



# Tropical Fern & Exotic Plant Society, Inc. Newsletter

Volume 13, Issue 9

Editor: Reggie Whitehead November 2011

## Auction in Review

Date—October 24, 2011

Annual Fund raising auction

Our Auction was called to order at 7:30. Preview of the plants began at 7 p.m.

Hospitality- everyone, including people we've never met — all coordinated by Emaly Israel and Martha Bogaards.

Auction ended at — 9:40

This month's meeting was the much-anticipated auction, in which plant fanatics enter the Garden House at Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden, and see row after row of plants available for auction. This year's auction had a good showing of plants, although the crowd was thin. This light turnout had 2 differing aspects to it: it made for fewer dollars for the Society, but the bidding process was much faster, often leading to better prices for the buyer.

There were several stars in the line-up of plants, most notably some impressive specimens of *Asplenium nidus-avis*, and surprise showings of *Platycerium quadridichotomum* and *P. stemaria*, both of which show up rarely at auctions. There were unusual crotons, several species of *Justicia*, a very rare *Fernandoa*, and a body-sized cluster of *Platycerium bifurcatum*. Palm



*Platycerium quadridichotomum*

seedlings, **Plumerias**, **Caladiums**, **Anthuriums**, and **Calatheas**

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## Next Meeting, Monday, November 28

We present **Roger Hammer** who will speak on Florida Icons at our next meeting.

What makes Florida, Florida? With this entertaining collection of photos, anecdotes, and little-known facts, find out the story behind fifty of the Sunshine State's best-known and beloved icons. Included in the program are such Florida icons as tropical flowering trees, Florida's native orchids, the American crocodile, Apalachicola oysters, Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden, Everglades National Park, worm grunting, and even pink plastic lawn flamingos.

Raffle table is supplied by **Peter Kouchalakos** and **Steve Correale** 7:30 p.m. — **See you there!!!**

## My First Staghorn Fern

by Reggie Whitehead

My life as a fern collector began innocently enough by the chance viewing of a staghorn fern in someone's backyard. Little did I realize at the time that that viewing would start me on a path to remote jungles looking for other ferns.

I acquired my first staghorn at a flea market in Miami. There were three staghorn pups attached around a wire basket, and over time those pups grew into larger plants and eventually produced pups of their own. I still have the plant, and today it is a spectacular specimen. You know the type, the kind that is suspended by a heavy chain and hangs down from the branch of an oak tree.

When I bought my first plant, back in the 70's, staghorns were becoming widely noticed, and subsequently their popularity made them the objects of random theft. My plant was too small to really attract attention, but then over time as I began to cultivate and propagate these interesting plants, I still kept them hanging around on my patio. Eventually, I began moving them out into the landscape, and subsequently attaching them to trees — their native host.

As I began learning about them, I decided that I needed to grow as many of them as our South Florida climate would allow. I bought Wendy Franks *Platycerium Fern Facts* book, and proceeded to hunt down many of the species. As I found the different species, from a variety of sources, I would check

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

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

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

|                         |                |
|-------------------------|----------------|
| <b>Steve Forman</b>     | (305) 662-2368 |
| <b>Debbie Lamb</b>      | (305) 251-8675 |
| <b>Reggie Whitehead</b> | (305) 613-5944 |

**Trinity Churchside Garden**

*Landscape Design, Consulting;  
Medicinal, Weird, and Native Plants*

**DAVID MCLEAN**

14 S.W. 11 Street    *Open Sat and Sun and by appointment*    **(954) 768-0423**  
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33315    **Just west of South Andrews Avenue**

*The first Saturday of each month is a special day!*

*Holiday Party*

*Monday, December 19*

*Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden*

SHERRIN A. SMITH (Miami Native)  
PLANT, PET, AND HOUSE SITTING; Personal Assistance  
305 448-2598 Phone    305 668-4622 Fax  
E-mail: sas56chevy@aol.com

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*Gloxinia perennis*

complemented the array of plants for auction. One of the plants I've never seen at an auction was a really interesting garden plant: *Gloxinia perennis*, an easy-to-grow stoloniferous plant that produces 8 inch tall stems of blue-lavender bell-shaped flowers.

But it was the opposite end of the room which had an equal array of desirables: the smorgasbord of food that was brought in to such an extent that there was hardly any room left available on 7 long tables! In the many society meetings I have attended, this array of food and drink was unrivaled except at the grandest of holiday dinners. Kudos to the members who spared no effort to bring in their best dishes, and I can say that the Pecan Pie (originated in Marie Nock's kitchen) was not only delicious, but gone within minutes of its appearance. (I could wax poetic about its fabulous, nutty-sweet, perfectly baked, buttery-crust excellence). We really appreciate the fine work that Emalyl Israel and Martha Bogaard contribute to the society. At our functions, they always make sure that we are all very well fed and attended to. Once again, thanks to Emalyl and Martha, and all of the people who assist them.

*Secretary's note:* For future attendees, when you go to a TFEPS auction, bring your appetite; you won't be disappointed.

The crowd members seemed quite pleased with their hauls, and there was nary a leaf left to worry about when we all left.

Respectfully Submitted,  
*Craig Morell, C.P.A.*  
*Certified Plant Addict*

(Staghorns continued from page 1)

them off in my book.

The first and probably most important source was Jerry Horne in Miami. After Jerry, there was John Bender, and then Richard Button, and Fantastic Gardens and soon I began hearing about different plant people (many whose names I have completely forgotten) who had different species of staghorns. After many years of collecting, I learned of Charles Alford, who was growing all of the species from spores. I eventually was fortunate to visit his first nursery in the Apopka area, and see all of the species doing so well.

As the years have come and gone, many of the staghorns also have died off for various reasons, but 30 years later, I still have a collection of these beautiful plants and still am in awe of how unique they are.

There are some that are a little difficult to grow even in the paradise we know as South Florida, but still many of the species are well worth the growing.

### Welcome New Members

Cindy P. Arnold  
19150 South Flag Drive  
Miami, FL 33157  
(786) 218-7765  
4Danny@bellsouth.net

Barbara Krantz  
15030 S. W. 80 Avenue  
Palmetto Bay, FL 33158  
(305) 235-9369  
BMKrantz@bellsouth.net

Linda Bell  
8370 S. W. 149 Drive  
Miami, FL 33158  
(305) 775-2536  
Lmbell001@yahoo.com

Mary Ann LaRusso  
10855 S. W. 136th Court  
Miami, FL 33186  
(305) 495-7332  
larussom@bellsouth.net



### Raffle Tables for 2011 — 2012

|                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| November 28.....  | <i>Peter Kouchalakos and Steve Correale</i> |
| December .....    | Annual Holiday Party                        |
| January 23 .....  | Frank and Sally Tastinger                   |
| February 27 ..... | Redland Nursery                             |
| March 26 .....    | Steve and Marie Nock                        |
| April 23 .....    | Philpp 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: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

## ***Out of Sight; Out of Mind***

*by John Banta*

Mistakes teach us more than successes. I appreciate the beautiful blue-gray lacy foliage of the California poppy, *Eschscholzia californica*, and the liquid sunshine of its flowers. The seedlings were robust and full of promise as I carefully transplanted them. I watched in disappointed amazement as every one of them wilted and died. This plant simply did not tolerate ANY disturbance to its root system. I knew that many of our native terrestrial orchids seldom survived transplanting. What goes on here? Aware that 80% of vascular plant families have mutualistic relationships with fungi called arbuscular mycorrhiza, I thought this might be a factor. No! The California poppy just

won't tolerate any disturbance.

The arbuscular mycorrhiza did arouse my interest. It seems that many plants reward the fungi in their roots by giving carbohydrates to the fungi in exchange for nutrients like phosphates and nitrates. It seems that the more generous the fungi is the more the plant rewards it with sugars and other goodies that the fungi need. One, no doubt wonders, how applications of fertilizers affects this delicate relationship. And what damage could be caused by applications of fungicides? The roots, being hidden from view, often escape our concerns and appreciation.

***Next Meeting, Roger Hammer, Florida Icons, Meeting begins at 7:30 p.m.***

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