



Tropical Fern & Exotic Plant Society, Inc. Newsletter

Volume 12, Issue 9

Editor: Reggie Whitehead November 2010

Auction in Review

On October 25, we held our annual Auction and once again it was a wonderful experience.

As guests arrived they stopped by the bountiful refreshment table which was filled with drinks, mouthwatering appetizers, and a whole array of delectable desserts. As usual, **Emaly Israel** and **Martha Bogaards** coordinated the hospitality committee and provided the crowd with a wonderful table of delicious treats for the evening.

Our auction tables were stocked with a very nice assortment of ferns, aroids, orchids, bromeliads and many other beautiful tropical plants all wanting new homes.

President **Mike Twyford**, opened the evening by giving general rules of the auction and introducing our very popular and energetic auctioneer, **Tom Moore**.



Auctioneer Tom Moore in action

The quality of our plants improve every year, and we are always very grateful for the generous donations from our members and our always-reliable commercial nurseries. **Patricia Bullis** (Bullis Bromeliads) donated six beautiful and colorful bromeliads. Our friends at Silver Krome Nursery (Denis and Bill Rotolante) donated several aroids, plus an unusual Piper, and some very nice **Calatheas**. Our members, such as **Home Chaovanich** (from Thailand), attended the Aroid Show in September and gladly donated a very interesting **Dieffenbachia**; **Ivan Portilla** of Ecuagenera (from Ecuador) also left an unusual **Anthurium** species for our auction. Our members have very unique plants in their collections and were very generous with them. **Charles Alford** sent a mag-

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Next Meeting Monday, November 22

The Tropical Fern & Exotic Plant Society presents **Peter Kouchalakos** who will speak on **The Colorful Neos** (as in **Neoregelias**).

Peter is a longtime grower of the most beautiful bromeliads around, and we are fortunate to have him as our speaker once again. Raffle table will be supplied by Peter as well.

What a great evening this will be. See you at 7:30 p.m.

Maidenhair Foray

People have a natural curiosity about ferns. I suppose being some of the oldest plants on the planet might have something to do with that. They were strange new life forms on our prehistoric earth. However, these strange new life forms have endured and evolved and morphed into what we now have today in our own back yards.

Of course, ferns of old, were huge by today's standards. They would not fit easily or neatly into modern horticulture. But, as millions and millions and millions of years passed, ferns changed. They took on different shapes, and assumed more compatible and comfortable sizes (however, a few are still a little too large to sit on a plant stand in Aunt Fanny's parlor, **Angiopteris evecta** comes to mind).

So, now we have ferns that are perfect for our everyday lives. Ferns that we can easily use to landscape a garden, large or small. Ferns that are there just to look pretty and baffle us, when they don't behave as we expect them to.

While ferns had long ago adapted to their environments, we have decided to call their environments: zones.

According to the USDA Hardiness Zone finder, the zone that fits most of my plants is Zone 10.

The ferns and other plants that I grow do better here, than let's say, in zone 6.

While in the past, I have futilely

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The Tropical Fern & Exotic Plant Society, Inc.
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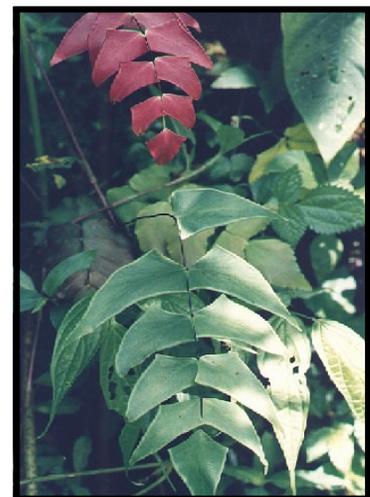
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(Maidenhairs continued from page 1)

tried to grow *Adiantum pedatum* (the Horseshoe Maidenhair) I found in Connecticut years ago. I learned that ferns live where they live, for a *natural* reason. They grow where they have adapted.

Maidenhairs, were truly popular during the Victorian age, and still are popular today. I was chatting with friends in the Philadelphia area recently, and they had no idea that there were approximately 200 species of **Adiantum** ferns. I, of course, explained to them that I used to have quite the maidenhair collection. Years ago, after visiting the stunning maidenhair collection of **Milton Piedra**, I learned to appreciate the beauty and diversity of these plants.

Along with the 200 species of **Adiantum**, there are myriad cultivars and hybrids out there as well. Most people tend to associate maidenhairs with 'baby's breath' flowers. There is not a great similarity other than the fact that some maidenhair leaflets are tiny, and in some way can resemble 'baby's breath' flowers. However, some of them, for example *Adiantum peruvianum*, or *A. macrophyllum*, or even *A. trapeziforme*, have rather large leaves or pinnules.



Adiantum macrophyllum, showing juvenile red growth and mature green foliage

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nificent specimen of the Blue Lycopodium also known as *Huperzia gobellei*. and a rare *Elaphoglossum langsdorfii*.

Other members who gave generously to our auction were **Tim Anderson** (Palm Hammock), **Mike Twyford**, **Vivian Waddell**, **Steve and Marie Nock**, **Ann Marie Scherr**, **Jackie Gaudio**, **Elliott Brown**, **Marnie Valent**, **David Foster**, **Craig Morell**, **Phillip Iloo**, **John DeMott**, **Michael Ferraro**, **Debbie Lamb**, **James Sprague**.

The evening could not've gone as smoothly, as it did without our auction assistants **Debbie Lamb**, **Michael O'Dea** and **Reggie Whitehead**. We gratefully thank **Argeo Hernandez** for manning the holding area; and many thanks to **Bob Benaim** for sitting in as cashier.

(Maidenhairs continued from page 2)

Yes, maidenhairs, as well as many other ferns tend to be mysterious plants, however, once you understand them, like anything else, you can grow them.

Today there are only a handful of people that I know of who are cultivating the many different species. Recently I asked my friends about a grower in Philadelphia, Barbara Varga; they'd lost track of her. People who are growing maidenhairs today are **Duane Petersen** in Wichita, Kansas; **Larry and Glenda Weed** in Metairie, Louisiana; **Ray Roberts** of Central Florida Ferns, and **Craig Reid** of Lord Cheery's Fern Farm, here in the Redland area of South Florida.

Ah, whatever happened to my own maidenhair collection — I suppose, we could chalk it up to too many [plant] irons in the fire, or that great American novel "Gone With the Wind." Honestly, the best growing season for my maidenhair ferns was right after Hurricane Andrew. Ironic isn't it? The oak tree that shelters my pool/patio area where the maidenhairs grew, was pretty much cleaned out by the storm. The opened oak tree branches gave me the proper light to grow these plants to specimen size. However, as the branches grew in and with my busy schedule, the maidenhairs were not able to keep up with the changing conditions. I still have a few maidenhair ferns, but now, other sturdier ferns have taken their place in the collection. — **Reggie Whitehead**

Raffle Tables for 2010 — 2011

November 22, 2010.....	<i>Peter Kouchalakos</i>
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

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

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Golden Landscapes

by John Banta

There are people who believe that the State of Florida lacks the rich natural beauties that are flaunted by other states; majestic mountains, grand waterfalls, cloistered valleys and geological variety. I must admit that unless you have an unusual fondness for carbonates its geology is rather depauperate. But Florida does have its moments of grandeur. One of those breathtaking moments just occurred.

I would be remiss in not advising you to make a point of visiting Fisheating Creek Wildlife Management Area in Glades County near Lakeport on State Road 78 during the third week of October. That is

when thousands of acres of *Coreopsis gladiata* are in full bloom. The air is perfumed with their fragrance and the entire landscape is washed in gold. It is one of the most extravagant floral displays I have ever seen. A scene never forgotten once seen. Florida's flatness and climate provide the unique flood plain required for this astounding floral extravaganza. I urge you to take the opportunity to experience this natural wonder.

When you get your 2011 calendar do make a notation for an October journey to Glades County. You won't regret it.

Next Meeting, Peter Kouchalakos, The Colorful Neos, Monday, November 22, 7:30 p.m.

This Newsletter is also available through PDF and our www.tfeps.org website.

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