



# Tropical Fern & Exotic Plant Society, Inc. Newsletter

Volume 14, Issue 4

Editor: Reggie Whitehead April 2012

## March in Review

Date—March 26, 2012

Speaker- **Jeff Wasielewski**, Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden (FTBG) Multi-media Specialist

Topic- **South Florida- Why Are Different Than the Rest**

Treasurer's report balance--  
**\$ 11,788.84**

President called meeting to order at—7:45

Hospitality- **Emaly Israel** and **Martha Bogaard**

Raffle provided by—Ree Gardens, which included some rare and unusual plants, such as *Angiopteris evecta*, an *Anthurium 'Marie'* (named after Marie Nock), a rare *Philodendron paludicola*, a yellow *Impatiens* species, a colorful Thai *Aglaonema*, and more.

Meeting ended at—8:45

Marie Nock introduced the speaker, **Jeff Wasielewski**, at 7:50. Jeff is a man of many talents and a certainly diverse history. Currently he is an adjunct professor at Miami-Dade College, in addition to being the multi-media specialist at FTBG. Jeff has a 4 year degree in English, a Master's Degree in Education, and was assistant curator of fruit crops at FTBG before he came into his present position. His program covered the diversity of ecology in South Florida, which has been

shaped by the four basic forces of unique soil types, a wet-dry season, hurricanes and their myriad influences, and the unusual populations of pests, diseases and weeds. Several images were shown illustrating croton scale, and **Ficus** pests. Jeff's presentation was a good example of the clear and measured style of an experienced teacher. The program closed at 8:30.

*Respectfully submitted,*

*Craig Morell, CPA  
Certified Plant Addict*

## Next Meeting, Monday, April 23

The Tropical Fern & Exotic Plant Society presents **Dr. Bruce McAlpin** who will speak on *Platycerium Tricks and Other Odds & Ends* on Monday, April 23<sup>rd</sup> at 7:30 pm.

This lecture/demonstration will share tips for successfully growing *Platyceriums* (Staghorn ferns) and other gardening tricks. Bruce has an eclectic collection of rare tropical plants so the second half of the program will focus on some of his oddities and their growing tips.

There will be plants for Raffle donated by **Philip Iloo** and **David McLean**. Refreshments will be served.

## 2012 Show and Sale

Our 2012 Annual Show and Sale is just around the corner. We are looking forward to another beautiful and successful show and sale.

The society thanks our president, **Marnie Valent** for volunteering to be our Show Chair this year.

All members are encouraged to participate in the show which will take place once again in the Garden House at Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden. There will be ribbons awarded in several major categories. This year's show will feature a landscaped setting, with our plants as the focal point.

There will be 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place ribbons, for not only ferns, but also for flowering plants as well. Larger rosettes will be awarded to **Best Native Plant, Best Flowering Plant, Best Fern, Most Unusual Plant** and **Best in Show**. We are awarding a special ribbon, **Sweepstakes**, for the most Blue Ribbons awarded to an individual.

Members may bring in plants on **Thursday, May 31** beginning at 10 a.m. Plants will need to have Plant Entry Cards and a Plant Entry Sheet. You may pick up cards at the May meeting, or on May 31 when you bring your plants in.

All plants must be identified before they are entered for display. If you are unsure of the botanical name, someone will be there to  
*Show and Sale continue on page 2*



*(Show and Sale continued from page 2)*

When transporting plants to the show, particular care should be given so that important foliage is not damaged. Wrapping plants in newspaper and plastic helps reduce damage and breakage of award-winning specimens. If you are transporting a hanging basket of ferns where the rhizomes have covered the base of the basket, you might want to use a plastic crate to rest the bulk of the plant in so that you do not damage the rhizomes. Also, you could place cushions of wadded up newspaper underneath the plant to keep the fronds from being crushed.

### **Display Plants**

If you are participating as a vendor, your display plants also will need to be brought in on **Thursday, May 31, beginning at 10 a.m.** More information for vendors is covered in the vendor packets. (Since our vendor's plants will be an essential part of the display, it is imperative that these plants be at the Garden in a timely manner so that they may be incorporated into the design — your show designer will be extremely grateful for your help in this regard. Other member's display plants should also be brought in during this period.) If you are a member and are interesting in selling as a vendor, you will need to contact Vivian Waddell, (vcwaddell@yahoo.com).

### ***Selling Plants — Member's Table***

Members wishing to sell through the Member's Table will be able to bring their plants in on Friday, June 1 and Saturday morning, June 2 **before** 9 a.m. Members may bring in up to 30 plants per day.

Your plants **MUST** be double tagged. One tag will go to the cashier (please mark your tag with your initials) and one tag remains with the plant. The society collects 15% of your sales. Members participating on the Member's Table will be mailed a check from our Treasurer, shortly after the weekend sale.

### **Volunteers Needed**

The society will need volunteers to help with the show and sale.

When you bring your plants in on Thursday, we will be setting up the show. If you can spare some free time, our show designers would welcome your help with arranging the exhibit. We will be arranging the display from 12 noon until 7 p.m.

We will need volunteers to sit at our Membership Table (passing out literature, greeting guests, etc.) and volunteers are needed to man the holding area. Volunteers are also needed to monitor the display and answer questions (to the best of your ability, no training required). This also serves to keep plants out of harms way.

Fairchild has also changed its policy for free entrance for society members. If you are a member of the Garden you are automatically admitted free. If you are a member of the society and are working for the show, you will be able to attend for free, if not you will be charged the general admission price for the Garden, \$25.00.

This show and sale, will be another great experience for us. Please participate in any way you can. We would love to have your plants in the display, or your time as a volunteer.

On Friday, June 1, volunteers, are of course invited to attend our Appreciation Luncheon. If you would like to bring something for the Appreciation Luncheon, please contact either Emaly Israel (305) 235-0886 or Martha Bogaards (305) 661-2305.

This is a luncheon that is set up amidst the backdrop of the display, "food among the plants," so to speak. Our luncheon will begin at 1 p.m., prior to judging of the show.

Our Show and Sale has become extremely important to us, and being the only plant show in South Florida that brings in so many tropical plants in one giant display, we will work hard once again to put our best face forward.

Last year's sale brought in many new species of plants that were not in cultivation. Our Show and Sale is the perfect venue for getting new plant material. We will still have the plants you've always loved, and the plants that have eluded you in the past. The bottom line is, please come, and tell your neighbors and friends. And, while at the Garden, take the time to look around and enjoy Fairchild. There is a dedicated shuttle that runs between the new Visitor's Center and the Garden House, this will also help you get your plants back to your vehicle. There will also be porters who will be standing by to help you as well.

We are hoping that you will be able to put in a little time in some capacity. We will not need you for the entire weekend, just an hour or two — but would love it if you did stay and enjoy the show and sale, and tour Fairchild.

Finally, there will be a sign-up sheet at the May meeting, or contact Marnie Valent (305) 235-5929 or Tom Moore (305) 666-0219, if you are interested in volunteering on Show Weekend. Do not forget to tell family and friends, as well as strangers about our beautiful annual show and sale.

# **A Brief Introduction to Ferns**

*Courtesy of the American Fern Society*

## **Introduction**

Ferns have been with us for more than 300 million years and in that time the diversification of their form has been phenomenal. Ferns grow in many different habitats around the world. The ferns were at their height during the Carboniferous Period (the age of ferns) as they were the dominant part of the vegetation at that time. During this era some fern like groups actually evolved seeds (the seed ferns) making up perhaps half of the fern like foliage in Carboniferous forests and much later giving rise to the flowering plants. Most of the ferns of the Carboniferous became extinct but some later evolved into our modern ferns. There are about 12,000 species in the world today.

## **Structure of Ferns**

Ferns and fern-allies are more complicated in structure than most people would suspect. Their structures, though similar in some ways to those of flowering plants are different enough to warrant a distinctive terminology.

## **Fronds**

The frond is the part of the fern that we see as we wander through the woods it is the "leaf" of a fern. It is divided into two main parts, the stipe (leaf stalk or petiole) and the blade (the leafy expanded portion of the frond).

The blade may be undivided to finely cut, each degree of division having a specific term. "Pinnate" blades are divided into leaflets (pinnae), with each leaflet narrowly attached to the central stem (called the rachis in this leafy part of the frond). Blades more divided are designated as bipinnate or even tripinnate with some divided four or five times. The ultimate division are called pinnules. Another type of division is one where the green leafy tissue isn't completely separated from the rachis but rather it spreads along the rachis, instead this degree of division is called "pinnatifid".

Fronds vary greatly in size, from tree ferns with 12 foot fronds to the mosquito ferns with fronds only 1/16 of an inch long.

## **Rhizomes**

Rhizomes would be comparable to "stems" in the flowering plants. Fronds arise from the rhizome. In many cases the rhizome can be inconspicuous or even entirely underground. Rhizomes of tree ferns on the other hand may be 60cm in diameter and up to 12 m tall. In some epiphytic ferns (ferns that grow in trees) and in terrestrial creeping ferns the rhizome roams widely and is quite visible. The fronds that arise from this "stem" arise from the upper side or occur in one or more rows laterally on each side.

The rhizome contains the conducting tissues (xylem and phloem) and the strengthening tissues (sclerenchyma fibers). The conducting tissue, known as the vascular bundle, carries the water, minerals, and nutrients throughout the plant.

## **Roots**

Roots are formed from the rhizomes or sometimes from the Stipe. The roots usually do not divide once they grow from the rhizome. Tree fern roots grow down from the crown and help thicken and strengthen the trunk. The roots anchor the plant to the ground and absorb water and minerals.

***In Memoriam***

*It is with sadness, that we say  
farewell to Mr. Dale Magrew, who  
passed away, late in the evening of  
April 13. Dale was 89 years old and  
had been very ill recently.*

*Dale and Wilma Magrew (who  
passed away a couple of years ago)  
were plant growers extraordinaire,  
and they were excellent benefactors  
of the Tropical Fern & Exotic Plant  
Society. Rest in Peace.*



***Get your plants  
ready for the 2012  
Annual Tropical  
Fern & Exotic Plant  
Society Show and  
Sale***

**Raffle Tables for — 2012**

*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: \$** \_\_\_\_\_

## ***Biopiracy***

by John Banta

A new word for an old practice. This activity has its origins linked to the Indian mutinies and revolts of 1857 against British rule in India. One consequence of this unrest was the British resolve to use greater numbers of British young men in the armed forces in India. This decision made the control of malaria a necessity. The bark of the Cinchona tree, native to Bolivia and Peru, produced the only known effective medicine: *quinine*. A Dutchman, DeVirj, working with Charles Ledger and Englishmen Richard Spruce and Clements Markham obtained seeds and seedlings (illegally) that were transported to India and Java where new techniques in harvesting and growing the trees resulted in ample supplies of quinine.

The inefficient and brutal means of collecting rubber in Amazonia as well as the greatly increased demand for rubber for automobile tires, hoses, etc. prompted Thomas Hancock to suggest to Sir William Hooker of Kew Gardens that a transfer of rubber plants to Asia, much like the transfer of Cinchona trees, would be beneficial. An Englishman, named, Farris, brought 2000 seeds to Kew from Brazil. None survived the journey to India. In 1876 Henry Wickham hoodwinked the Brazilian customs officials and shipped 70,000 rubber tree seeds to Kew and they became the basis of the entire rubber industry in Asia. The results of this biopiracy seems to have benefited the greater good. It is almost like sharing knowledge.

***Next Meeting, Monday, April 23, Bruce McAlpin, Platycerium ferns, etc. , 7:30 p.m.`***

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