

## Do You Come Here Often?

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[See table of contents](#)

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Article abstract

If ferns went to bars...

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## Do You Come Here Often?

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*Jill Sell*

it isn't as easy  
as picking someone up  
in a bar

sporangium play hard to get  
on undersides of fronds  
sometimes hidden by the indusium –  
a cloak of modesty  
but dressed to show cleavage

sporangia cluster  
on Girls Night Out  
form a sorus—  
safety in numbers

millions of spores  
fall to the ground  
or float awhile aimlessly

those that wander  
into moist region  
germinate  
send out green filaments  
that bear hearts as prothallia

only a few get lucky  
others perish long before  
the last song is played

prothallium grows  
male and female organs  
on its underside  
antheridia meet archegonia  
“What’s your sign?”

and like the 5 o’clock  
watering holes downtown  
it takes liquid to make it work  
antheridia’s spermatozoids  
need dew or raindrops  
as well as courage  
to meet and greet and swim  
to the female

upon arrival  
finally  
a fern frond