

TROPICAL FERN AND EXOTIC PLANT SOCIETY, INC.

NEWSLETTER

Volume 17, Issue 29

April 2017

President's Message

Our Show and Sale is rapidly approaching and will take place on May 27-28. In the recent past we lost two of our long-time members and pillars of our society. We will dedicate the 2017 Show & Sale to the memory of Larry Weed and Richard Button. They both contributed so much to our shows over the years and will be greatly missed.

Please think about plants you wish to enter in the show. For those who will be offering plants at the Membership Table, you are allowed to have a maximum of 30 plants each day (Saturday and Sunday.) If you wish to bring more plants, you will need to rent a vendor space. Please contact Vivian Waddell for a Vendor Agreement. There will be a sign-up sheet for volunteers at our next meeting, so please consider helping out with either setup or, on the sale days. Our hospitality committee would also like to ask for your help in preparing something for the Judges luncheon to be held on Friday. **We need to get behind this show & sale and make it special.**

MEETING REMINDER •

Monday, April 24, 2017 at 7:30 pm in the Garden House at Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden

Topic: "Growing Better Plants with Reverse Osmosis Water"

- How to build a low cost system for medium sized plant collection

Speaker: Paul Alan Wetter, MD

Paul Alan Wetter, MD [Paul @SLS.org] became interested in orchids in the late 1960's when he was studying the natural history of south Florida; Miami has been his home since childhood. He has been growing orchids as a hobby ever since, with a special interest in epiphytic orchids in the subtropical garden.

In his professional career, Paul, Professor Emeritus of The University of Miami School of Medicine, has been a pioneer in minimally invasive surgery and has numerous honors for his contributions to the field. He is Chairman and Executive Director of the Society of Laparoendoscopic Surgeons ("SLS") an organization he founded in 1989. SLS has 6,000 members worldwide and teaches physicians about new developments and safety in surgery. In 2009 he founded ORReady, a world initiative to improve outcomes for six million patients worldwide.

In 2003 Paul joined the West Palm Beach Judging Center where he is an accredited AOS Judge. In 2011 he was guest lecturer and judge at the Worldwide Orchid Conference in Singapore.

*The
Tropical Fern &
Exotic Plant Society
Annual Show & Sale*

May 27 & 28, 2017

9:30am—4:30pm

Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden

Garden House

10901 Old Cutler Road, Coral Gables

*The show features an exciting array of rare and unusual plants
in a beautifully designed display. The vendor sales area includes
ferns, aroids, orchids, hoyas, crotons, bromeliads, heliconias,
flowering trees and more.*

HOPE TO SEE YOU THERE!

May 27 & 28 Show & Sale Member's Sales Area

Any member who wishes to sell plants at the Show and Sale may do so in our **Member's Sales Area**; there are however a few stipulations:

1- You will be expected to help at the Show and Sale for a minimum of two (2) hours. Remember you need to help sell your plants as well as the other seller's plants.

2- A maximum of thirty (30) plants per day are allowed. Items must be double tagged with plant name, price and your initials. One tag will stay with the plant at the time of sale and the other will be used to pay you for the item sold. Those tags will be returned to you along with your payment.

3- You will be required to supply three (3) plants to a future raffle table at one of our general meetings. *[new rule]*

4- We hope you will take part in the show and display plants in the exhibit (not required but it would be nice.)

Monies collected through the **Member's Sales Area** will be turned over to the Treasurer, Bob Benaim, after the sale closes on Sunday, May 28. After all funds are deposited checks will be issued to participants for their sales less a fee of 20%.

Speakers for TFEPS, 2017

January: Bruce McAlpin, Sansevieras worth growing

February: Reggie Whitehead, Ferns of the World

March: Barbara McAdam, South Florida's imperiled butterflies

April: Paul Wetter, Setting up a small reverse osmosis system

May: Chad Husby, Tropical Conifers

June: Jeff Wasielewski, Hurricane-worthy tropical fruit trees

September: Debra DeMarco, Designing a Garden

October: auction

November: Jason Lopez, Fairchild's conservation work in the Caribbean

December: Holiday Party



2016 TFEPS SHOW & SALE



In Memoriam

Larry Weed
1934-2017

Another of our dear friends, and Charter member, has unexpectedly left us: *Larry Weed*. Many of you became very familiar with Larry and Glenda Weed from Louisiana because of their ferns. They always graced our plant show with their southern charm, and beautiful plants. In March, Larry passed away while recuperating from a fall.

Larry and Glenda came to Miami to participate in our plant show at Fairchild, and along the way, they would visit other fern growers, to see if they had special and interesting plants that might be stunning additions to the south Florida growers.

Long before they began attending The Tropical Fern & Exotic Plant Show and Sale, they would attend the South Florida Fern Society's Show and Sale.

Coincidentally, we met the Weeds, at the old Palm Hammock Orchid Estate years ago, while we were visiting Tim Anderson. The Weeds were being shown the nursery by our good friend Milton Piedra, and after that we became good friends with them as well. Whenever the Weeds would come to Miami, we hosted them, and in turn whenever we headed to Louisiana, we would stay with them at their home in Metairie.

Even though we shared a passion for ferns, we also enjoyed sharing stories about almost anything and everything under the sun.

Larry, an engineer, became enamored with ferns, and grew an extensive collection of tropical ferns, and other plants at his home in Louisiana. He was always eager to try out new species, and he grew them to specimen size, and at times would propagate them, to ensure that his fellow fern growers could also enjoy his plants.

We will miss Larry, who was not only our plant friend, but a true friend and gentleman, who always possessed a welcoming smile, and treated everyone he met, as a long lost friend.

Please join us in extending our deepest sympathies to Glenda, his grieving wife and best friend, and their sons Michael, and Marcell. We are truly sorry for your loss. And may Larry rest beautifully in peace.

Reggie Whitehead

Closer Than Sisters

By John Banta

The *Malpighiales* is a group of plants that are not very common in our gardens. One exception might be the “Barbados or west Indian cherry” (*Malpighia emarginata*) a fruit known for its high vitamin C content. While this family of plants may not be very common in our gardens it often amounts to around 40% of the plants in some rainforests. This plant family was recently identified as the family containing the largest flower in the world.

Rafflesia arnoldii was not an easy plant to classify as it has no roots, stems or leaves and its flowers are unique. Only genetic detective work revealed its association to the Malpighiales. In the course of this genetic investigation a shocking fact was revealed. The Rafflesia was stealing genes from a grape vine to use as its own. This was the first case of a massive horizontal gene transfer in a higher organism without sex. Viruses and bacteria are old hands at horizontal gene transfer but this was like a dog and a horse exchanging genetic material.

The grape vine that had its genes ripped off by the Rafflesia was in the genus, *Tetrastigma*, that is the host plant whose roots are invaded by the mycelium like haustorium that sucks up the sap from the vine. This genetic transfer broke the “species barrier” that defines what a species is.

Darwin will have to live with this new reality.

REMINDER:

- Get your favorite plants ready for the plant display at the upcoming show & sale •



Mounting Plaques

Made of 1" x 3" Pressure Treated Lumber

12" x 12" - \$ 8.00

15" x 15" - \$ 11.00

18" x 18" - \$ 15.00

24" x 24" - \$ 20.00

Contact – Bob Benaim

305-793-9755 or

bobbenaim@gmail.com

TFEPS February 27, 2017 meeting

Speaker: Reggie Whitehead

Topic: Ferns of the World

Notes by: Georgia Tasker

The Society's founder, Reggie Whitehead, gave a much-anticipated fern talk at the February meeting, and attendees were as numerous as spores on a *Platycerium*. Seldom has there been a more robust display of plants for a lecture: ferns and fern allies in gloriously good condition were supreme examples of Reggie Whitehead's passion for these plants. Calling the tour de force "Ferns of the World" Whitehead began with the primitive ferns, which he said he remembered by the acronym PILES: *Psilotum*, *Isoetes* (quillworts), *Lycopodium*, *Equisetum* and *Selaginella*. A couple of examples he showed were Whisk fern, *Psilotum nudum*, which pops up of its own accord, quite often in staghorn ferns, having no roots and *Lycopodium nummulariifolium* with overlapping strings of dark-green scale-like leaves. Adder's tongue, *Ophioglossum pendulum*, bears what he called "spore lobes" in which the sporophytes develop. The structure dangles among the fronds like a watch fob. This fern requires a particular mycorrhiza fungus to germinate, not unlike orchids. But do not hold your breath; they take 8 to 9 years to do so, he said. Here it is: *Angiopteris angustifolia* has narrow pinnae; *Angiopteris evecta* has a caudex and wide pinnae. You won't be confused again, OK? And a specimen Whitehead collected in Java is unnamed. (During the peak of his fern mania, Reggie and Tom Moore made 17 collecting trips to various tropical regions. Java was just a locale.) Polypodiums many feet are a widespread genus of ferns, one of which the Plant Explorers collected in Costa Rica. It is *Polypodium loriceum*. Also from Costa Rica, Whitehead had *Campyloneurum angustifolium* 'Corkscrew.' Two mother ferns are among his collection: *Meniscium reticulatum*, from Brazil; *Pleocnemia irregularis* from Southeast Asia to Borneo, New Guinea, the Philippines and the Moluccas. The nickname comes from the ferns' habit of developing baby ferns on top of mature fronds.

Continued, next page

Reggie Whitehead fern lecture, continued from previous page

There were many more ferns that he brought, including *Platycerium coronatum*, a truly majestic staghorn, and *Platycerium Hillii*, closely related to *P. bifurcata*, the common staghorn.

Then there were the maidenhairs which he discovered really liked sunlight after Hurricane Andrew blew over their oak tree. He once had 200 species in his collection.

You simply should have been there. To illustrate that footed ferns (as well as maidenhairs and campylonereums) can be pruned, Reggie cut off all the fronds of a *Davallia*, a rabbit's-foot fern (always a show-stopper for a fern lecture). A *Microsorium* species, conveniently had sporangia beginning to mature, so Reggie could follow that by showing two containers of ferns he is growing from spores. The spore lecture, however, is for another time.

Fertilizer: 20-20-20, now at full strength since spring has sprung, applied with a hose end sprayer.

Reggie Whitehead

February 2017 TFEPS

Speaker: Ferns of the World



TFEPS NEWEST LIFE MEMBERS

Lise Dowd & Steve Forman

2017 OFFICERS:

President: **Chad Husby**

Vice President: **Georgia Tasker (305) 661-1039**

Secretary: **Craig Morell (305) 667-1173**

Treasurer: **Bob Benaim (305) 793-9755**

DIRECTORS at LARGE:

Vivian Waddell (305) 665-5168 [2017-2019]

Leonard Goldstein (305) 667-4609 [2017-2019]

Ellis Brown (305) 484-7997 [2016-2017]

Linda Bell (305) 484-7997 [2016-2017]

IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT:

Marnie Valent

2017 DIRECTORS:

The board consists of TFEPS officers, the immediate past president, and elected directors at large.

2017 COMMITTEES:

Hospitality:

Emalyl Israel (305) 235-0886

Membership:

Sherrin Smith (305) 213-2598

Sheila & Michael O'Dea (305) 253-4907

Raffle Table:

Ralph Hernandez (786) 261-4856

Special Sales:

Marie Nock (305) 232-2257

Show & Sales:

Vivian Waddell (305) 665-5168

Webmaster:

Bob Benaim (305) 793-9755



Membership Application - 2017

We offer 4 different memberships options:

Yearly: _____ \$ 15.00 for individual _____ \$ 17.00 for two members at the same address

Lifetime: _____ \$ 125.00 for individual _____ \$ 150.00 for two members at the same address

Yearly dues are for calendar year - January - December

This is for a New Membership: _____ or for Renewals: _____

Please Print

Name: _____

Phone: H or C: _____

E-mail: _____

Name: _____

Phone: H or C: _____

E-mail: _____

Street Address: _____

City, State _____

Zip Code + 4: _____ + _____

H = Home Phone **C** = Cell Phone

Enclose check payable to: TFEPS

Please mail to: TFEPS – Membership

P.O. Box 902094

Homestead, Florida 33090-2094