



Tropical Fern & Exotic Plant Society, Inc. *Newsletter*

Volume 13, Issue 4

Editor: Reggie Whitehead April 2011

March in Review

Date—March 28 2011

Speaker- ***Philip Iloo, Stelmar Gardens***

Topic- ***Growing Orchids Outdoors***

Treasurer's report balance-
\$11,226.67

President Mike Twyford called meeting to order at — 7:45

Hospitality- ***Emaly Israel, Martha Bogaard***

Raffle provided by—Steve and Marie Nock, Philip Iloo, David Foster. There were numerous choice plants including a small ***Angiopteris evecta***, a hefty ***Schomburgkia*** (***Myrmecophila***), the curious appearance of a 'Belinda's Dream' hybrid tea rose, and a 'General Macarthur' croton. There were several ferns as well, including lush specimen of ***Adiantum*** and ***Hypolepsis***.

Meeting ended at —**9:00**

Elaine Mills announced that there will be a Community Day at the USDA Station at Chapman Field in Coral Gables on April 9. There will be a station tour, a number of plant vendors, and tours of the buildings. Visitors are encouraged to attend this tour, since the facility is

generally closed to the public.

Tom Moore suggested and reiterated that dues are due, or past due. He suggested that members check their newsletters for a membership renewal date.

Marie Nock introduced the speaker for the evening, Philip Iloo of Stelmar Gardens. Philip is an outstanding grower with numerous talents in horticulture. He has worked for several firms in this area, and is well known for his prowess with orchids, ferns, gesneriads, hoyas, and a number of other epiphytes. His nursery is in Homestead, in an area that he gently terms as "well-ventilated". (Read also: breezy). This condition permits his plants the ability to dry off

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2011 Show and Sale

Our 2011 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, Mike Twyford for volunteering to be our Show Chairman 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, June 2 beginning at 10 a.m. Your plants will need to have Plant Entry Cards and a Plant Entry Sheet. You may pick up cards at the May meeting, or on June 2 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

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Next Meeting Monday, April 25

David McLean, a favorite speaker, will show and talk about ***New Plant Introductions for the Garden***. He will explain how they should be used, their heartiness and their requirements. This month's raffle table will be supplied by David McLean and Craig Reid (the Fern Fern).

There will be plants for raffle and refreshments will be served. See you at 7:30 p.m.

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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The first Saturday of each month is a special day!

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after watering, a point he would reiterate many times.

Philip showed off an impressive array of **Phalaenopsis**, **Cattleyas**, and **Dendrobiums**. His main points were that he uses very well-drained inorganic media such as Sta-Lite, or charcoal / lava rock mixes. He showed a beautiful specimen of an ***Epidendrum 'Joseph Lii'***, grown in part shade in a potting mix of lava rock, Pro-Mix, and perlite. In this instance, the plant thrived in a mix of inorganic and organic media. His **Cattleya** hybrids and species were show quality, either mounted on teak plaques or potted in Sta-Lite.

One of his primary recommendations was to use Nutricote fertilizer embedded in a small layer of coconut fiber to keep the fertilizer prills from sifting through the medium. He warned not to use Osmocote, which can release its fertilizer too quickly in hot weather. Some of the **Phalaenopsis** baskets had several generations of flowering keikis attached to the baskets, and the plants had clouds of flowers, leading the members to wonder if he secretly fertilized the plants more than he says he does.....

Philip says he uses liquid fertilizer very rarely, relying almost solely on Nutricote either on the soil, or suspended above the plant in a small packet of screen or nylon stocking. Whatever techniques Philip uses, his plants were among the best grown we've seen in a long time. A visit to his greenhouses is eye-opening for the variety and size of the plants at his business. We

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help you on June 2. All members are encouraged to participate in the display. Judging will be on a fair scale affording both the novice and seasoned grower a chance to win awards.

While there will no doubt be many ferns entered, there will be major awards given to non-fern plants as well.

The success of this show depends on the generous nature of our members, who by the way made the past shows so successful.

All you will need to bring are your plants, we handle them from that point on. You will need to come back on Sunday after the show to collect your ribbons and plants.

Remember, we will begin accepting plants at 10 a.m. on Thursday, June 2. You may bring plants in, up until 7 p.m. that evening. ***However, it would be extremely helpful for plants to arrive early in the afternoon so that they may be properly placed in the display.*** If you need help in getting a plant to the garden, please let Tom Moore know (305) 666-0219. We will try to accommodate all reasonable requests.

Grooming Plants

It is never too late to discuss some of the basics. Our show will have an easy judging standard, however, we still require that plants be as free as possible from glaring blemishes. This means, no pests and no leaves or fronds that are severely marred by pests. Plants will be judged on quality, appropriate number of leaves or flowers, or (in the case of ferns) fronds on a specimen.

Small plants, or young plants certainly should be entered in the show, reasonable care should be made to show them off to their best advantage. This rule of thumb also applies to older, mature plants. Plants should be well-supported and established on their mountings or pots (if terrestrials).

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, June 2, beginning at 10 a.m.** More information for vendors is covered in the vendor packets (being sent out very soon). 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.

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 3 and Saturday morning, June 4 **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.

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. There will be a sign-up sheet at the May meeting, or contact Mike Twyford (305) 444-6332 or Tom Moore (305) 666-0219.

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, \$20.00.

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 3, 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.

Please arrange your schedules so that you are able to participate during the show weekend. Even if you are unable to enter a plant, or volunteer some time, please drop by to support the society, your presence will mean a lot to us. See you in just a few weeks.

See you at the Show and Sale

On the Mend

We take this time to mention that our dear friend *John Banta*, is out of commission for a little while. John, recently had to undergo a heart by-pass operation. He is recuperating nicely. We suspect that he is forcing his body to mend fast so that he can get back to taking care of his plant collection. John also called me, worried, that he would not be out of the hospital in time to write an article for this month, so I gave him permission to take a month or two off. In all seriousness, I admire the man’s knowledge and his sense of responsibility — but, I believe that we will run some of his past articles in his column until John is fully able to write for us once again. Let us keep John and his family in our thoughts and prayers. We wish him a fine recovery.

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learned a lot from his presentation, and hope to see him again soon.

Secretary's note: as of this writing, the April 9 Chapman Field USDA station tour and Community Day has been cancelled due to budgetary concerns at the Federal level. The re-scheduled tour and Community Day has yet to announced.

Respectfully submitted,

*Craig Morell, CPA
Certified Plant Ad-
dict*

Tropical Fern & Exotic Plant Society

Show and Sale

June 4 and 5

Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden

New Lifetime Members

June Fisher-Warren and E. William Warren
418 S. E. 28th Avenue
Ocala, FL 34471-2750

New Members

Gail and Gerald Taccolini
309 Bowlan Street., N
Jacksonville, FL 32211-7915
(904) 721-2948

Raffle Tables for — 2011

April 25, 2011 *David McLean/Craig Reid*
May 23, 2011 *John Lucas/Rebecca & Duane Tannenbaum*

**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: \$** _____

The Most Beautiful

by John Banta

This is a tale of very beautiful plants that look alike but are not closely related. The story begins back in 1882 when a beautiful plant with dark green stripes on its leaves was described as *Heliconia triumphans*. It was originally collected in Sumatra. There are some highly attractive **Heliconias** from Asia but none from Sumatra or Malaysia. This beautiful plant disappeared from horticulture leaving only the almost mythical story of the most beautiful **Heliconia**. It should be noted that botanists questioned the horticultural use of the name, *Heliconia triumphans*. After a long and tangled history, the true identity of this beautiful plant was revealed by Dr. Helen Kennedy to be *Phrynium villosulum* in the **Marantaceae**. This **Phrynium** is truly one of the most beautiful plants. Its 5 foot tall leaves boldly patterned with almost black stripes and rich purple undersides is a joy to behold. The reason it is so seldom seen is its demanding requirements for warmth and very good water. You may have to visit Kalimantan or the Singapore Botanic Gardens to see this beauty.

There is however a beautiful **Heliconia** with striped leaves from Peru originally described as *Heliconia variegata* by Loesener in 1916. It turns out that the epithet "variegata"

was used by Linnaeus in 1753 for another **Heliconia**. In 1976 this remarkable **Heliconia** was collected by Tim Plowman (5900) near Tingo Maria, Peru. Because its original name was determined to be a homonym (variegata=bihai) Plowman, Kress and Kennedy named it 'zebrina' in 1982. This could be considered the most beautiful of the **Heliconias**. The velvety leaves elegantly patterned like *Calathea zebrina* have a rich purple underside in some varieties. The inflorescence is a bright pumpkin orange with a matte finish. The horticulturally desirable small size makes it a great addition to any collection. A very limited amount of this beautiful **Heliconia** is available from an Ecuadorian nurseryman who occasionally sells plants in our area. Lee Moore may also be a source for this plant. To be certain that the plant you get is in fact a **Heliconia** rather than the more common *Calathea zebrina*, look at the junction of the leaf blade and the petiole. The **Calathea** has a pulvinus (thickened tissue which allows the leaf blade to be articulated) whereas the **Heliconia** has a smooth transition from petiole to leaf blade. Understanding why these different plants have evolved similar colors and patterns may lead us to ideas as beautiful as the plants themselves.

Next Meeting, David McLean, New Plant Introductions, Monday, April 25, 7:30 p.m.

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