



# Tropical Fern & Exotic Plant Society, Inc. Newsletter

Volume 12, Issue 6

Editor: Reggie Whitehead June 2010

## May in Review

Date—May 24, 2010

Speaker- Dr. Jeff Block

Topic- The Complete Tropical Garden-  
Treasurer's report balance-\$ 14, 699.50,  
reporting that the Fern Sale netted no  
profit.

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

— Hospitality- Imalyl Israel and Mar-  
tha Bogaards

— Raffle provided by—John Lucas,  
and Duane and Rebecca Tannenbaum

Meeting ended at—9:10 p.m.

Reggie Whitehead spoke about the  
upcoming Fern Sale and Show, with  
attention being paid to the judges'  
luncheon, and the need to have plants  
ready for the show.

Marie Nock introduced Dr. Block, a  
retired anesthesiologist from South Mi-  
ami Hospital, and a long-time plant  
grower. Dr. Block started off by saying  
that he learned a great deal from plant  
societies. (Secretary's note: he's learned  
well, evidenced by myriad Blue Rib-  
bons and crystal trophies). He also  
polled the audience about the length of  
time the members have been gardening,  
finding out that many of them were  
long-time gardeners, a decade or more  
in the craft. He went on to show a num-  
ber of power point images of his prop-  
erty, which many have visited, and all  
have found exceptional. One of the  
many long-term investments made in  
his property was to furnish it with a  
reverse-osmosis (RO) water treatment  
facility capable of producing hundreds  
of gallons of near-distilled-quality water  
per day. Combining this with a perma-  
nently piped irrigation and misting sys-

tem in his conservatory and in many of  
his mature trees, the epiphytes on his  
property are quite happy. Many grow-  
ers have found out that ferns, orchids,  
palms, bromeliads and many tropical  
plants have trouble growing with cal-  
cium-laden water. The growth response  
is amazing, and many "difficult" plants  
grow surprisingly well with RO or rain  
water. For those who know his extraor-  
dinary palms, ferns and bromeliads, the  
proof is readily evident !

Regarding garden design, Dr. Block  
mentioned some of the standard princi-  
ples of landscape architecture: good  
ventilation, mixed textures, long vistas,  
open space as a counterpoint to dense  
plantings, and wind breaks on the  
northwest side of the garden. His gar-  
den has good ventilation from the  
southeast, where warm humid air origi-

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## What A Show

This year's Annual Show and Sale  
was as impressive as ever. Many  
beautiful, exotic and rare plants were  
everywhere, and our members showed  
up in record numbers to help mount  
this spectacular event.

First we'd like to thank **Emalyl  
Israel** for her tireless hospitality duties  
on show weekend. From the onset of  
this year's show, assisted by Martha  
Bogaards, Emalyl was checking on  
members' out meal preferences. She's  
such a considerate person who remem-  
bered which members preferred vege-  
tarian meals, or which members were  
allergic to which foods, or even re-  
membering which special soft drinks,  
to serve. Emalyl's greatest passion is  
to make sure that all of our members  
are well-fed and cared for during the  
duration of the show weekend. And we  
gratefully thank her for all that she  
does for us.

Our members, starting on Thurs-  
day morning, came in and worked tire-  
lessly to set this year's show up. Mem-  
bers who volunteered were, Jerry  
Valent (who helped designed the show  
this year), Bob Benaim, Mike Twyford  
and Miguel Nicolas (who set up the  
structure for the display), and Martha  
Bogaards, Sallye Jude, Jackie Gaudio,  
Vivian Waddell and Bobbie Hull  
(hospitality committee). We also thank  
Peter Kouchalacos, Rusty Knight (who  
came in from South Carolina), Michael  
O'Dea, Ray Roberts (Apopka, FL),  
Tom Moore and Lavinia Acton.

We also thank President Mike  
Twyford for successfully guiding us  
through the weekend; and we thank our  
vendors for once again providing ex-  
traordinarily beautiful specimens for  
our display, as well as having topnotch  
plants in their sales area.

There were lots of prize ribbons

*(Show and Sale continued on page 5)*

## Next Meeting, Monday, June 28

The Tropical Fern & Exotic  
Plant Society presents **John  
Banta** who will speak on *The  
Realm of Peacocks [Thai Gin-  
gers]*.

John has collected plants  
around the world and introduced  
them into cultivation in the United  
States. He is a plant hybridizer  
and innovator currently working  
on inducing variegation into  
plants. Peacock gingers from  
Thailand are one of his current  
passions.

John will have plants available  
for purchase, and this month's  
Raffle Table is supplied by Larry  
and Glenda Weed. See you there  
— 7:30 p.m.

***The Tropical Fern & Exotic Plant Society, Inc.***  
**Officers for 2010**

<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
	Emaly 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

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nates so much of the year. Start a tropical garden by planting the canopy trees first, then work toward the ground level or understory plants. Consider planting micro-gardens, and leave some space for plants to grow into. Many plants grow well in micro-climates created by other plants.

Of particular interest to TFEPS, Dr. Block uses ferns of many types in his garden, including inspirational specimens of *Angiopteris* (especially the pinnate forms), as well as handsome specimens of *Platynerium* and *Davallias* as ground covers. It becomes clear that water quality makes a huge difference in plant growth in these genera. On a wet wall inside a long enclosed conservatory, we saw specimens of *Adiantums* growing with abandon. Dr. Block mentioned he used an old formula gleaned from Fairchild Garden, which calls for plastering coral rock walls with a mixture of buttermilk and manure, providing a potent smell, but a good organic base on which to grow plants.

There was lively discussion about cold damage from the first quarter of the year. Dr. Block mentioned that magnesium based fertilizers, especially magnesium sulfate, had healing effects on plant tissue. As a physician, he noted that the magnesium core of chlorophyll is almost identical in structure to iron in human hemoglobin, acting in the same ways. Many members volunteered their examples of plants which were hit by cold weather. The University of Florida has an excellent weather site called FAWN, for the Florida Automated Weather Network and can be seen at [www.FAWN.org](http://www.FAWN.org). Dry air, cold soil, poor health, and wrong-plant, wrong-place combinations proved deadly to some plants. Dr. Block made mention that healthy plants will withstand and recover from cold events better than stressed plants. He suggested we look positively at weather events, learn from them, and most importantly, SHARE the information. The information is priceless to many growers, not just locally. His collection has 2 state champion trees, a gigantic Silk-Floss tree, *Chorisia speciosa*, and a venerable 'Haden' Mango from dec-

*(Review continued on page 5)*



*Sid and Regina Gardino with Best Show—Adenium obesum*



*Our Judges: Craig Morell, Dr. Lester Kallus, Martha Kent and TFEPS President Mike Twyford*

**2010 Show and Sale**



*Philip Iloo with Best Flowering Plant — Dendrobium amabile*



*Duane & Rebecca Tannenbaum with Best Florida Native — Campyloneurum phyllitidis*



*Sherrie Macchia with Best Fern in Show — Doryopteris ludens*



*Steve and Marie Nock Sweepstakes Winners for Most Blue Ribbons — Featured here with Anthurium regale, one of their prized specimens*



*Glenda and Larry Weed with Most Unusual Plant — Lecanopteris lomariodes*



Photo contributors: Dr. Lester Kallus,  
Steve Forman and Sid Gardino

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ades ago, part of the sprawling mango groves which carpeted the area 60 years ago. Dr. Block finished his program at 9:10 with a call to arms to share information about cold damage, and how plants respond to weather events. His program was enlightening and made many of the members want to install their own RO water units.

Respectfully submitted,

*Craig Morell*

Secretary, CPA (certified plant addict)

(Show and Sale continued from page 1)

awarded this year, and some very spectacular specimens introduced. (See color photos of show plants and Major winners. Also, more photos on our website: www.tfeps.org.

As always, the exhibit featured some rather unique plants, one was the “cat-tail” *Hildewintera colademonopsis* cactus beautifully grown and carefully brought in by Dr. Bruce McAlpin.

Another interesting plant was *Acanthostachys strobilacea*, the pine cone bromeliad, with its long, gangly pencil-thin leaves. Yet, another favorite of the show was a *Neophytum ‘Galactic Warrior,’* with its extra-terrestrial, spiny, red leaves.

Once again our Show and Sale was a success because of our very generous and talented members. Thank you for a great weekend. — Reggie Whitehead, Show Coordinator

### Raffle Tables for 2010 — 2011

June 28.....	Larry and Glenda Weed
July 2010.....	No Meeting
August 2010.....	No Meeting
September 27 .....	Richard Button
October 25 .....	Annual Auction
November 22, 2010.....	Peter Kouchalakos
December 2010 .....	Holiday Party
January 24, 2011 .....	Sid Gardino
February 28, 2011 .....	Tim Anderson/Redland Nursery
March 28, 2011 .....	Steve Nock/Philip Iloo
April 25, 2011 .....	David McLean/Craig Reid
May 23, 2011 .....	John Lucas/Rebecca & Duane Tannenbaum

*Please make check payable to:*

**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.

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## *The Realm of Peacocks*

by John Banta

I admit that I'm taking advantage of the back page this month to promote *this month's* program "*The realm of Peacocks.*" The program deals with my favorite country, Thailand and my most favored plant genus, **Kaempferia**. Peacocks are synonymous with extravagant displays of color and beauty. Any visitor to the temples in Bangkok quickly realizes that Thailand's art makes the baroque style seem absolutely austere. It seems only natural that Thailand should be the epicenter for a genus of gingers known as peacock gingers. Peacocks are native to the Asian rainforests. This evening we shall view some of the riches of Thailand; not the least are endemic

**Kaempferia**, peacock gingers, that are admired for their beautiful leaves as well as stimulating thoughts about how and why the leaves are so decorated. With over 200 slides to view I still expect to see many of the plants featured in the program sold to members who wish to enrich their gardens with clever plants that hide underground when Winter comes. And dare I hope that some members will try their hand at hybridizing these beauties to produce new and more beautiful Peacock Gingers.

*Next Meeting, Monday, June 28, John Banta, The Realm of Peacocks [Gingers] — 7:30 p.m.*

This Newsletter is also available through PDF and  
our [www.tfeps.org](http://www.tfeps.org) website.

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*6880 S. W. 75 Terrace*  
*South Miami, FL 33143*