



Tropical Fern & Exotic Plant Society, Inc. Newsletter

Volume 13, Issue 7

Editor: Reggie Whitehead September 2011

Annual Plant Auction Monday, October 24

It is almost time for our wonderful, Annual Plant Auction. Our auction will once again be held at Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden, on Monday, October 24, beginning at 7:00 p.m.

People all over South Florida look forward to our auction, and we don't want to disappoint them.

Members are asked to participate in our annual fund-raiser.

To add to our collection we are also asking our usual friends at nurseries and plant shops to participate. Their generosity in the past has been tremendous and it is only matched by our own members' generosity.

Your donations may be of any plant of your choosing. Whether it is a fern, bromeliad, heliconia, aroid, flowering tree, orchid, or any plant that you feel would be a nice addition to our line-up of special plants. Please have plants at the garden no later than 6:30 p.m. so that they may be arranged.

If you are not able to donate a plant to the auction, we still hope you will come out and support us with your presence. To make things easier for purchase, checks and cash, will of course be welcomed.

We will need volunteers to help serve as arrangers, runners, and

people to help man the holding area.

Another way you may donate is to assist our hospitality committee. In the past, many people have been very generous in providing wonderful treats for our refreshment table. If you would like to bring something for the refreshment table, please contact **Emaly Israel** (305) 235-0886 or **Martha Bogaards** (305) 661-2305.

Next Meeting Monday, September 26

The Tropical Fern & Exotic Plant Society presents **Dr. Bruce McAlpin** who will speak on Success with Cacti and Succulents, at 7:30 p.m.

Dr. McAlpin will draw on his many years of experience working with tropical plants at Bob and Catherine Wilson's Botanical Garden in San Vito, Costa Rica; at New York Botanical Garden; at Marie Selby Botanical Garden; and in his own extensive collection that ranges from aquatics to desert plants to share tips for success with these plants for the South Florida gardener.

This month's raffle table will be supplied by Gardino Nursery. Meeting begins at 7:30 p.m. See you there.

The Fern Allies

by Don Keller

The so-called fern allies are represented in south Florida by eight species in four families. These families are not closely related to the ferns or to each other and, with few exceptions, do not look much like ferns. In common with ferns they are vascular plants and reproduce by spores.

All are of very ancient origin and for millennia were the dominant plants on earth, as evidenced by the fossils of many extinct species found in coal and other deposits. Many were veritable giants, growing to the size of modern trees.

At least seven of our species are native. Recent evidence indicates that the eighth, previously thought to have been introduced is also likely to be native.



Psilotum nudum

With the exception of *Psilotum nudum* and *Equisetum*

(Fern Allies continued on page 2)

The Tropical Fern & Exotic Plant Society, Inc.
Officers for 2011

President		
	Mike Twyford	(305) 444-6332
Vice President		
	Marie Nock	(305) 232-2257
Secretary		
	Craig Morell	(305) 667-1173
Treasurer		
	Tom Moore	(305) 666-0219
Hospitality		
	Martha Bogaards	(305) 661-2305
	Emaly Israel	(305) 235-0886
Special Sales		
	Marie Nock	(305) 232-2257
Librarian		
	Juan Espinosa-Almodovar	(305) 444-3103
Raffle Table		
	Skye Palmer	(305) 595-9291
Webmaster		
	Bob Benaim	(305) 793-9755

Board of Directors will consist of the above officers and chairs;
and the following individuals.

Steve Forman	(305) 662-2368
Debbie Lamb	(305) 251-8675
Reggie Whitehead	(305) 613-5944

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hyemale, the native species are not seen in collections as they range from difficult to impossible to cultivate.

***Equisetum hyemale*:** This one is a real water lover. A large colony is growing in shallow water at the edge of a lake in Tropical Park. A second small colony grows in a drainage ditch off SR-27. There is also a colony present in two tree farms near Homestead AFB.

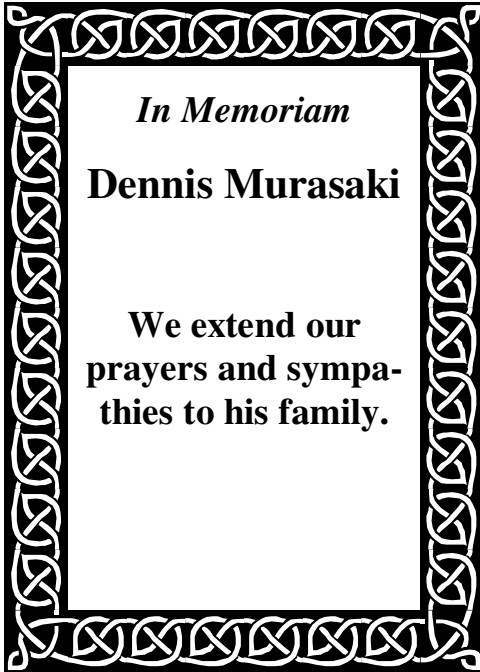
Lycopodiaceae: This, the club-moss family, is represented here by three species in three-genera—neither of which is common this far south. In fact, ***Phlegmariurus dichotomus*** may be the rarest plant in Florida. Only five plants are known and two of these were found in recent years. This, our only epiphytic club-moss, grows on three pop ash trees in the heart of Fakahatchee Strand. Probably fewer than a dozen dedicated swamp-rats have ever seen them.

The other two club-mosses: ***Lycopodiella appressa*** and ***Palhinhaea cernua*** are in two colonies in a preserve near Rookery Bay. Most of the plants are growing in a sandy road which is to be graded down and obliterated to allow the area to return to a “natural” condition. No other colonies are known south of Tampa.



Lycopodiella appressa

Visit us at: **www.tfeps.org**



New Members
Everett Skinner and Andrew Harshaw
15901 S. W. 240th Street
Homestead, FL 33031-1334
(786) 379-5389
eastev@gmail.com

Annual Plant Auction
Monday, October 24
7 p.m.
Get those plants ready!

Raffle Tables for 2011 — 2012

September 26.....	Sid Gardino
October 24.....	Annual Plant Auction
November 28.....	Peter Kouchalakos and Steve Correale
December.....	Annual Holiday Party
January 23.....	Frank and Sally Tastinger
February 27.....	Redland Nursery
March 26.....	Steve and Marie Nock
April 23.....	Philipp Iloo and David McLean
May 28.....	Tim Anderson and Craig Reid

Tropical Fern & Exotic Plant Society
6880 S. W. 75 Terrace
South Miami, FL 33143

Individual Member \$15. Household Membership \$17.
 Life Membership \$125. Life Household Membership \$150.

Member's Name: _____
Name of additional member: _____
Street Address: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip + 4: _____ + _____
E-mail: _____
Phone: _____ Amount enclosed: \$ _____

In Praise of Cucurbits

by John Banta

Interesting that our acquaintance with this family is primarily culinary even though many of its 700 species are fiercely toxic. The cool and elegant cucumber sandwich, Squash of so many varieties and what would Thanksgiving be like without pumpkin pie? Then there is that strange cult that strives to grow giant pumpkins. They are approaching the one ton mark. The lost art of watermelon seed spitting; lost due to the ubiquity of those wimpy seedless hybrids with their flaccid white useless "seeds". Gone are those hard black slippery seeds that could fly past the porch steps. I hope that the cucurbit breeders will enhance the variety of shapes and colors found in the gourds even though the present range is delightful.

To me the Queen of the family is *Alsomitra macro-*



carpa. It was dawn in Kabun Raya and I was watching the ruckus made by fruit bats returning to their daily roosts when I noticed the preposterously large fruits high in the trees. Why on earth would such large fruits (larger than basketballs) be produced so high in the trees? I learned later. When the paper thin skin of the large fruit split it was like an explosion of butterflies. The most aerodynamically evolved of all seeds swooped like swallows in graceful arcs and pirouetted in great circles. Such exacting perfection in evolution is a joy

to behold and it could have caused Alfred Wallace to pee in his britches. The relationships within this remarkable family remain some what obscure. That in itself is cause enough to love them.

Next Meeting, Dr. Bruce McAlpin, Cacti and Succulents , September 26, 7:30 p.m.

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