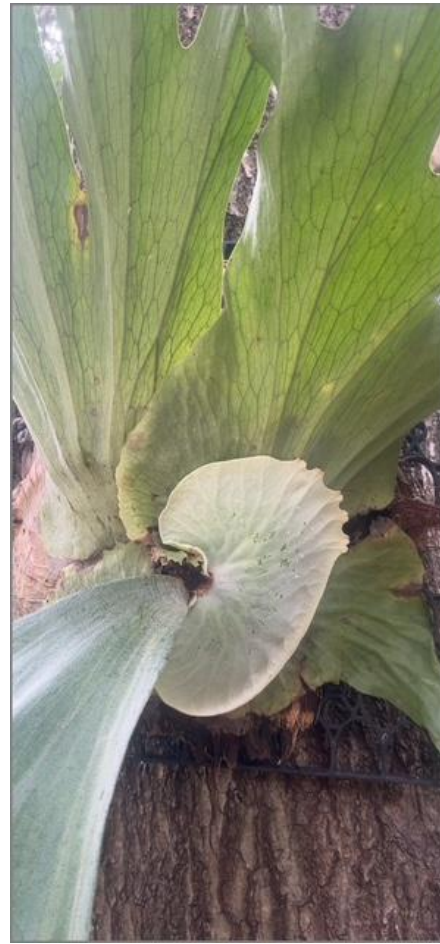
Platycerium wandae



P. wandae



P. wandae



P. wandae

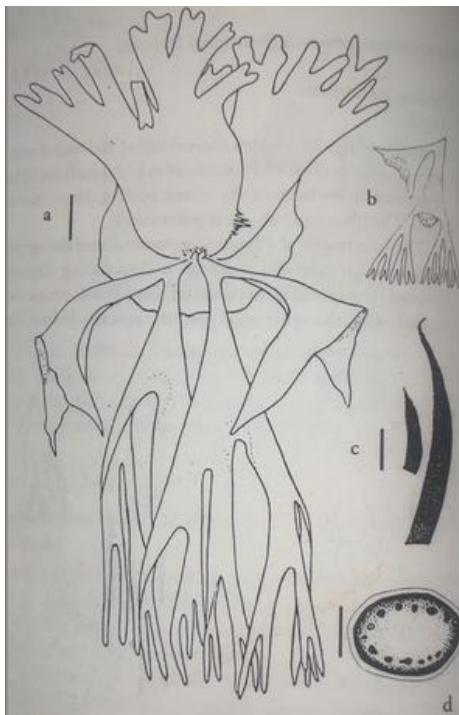


Figure 13.99.22. *Platycerium wandae*: a. habit, bar = 10 cm (4 in.); b. sporangial area placement; c. rhizome scales, bar = 5 mm (0.2 in.); d. stipe cross section, bar = 1 cm (0.4 in.).

