



October 18, 2013

Dear Friends,

Here is the 32nd issue of our weekly gardening newsletter for Houston, the Gulf Coast and beyond. This a project of The Lazy Gardener, Brenda Beust Smith, John Ferguson and Mark Bowen (both John and Mark are with Nature's Way Resources). We also have a great supporting cast of contributing writers and technical specialists who will chime in and tweak away regularly. We would love to keep receiving your input on this newsletter . . . . comments . . . . suggestions . . . . questions. . . .Email your thoughts to: [lazygardenerandfriends@gmail.com](mailto:lazygardenerandfriends@gmail.com). Thanks so much for your interest.

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Enjoy!

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"The time has come," the Walrus said,  
"To talk of many things:  
Of raintrees--and mushrooms --  
Of winter -- and hibiscus--  
And why whiteflies won't die --  
And whether pigs have wings."

- - my apologies to Mr. Lewis Carroll (nee Charles Lutwidge Dodgson)



## A POTPOURRI OF RAINTREES, MUSHROOMS, WINTERIZING HIBISCUS AND WHITEFLIES!

by BRENDA BEUST SMITH

Look up! See all those yellow flowers (above)? One of Houston's true floral treasures often goes totally unnoticed until its flowers fade away!

Golden raintrees are in bloom now all over the city. But most folks won't pay any attention until the beautiful huge yellow flower clusters go to seed and produce billions of peach-colored pods.

Remember the story of Johnny Appleseed? The legend says that hidden within his packages of apple seeds, that he spread across the nation, were a handful of miracle seeds that would produce the beautiful flowering tree that inspired Ross Lockridge, Jr., to write the novel-turned-movie "Raintree County."

Who else would tell you these things?

\* \* \*

*"Nature alone is antique and the oldest art a mushroom."*

-- Thomas Carlyle

Is your yard full of mushrooms? Mine sure is. But I haven't seen any that are this much fun!



Gwen Cnchewski found these birdnest mushrooms on top of the soil in a potted plant on her Klein area back patio. The tiny "cups" are about as wide as a pencil eraser with very tiny "pebbles" in them. Turns out these are bird nest fungi. The little disks inside the 1/2-inch wide cups are spores with sticky sides so they will cling to whatever they touch when rain splashes them out into the air. The resources I found said they're not poisonous. But I sure wouldn't eat them.

Mushrooms are like the top of an iceberg. What you see is the fruit of the iceberg (or huge organic material mass) underground.

I think they're neat. They're a sign your yard has a healthy abundance of organic matter.

Temperatures, sun, moisture have to combine in a just-right combination for mushrooms to appear. You can't stop them unless you want to destroy the wonderful organic balance in the soil that's produced them. They don't last long. One day you'll look out there and they will all be gone.

If they offend, or you're worried about children eating them, use disposable gloves to pick them up. Put them in a plastic bag and put it in the garbage. Husband mows them all the time and we've never noticed that this makes them spread. They last such a short time anyway.

If you're into FUNgi (they are, aren't they?), Jesse Jones Park and Nature Center in Humble has a neat program coming up: "No Fungi, No Forest," 1-3 pm on Thurs., Nov. 21. Details at [www.hcp4.net/jones](http://www.hcp4.net/jones) or 281-446-8588.

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At Hibiscus Society meetings, competitions show off the best of the best such as, l to r, DOUBLE-Windjammer by Gloria Mikulenska; SINGLE-June's Dragon by Joyce & CJ Melebeck; MINI-Liattle Rapsallion by Cindy Adkins and SINGLE-June's Dragon by Joyce & CJ Melebeck

## WINTERING HIBISCUS

One of the neat things about joining any of our plant societies is the wealth of information - geared specifically to our area - that comes monthly in their newsletter. Super advice from folks who aren't trying to sell you anything!

The American Hibiscus Society, Lone Star Chapter's "Petaloid," for example, includes not only pictures of winners from the last meeting, but a lots of advice on wintering hibiscus.

Mind you, most hibiscus winter over here just fine. The more winters they survive, the tougher their root systems get and the more cold they can tolerate. Mulching well helps keep the roots warm and may make the difference between returning or not returning in spring.

But if you're into the truly fancy tropical hibiscus, and don't want to risk a winter kill, the many tips offered by Marti Graves in the latest Petaloid include:

- \* A few plants can be moved into the house for the winter. They need sun and great drainage. Even so, expect some leaf/bud drop. That's normal.
- \* Use a rolling cart to move potted hibiscus from garages into sun during day. They need circulation and sunlight. Even this will trigger normal bud and leaf drop.
- \* Plan to cover inground plants that can't be moved. Some even build mini-greenhouses over multiple plants. (Make sure this doesn't violate deed restrictions!)
- \* For mild freeze protection, string plants with Christmas lights, then cover with a freeze cloth fastened with clothespins.
- \* For individual plants, use a tomato cage covered with a blanket, then plastic.
- \* Freeze cloth (available at nurseries) is worth the investment.
- \* Watch temperatures. They fluctuate widely here. Temperatures rise quickly under plastic, so it should be removed during daytime.
- \* Reduce watering during winter but don't allow them to completely dry out. If plants are under plastic at a close distance, water only roots, not foliage.
- \* Reduce amount, frequency of fertilizer starting in November. Use a ratio that includes more potassium and

less nitrogen. Increase nitrogen in March when temps rise.

\* Plastic should never touch the leaves of the plants.

More on winter hibiscus preps and greenhouses will be discussed by Gloria Mikulenska at the free, open to the public, Hibiscus Society meeting, Tues., Oct. 22, 7:30 p.m. at the Metropolitan Multi-Service Center, 1475 W Gray St, Houston, TX 77019.

## EXPERT ADVICE DEPENDS ON YOUR STARTING POINT!

Jo has a problem with her Maid of Orleans gardenia, which she loves for the scent. Whiteflies. She tried insecticidal soap, and it did knock them back, but they returned. What now?

I've always said my real expertise lies in knowing where the real experts are. But this dilemma does illustrate my philosophy of gardening which, I know, isn't shared by all. My reply to Jo:

"You don't say, Jo, where you live and that makes a HUGE difference. Maid of Orleans - like azaleas, camellias, magnolias, hydrangeas, magnolias and other gardenias - is going to want porous, slightly acidic soil that is extremely well-drained, even rainfall/moisture and, while it can take hot temperatures, no prolonged periods of extreme drought and morning/noon sun.

*"Healthy plants have a natural resistance to disease and insects (including whitefly). Sometimes the insects are just "passing through," and although they are not fun, they don't do any permanent damage and can be ignored until their season passes. If they are causing unacceptable damage, then that tells me the plant is not happy and so its resistance is down. Why?*

*"Is it getting too little or much water? Sun? Drainage? Is your plant one of those varieties that has been so over-manipulated by hybridizers that it's just inherently weak? I think that's what's happened with many of our plants. They keep trying to make the plants smaller (for our smaller yards) while not losing the prolific blooming and the result is a plant that is weaker overall.*

*"My solution would be to 1. ignore it or 2. find another plant that's hardier and doesn't have whitefly problems. We have so many super-hardy-here plants available now."*

But I figured Jo might not agree with my approach. So turned to my cohort on this magazine, Mark Bowen, for some more helpful advice. Mark's recommendation:

*I would recommend spraying the leaves (top and bottoms) with soybean oil. You can go to the grocery store if you want and buy Wesson or some other brand of Soybean Vegetable Oil, or you can look for "Natural Oil" soybean oil under the San Jacinto Environmental Supplies label. Use 7 tablespoons of soybean oil per gallon of water to spray the leaves weekly until the whitefly problem has passed (hopefully).*

*Keep in mind, soybean oil should only be used when daytime temperatures are under ninety degrees. Soybean oil works much the same as a dormant oils do by smothering whiteflies, but it has fewer side effects than petroleum derived dormant oil or other conventional treatments. If gardenias get too dry in the summer, they tend to attract whiteflies more than usual.*

*Ultimately keep in mind that gardenias are very attractive in general to whiteflies. If the issue stays manageable, it might be fun to keep your plant. But if it becomes a regular chore to keep the whiteflies at*

*bay, you might consider substituting.*

There's room for all of us in the garden!

\* \* \*

NEED WHEN TO DO WHAT GARDENING HELP IN THE GREATER HOUSTON AREA? Brenda's "Lazy Gardener's Guide on CD" gives month-by-month reminders of when to plant what, fertilize, prune, etc. \$20. Make checks payable to Brenda Beust Smith and mail to "Lazy Gardener's Guide on CD," 14011 Greenranch Dr., Houston, TX 77039. PDF file.

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Need a gardening/environmental speaker for your group or school program? Brenda has list of dozens of great horticulture/ecology Upper Texas Gulf Coast area speakers, many of whom are free. Email her for a free copy or for criteria to have your name added as a speaker: [lazygardener@sbcglobal.net](mailto:lazygardener@sbcglobal.net).

Questions aimed at me can be emailed to [lazygardener@sbcglobal.net](mailto:lazygardener@sbcglobal.net) (altho I'll get any you send to this newsletter as well).

ARCHIVES OF BRENDA'S COLUMNS:

Link to archives: <http://archive.constantcontact.com/fs172/1112503958110/archive/1112822112421.html>

For correspondence that is specific to Brenda, feel free to email her directly at [lazygardener@sbcglobal.net](mailto:lazygardener@sbcglobal.net).

## For the 'Best Ever' fall flowers

By Mike Serant





Fall is a special time a year for many reasons. One my favorite reason is the beautiful fall color we can enjoy with a variety of gorgeous fall & winter annual color. We buy them small and with the right care they bush out into these little mountains of blooms that bring joy every time we see them. Very inexpensively we can dress up any property.

The big keys from **an Organic point of view** are reduced culture stress and proper nutrition.

**Cultural Stress** - Annual fall flowers do not like a lot of water. Too much water brings on soil diseases which is the biggest problem facing our annual color. We often forget that summer is over and the heat is drastically reduced from the summer. Plus flowers are always planted in prepared top soil which contains a lot of organic matter. Organic matter holds water. This is much different than the soil turfgrass is grown on which contains very little organic matter. On top of all this flowers always get a layer of mulch which further holds water.

**Bed Preparation** - We are not talking about a lot of space when we plant flowers even on large commercial properties so we can invest in great growing soil. True plant health begins in the soil. For new beds or containers look for quality top soil with properly aged compost, clean sand mixed in and is slightly acidic. The top soil must drain well and contain a lot of beneficial microorganisms.

If you don't want to replace the entire soil site then add quality, well-aged compost. You should plan for a cubic yard of compost to cover 125' - 250' before you work into the soil to a depth of 3" - 4". Good compost will be rich in beneficial microbes and nutrients.

**Fertilization and Disease Prevention** - These two major areas will go hand in hand. We already visited about 'not overwatering' and the beneficial microbes you get by adding well aged compost products. Remember when given a chance good microbes beat bad microbes every time. When buying new plants it is very important to look at the plants carefully (take a few out of the pot and look at the roots) to make sure they are healthy to start with.

At time of planting use 4 lb of a quality, granular organic fertilizer per 100 sq ft with a Nitrogen-Phosphate-Potassium of something like 8-4-6. Make sure the organic fertilizer has rich, diverse nutrient sources and does not contain any poultry products.

A well-made organic fertilizer will never burn and will be completely safe for all children and pets. Some of your better grade organic fertilizers will be inoculated with beneficial microbes as well. With this addition you want a large variety of beneficial microorganism species and in sufficient number to actually do you good. A properly made organic fertilizer will feed the indigenous microbes in your soil, the aged compost plus the inoculated organic fertilizer will then further increase the microbe numbers. The value will be increased growth and disease protection. Much like we see here:





After installation water in well with a well-made liquid organic fertilizer that contains seaweed, fish, molasses and humic acid to ease transplanting and to fast start the new planting. Finally apply a 1" layer of aged native hardwood mulch and Viola' ... you're done!

Follow Up - After initial use with the organic liquid fertilizer re-apply this product every 2 - 4 weeks as a foliar spray to keep your flowers jumping. Annual flowers are heavy feeders and will enjoy the nutrition you give them.

Conclusion - With healthy plants to start with, correct watering, healthy soil/mulch and quality organic fertilizers you will have outstanding flowers and another reason to smile this fall and winter.

Mike Serant co-owns and manages San Jacinto Environmental Supplies/MicroLife All Organic Fertilizers. He is a 30 year veteran in the professional landscape industry and co-founded OHBA, [www.ohbaonline.org](http://www.ohbaonline.org), a 501-c-3 Organic educational non-profit. You can access Mike via MicroLife Facebook or email [mserant@sanjacsupply.com](mailto:mserant@sanjacsupply.com)

MULCH CORNER

BY JOHN FERGUSON

BROWN PATCH





The season for "brown patch" is upon us. Brown Patch in St. Augustine and other grasses is a fungal disease that occurs most frequently at daytime temperatures of 75-85 degrees Fahrenheit and with cooler nighttime temperatures (sometimes in the spring but most commonly in the fall). It grows best in the moist soils that we have in the fall. Symptoms include yellowish grass with grayish ring of wilted grass at edges of patch, several inches to many feet across. Grass blades will easily pull off of stolons in grayish area. The disease damages roots, stolons, and nodes. The disease often starts in the spring and becomes bad in the fall, it survives best in turf grass with excessive thatch (healthy soils do not have thatch).

Have you ever wondered why some yards get brown patch and others do not? Have you noticed that your neighbor whom never fertilizes or waters their yard does not seem to get brown patch? There is a reason why!

Healthy soils have a species of bacteria in them called actinomycetes. This good bacteria eats the bad fungus that causes brown patch and other bad fungus like "Take All", "St. Augustine decline", etc.). This good bacteria is very salt sensitive like many species of bacteria. The reason we use salt in canned goods, ham, bacon, jerky and other foods to preserve them is that salt kills bacteria. Hence, when we apply an artificial fertilizer (chemically a salt) we kill this good bacteria that prevents this disease.

Brown Patch is a soil borne fungus (*Rhizoctonia solani*) that thrives in unhealthy soils. It is commonly found in soils that have been treated with synthetic artificial fertilizers, fungicides, pesticides, herbicides, and other toxic and dangerous chemicals.

Watering with municipal water also kills this good bacteria. The reason we add chlorine and chloramines to our public water supplies is to kill bacteria. As a result, the more one waters the greater their chance of getting this disease. Coupled with the use of artificial fertilizers it is a sure fire recipe to get brown patch. Also when we use synthetic nitrogen fertilizer it causes fast but weak growth. This weak growth is more susceptible to many diseases and insect problems and is always made worse by poor drainage and poor aeration.

Note: When lawn maintenance companies mow someone's yard with this disease they will often transfer the pathogen spores to your yard unless they clean and sterilize the mower between yards.

Treatment:

We have several options to control this disease. First, we have to quit doing the things that led to this disease in the first place.

For severe cases there is a product called "Actinovate" from Natural Industries that contains this good bacteria "actinomycetes". When applied according to directions it will quickly control this disease. This bacteria also kills (eats) some of the good fungus also. Hence after a couple weeks and the good bacteria has done its work we have to inoculate the soil with these other good microbes. The easiest, cheapest and best method is a good compost. Note: Low quality compost does not work.

There has been several studies that have shown that corn meal is also a natural way to control this disease. Agricultural corn meal works best. A few years ago the USDA tested many brands of grocery store bought corn meal and they found that Aunt Jemima stone ground corn meal worked the best.

A good compost is very effective at controlling brown patch and many other diseases. Compost should be applied at the rate of at least 1/4 inch but not more than a 1/2 inch layer at one time as we do not want to smother the grass.

Lastly a good compost tea has been shown to be an effective control. It takes more effort to make the compost tea correctly hence it is not the best solution for most home owners. Note: There are several companies in Houston that do it correctly.

## Prevention:

- 1) Use only low salt good quality organic fertilizers
- 2) Apply compost 1/4 inch to 1/2 inch deep every year on your grass
- 3) Apply some type of trace minerals (e.g. green sand) every 2-3 years to your grass
- 4) Quit watering, you will not need it.

Note: My landscape has been featured in Better Homes and Gardens magazine. In the severe drought of 2011, I only had to water eleven times all year to keep everything in the landscape lush. What I saved on water costs paid for all the other things I did in the garden!



The picture above is a typical example of brown patch.

## FREE TREES!

CenterPoint Energy and Trees for Houston are in the process of giving away 2,500 3-5 gallon trees as part of the Energy Saving Trees program. Studies have shown that the right trees planted in the right place can save

up to 30 percent through summer shade and slowing cold winter winds, and these trees will be available to Houston-area electric customers who agree to plant them in energy-saving locations. The program will run through October 18, 2013, while supplies last.

Available treesLive oakBaldcypressBurr OakCedar ElmChinkapin OakDrummond's MapleLoblolly PineMexican White OakNuttall OakOvercup OakPecan TreeShumard oakWater Oak

If you are a CenterPoint Energy customer [click here](#) to register for a tree. Be sure to register before Friday, Oct. 18.

## GARDENERS FORUM

### BOUNTIFUL BANANAS

#### QUESTION:

We have two Dwarf Orinoco and one Ice Cream trees with fruit in the Christian Community Service Center garden. This would not be unusual except these trees are all less than a year old. What do you think might account for this? Note we have to brace the small trees because the stalks are almost to the ground. Also note the double bloom on one of the trees. Best regards, Kenneth



#### ANSWER:

If I had to guess (and that's what I'm doing!), I'd bet it's been our recent periods of intense drought followed by heavy rains. Sometimes our heat/droughts scare plants so bad, make them think they're dying, so when rains come, they immediately set out to produce seed to continue the species. For us, that means flowers and, in your case, fruits.

Or it might not be that traumatic. Sometimes extreme weather just makes a plant go dormant in self defense, like they do when they feel cold coming in winter or heat coming in summer.. Then the weather changes (gets warmer, colder or wetter) and they are tricked into coming out of dormancy at the wrong time of year and bloom, etc.

Or . . . It could be your plants were treated by the grower with growth hormones to make them more visually

appealing, etc., to buyers and these also triggered fruit production. Or, it could be a benefit of these varieties! Whatever, ENJOY!

Brenda

## IN THE NEWS

**Stretching Your Dollars With Natives:** <http://abclocal.go.com/ktrk/video?id=9288588>

**Mosaiculture:** <http://myvirtualgarden2.blogspot.com/2013/09/mosaiculture-exhibition.html>

## WEEKLY EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS CALENDAR

October 18-19 - 41st Annual Herb Fair, South Texas Unit, Herb Society of America, (new location) Bethany Christian Church, 3223 Westheimer, Houston. Oct. 18, 4-7pm; Oct. 19, 8am-1pm. Herb plants, herbal products, crafts, jellies, blends, books, garden supplies, etc. Free growing advice. Special classes: 9 a.m.: Lois Sutton & Pam Harris, "Sitting Pretty - Assembling Herbal Chairs" and 10:30 a.m.: Beth & Jim Murphy, "Small Space Herb Gardens featuring Containers, Sprouts and Propagation Tips." Proceeds benefit local and national herb gardens and education. Details: <http://herbsociety-stu.org/>

Oct. 18-19 - Jerry's Jungle Garden Open House and Plant Sale, 9am-5pm both days. Rare and unusual tropical plants. 712 Hill Rd., Houston (832-978-5358 or [jerrysjungle.com](http://jerrysjungle.com)).

October 19: Urban Harvest's Backyard Chickens. 9:00 - 11:00 am. \$24 members. \$36 non-members. Private Residence East of downtown near Clinton/Waco. For more info: 713-880-5540 or [www.urbanharvest.org](http://www.urbanharvest.org)

October 19: Free Clinic - Fall Grasses for Texas Gardens, 10:15 a.m. at both Cornelius Nursery locations, 1200 N. Dairy Ashford and 2233 S. Voss, <http://www.calloways.com/clinics>

October 19: 1:30 p.m., Companion Planting Lecture by Dianne Norman at Wabash Antiques & Feed Store. Companion planting is based on the idea that certain plants can benefit others when planted next to, or close to one another. Dianne will discuss which vegetables that, when planted together are mutually beneficial. Instructor: Dianne Norman owns her own Wholesale Nursery, is a Texas Master Gardener and had one of the first Organic Subscription Farms in the Coastal area.

October 19: Huntsville: The 4th Annual Butterfly Festival & Plant Sale will be held October 19, 8 a.m. until 2 p.m., 102 Tam Road, Huntsville. Walker County Master Gardeners invite you to celebrate butterflies with



seminars, garden tours, face painting, children's activities and a monarch Tag and Release event. Natives, fruit trees, roses, perennials and butterfly merchandise for sale. Located at the corner of Highway 75 North and Tam Road approximately 2 miles north of the Pilot Truck Stop on Highway 75. Call 936-435-2426 for more information.

October 19-20: Peckerwood Garden in Hempstead, TX, would like to let everyone know of their upcoming Fall Open Days. We will be open two weekends, October 19 & 20 and November 9 & 10. Plant sales are from 11:00 am to 5:00 pm. Guided garden tours are at 1:00 & 3:00 pm. Tours are \$10.00. The garden is not wheelchair accessible and please, no young children. The Garden is not a "wander at will" type location and is only available through the guided tours. Peckerwood Garden is located at 20571 Hwy. 359 in Hempstead, TX. The phone number is 979-826-3232 and e-mail is [info@peckerwoodgarden.org](mailto:info@peckerwoodgarden.org). We can also be found on Facebook.

October 21: 8:30 a.m.- 11:00 a.m. Harris County Master Gardeners at Precinct 2 will host Open Garden Day at their Genoa Friendship Garden, 1202 Genoa Red Bluff Rd., Houston, TX 77034. Master Gardeners will be on hand to answer your gardening questions. Hours are 8:30 am - 11:00 am with a program on dividing Daylilies, Canna Lillies and Iris at 9:30 am. Free and open to the public. Children invited! For more info: 281 855 5600 or <http://hcmga.tamu.edu/Public/>

October 22: Urban Harvest's Compost & Compost Teas. 7:00 - 9:00 pm. \$24 members. \$36 non-members. United Way Community Resource Center, 50 Waugh Dr. 77007. For more info: 713-880-5540 or [www.urbanharvest.org](http://www.urbanharvest.org)

October 22: La Marque: Galveston County Master Gardener and Landscape Designer Karen Lehr will present "Landscape Design - Analyzing your Landscape," 6:30-8 p.m. Tuesday, October 22. This is first in a series of three programs that will give you the tools to analyze your own site and assess your landscape needs. It is suggested all three programs in the series be registered for and attended as the information advances through each program and will not be repeated. Dates of Landscape Design II and III are planned for October 29 and November 5. Seminar will be held at Galveston County AgriLife Extension Office in Carbide Park, 4102 Main Street (FM 519), La Marque. For course reservations, call 281-534-3413, ext. 12 or email [GALV3@wt.net](mailto:GALV3@wt.net).

October 23 at 7:30 pm - Lecture on "Endangered Cactus & Succulent Species in México and the United States." Presented by Houston Cactus & Succulents Society member Liliana Cracraft at the Metropolitan Multi-Service Center, 1475 West Gray, Houston, TX 77019. Free.

Oct. 25: 2nd Annual Sustainable Landscape Conference - A Catalyst Landscapae: Taking the LEED with SITES, 8am-2:15pm, Big Stone Lodge, Dennis Johnson Park. Co-hosted by Mercer Arboretum & Botanic Gardens, this daylong conference will address Houston's explosive growth and the need for the longterm energy and resource-efficient building techniques promoted by the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) and Sustainable Sites Initiative (SITES) developed to encourage low-impact landscape development schemes. For fees and other details, contact The Mercer Society at 281-443-8731, or [msociety@hpc4.net](mailto:msociety@hpc4.net).

Oct 26th OHBA's 'OktOHBAfest'! OHBA's annual party that raises money for college scholarships. This year it is at Buffalo Brewery 6:30 pm - 9:30 pm. Coming in costume gets you a discount. Please go to [www.ohbaonline.org](http://www.ohbaonline.org) to register and see details.

October 26: 10:15 a.m., Free Clinic - Spring Bulbs - Fall Planting at both Cornelius Nursery locations, 1200 N. Dairy Ashford and 2233 S. Voss <http://www.calloways.com/clinics>

October 26: Brazoria County Master Gardeners will present the Third Annual EcoFest at the Brazoria Environmental Education Station (BEES) on October 26 from 9-noon. The BEES is located at 585 CR 443

Angleton, Tx 77515. The fall plant sale plus demos and participation in container gardening, yard art, Texas Superstar plants, seed harvesting, daylily and amaryllis dividing, seed saving, children's activities and a tour of the BEES gardens will be offered free to the public. Call 979-864-1558 x110 for more info.

October 26: Have you wondered what Rainwater Harvesting is about? Are you concerned about our local water and would like local information? Would you like to collect water in a rain barrel! Then, we have the class for you! You are invited to a Home Landscape Series Water Conservation Workshop on Saturday, October 26, from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at the T. E. Harman Center, 226 Matlage Way, in Sugar Land, sponsored by Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, City of Sugar Land, and the Fort Bend County Master Gardeners. Topics will include landscaping to conserve water, irrigation efficiency, managing water supplies, and rainwater harvesting methods, including the opportunity to assemble your own take-home barrel! The registration fee is \$25.00 and more information and a registration form are available at <http://www.fbmj.com> or by calling Brandy Rader at 281-633-7029.

November 1-3: Antique Rose Emporium's 25th Annual Fall Festival of Roses. Free. Programs: Nov. 1 - 11am, Propagation by Glenn Schroeter; 1pm, Grow Roses by Judy Barrett; 2:30pm, Psycho Lighting by Linda Lehmusvirta; 3:30pm, Afternoon Tea. Nov. 2 - 11am, Grandma's Garden by Greg Grant; 1pm, Lawn Gone by Pam Penick; 2:30pm, Bulbs by Chris Wiesinger; 4pm, Fearless Gardening 101 by Felder Rushing. Nov. 3 - Behind Scenes Tour by Mike Shoup. Details: [www.antiqueroseemporium.com](http://www.antiqueroseemporium.com)

November 2, 2013 from Noon - 4:00 pm. Fall Rose Show of the Houston Rose Society. Note new meeting location: the Parish Hall of St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, 1819 Heights Blvd, Houston, Texas 77008. Free admission. [www.houstonrose.org](http://www.houstonrose.org) or Like us on Facebook.

November 2: Saturday with the Master Gardeners - November 2, 2013  
Garden Talk Topic "Fall Vegetable Gardening"

November 2: Join the Fort Bend County Master Gardeners' in their 4 acres of demonstration gardens on Saturday, November 2nd and talk to the MG volunteers who design and maintain them. It's a great way to learn about gardening and plants well-suited to Fort Bend County. Park in front of the Agriculture Center located at 1402 Band Road, Rosenberg, 77471. Take one of the sidewalks back to the area behind the building where you'll find the gardens and Master Gardeners at work. Gardens will be open from 9:00-11:00 a.m. on November 2nd. Attend an informal garden talk on Fall Vegetable Gardening which starts at 10:00 a.m. in the Vegetable Garden. Call 281-341-7068 or visit [www.fbmj.com](http://www.fbmj.com) for more information.

November 2: Use fallen leaves! Jesse Jones Park and Nature Center, 20634 Kenswick Drive, Humble ([www.hcp4.net/jones](http://www.hcp4.net/jones)), 10 am, bring a plain white T-shirt and create a wearable item. Reservations required; can make starting Oct. 23.

November 2: 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.: Prairie Heritage Festival. featuring nature tours; real live owls, bats, bees, alligators, turtles, snakes & more; performers, food exhibitors, kids crafts and fun for the whole family, free admission, location: Seabourne Creek Nature Park, 3831 Highway 36 South, Rosenberg, for more info. visit [www.coastalprairie.org](http://www.coastalprairie.org) or call 281-633-7042.

November 6: Gardening Daze begins, Wednesdays through Nov. 27, 8:30-10:30 a.m., Jesse Jones Park and Nature Center, 20634 Kenswick Drive, Humble ([www.hcp4.net/jones](http://www.hcp4.net/jones)). Teri MacArthur leader, plant ID, weeding native flower beds at Center or help tend demonstration heritage vegetable garden in pioneer homestead. Details online or at (281) 446-8588.

November 9-10: Peckerwood Garden in Hempstead, TX, Fall Open Days. Plant sales are from 11:00 am to 5:00 pm. Guided garden tours are at 1:00 & 3:00 pm. Tours are \$10.00. The garden is not wheelchair accessible and please, no young children. The Garden is only available through the guided tours. Peckerwood Garden is located at 20571 Hwy. 359 in Hempstead, TX. The phone number is 979-826-3232 and e-mail is [info@peckerwoodgarden.org](mailto:info@peckerwoodgarden.org).

November 13: Humble: Brenda Beust will present "The 10 Commandments of Lazy Gardening" noon-2 p.m., Wednesday, November 13, at Mercer Arboretum & Botanic, located one mile north of FM 1960 at 22306 Aldine Westfield Road, Humble. Learn how to enjoy the garden with less effort. For more information, call 281-443-8731 or visit <http://www.hcp4.net/mercer/>

November 14, 2013 at 7:30 pm. "Patsy's Fool-proof method for Growing Roses from Cuttings" will be the topic of the Houston Rose Society Meeting. Note new meeting location: the Parish Hall of St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, 1819 Heights Blvd, Houston, Texas 77008. Entrance to parking lot is on W 19th Street near Yale St. Our speaker is Patsy Williams, Master Rosarian and Horticulture Judge who will share her time tested technique for rooting rose cuttings. Free admission. [www.houstonrose.org](http://www.houstonrose.org) or Like us on Facebook.

November 16, 8:30 a.m. - 12 p.m: Home Landscape Series Water Conservation Workshop. The public is invited to a workshop that will cover many practical steps that homeowners can take to reduce water use in the landscape and maintain a healthy landscape with plenty of curb appeal. Location: Katy High School at 6331 Highway Blvd. Participants will have hands-on learning opportunities involving irrigation system components, including converting to a drip system and understanding the controller, and assistance in assembling their own take-home rainwater collection barrel. Workshop topics include landscaping to conserve water, irrigation efficiency, managing water supplies, and rainwater harvesting methods. \$25 fee. [www.fbmj.com](http://www.fbmj.com) or call Brandy Rader at 281-633-7029.

November 18: Harris County Master Gardeners at Precinct 2 will host Open Garden Day on Monday, Nov. 18 at their Genoa Friendship Garden, 1202 Genoa Red Bluff Rd., Houston, TX 77034. Master Gardeners will be on hand to answer your gardening questions. Hours are 8:30 am - 11:00 am with a program on dividing Overwintering Tropicals at 9:30 am. Free and open to the public. Children invited!  
<http://hcmga.tamu.edu/Public/> , 281 855 5600

Nov. 21: Forest Fungi Walk, 1-3 p.m., Jesse Jones Park and Nature Center, 20634 Kenswick Drive, Humble ( <http://www.hcp4.net/jones/> ) or 281-446-8588.

December 11: Humble: Casey Scribner and Brooke Judice of Trees for Houston will present "Trees in Urban Areas" noon-2 p.m., Wednesday, December 11, at Mercer Arboretum & Botanic, located one mile north of FM 1960 at 22306 Aldine Westfield Road, Humble. Scribner and Judice will offer information about the importance of trees in an urban environment, recommended trees for our area, plus tips for how to plant and take care of them. For more information, call 281-443-8731 or visit <http://www.hcp4.net/mercer/>

Submit calendar items to [lazygardenerandfriends@gmail.com](mailto:lazygardenerandfriends@gmail.com). Events must be submitted by the sponsoring organization. Please note: "garden calendar request" in the subject line. We list calendar items up to two months ahead of time.

Need speakers for your group? Brenda's "Lazy Gardener's Speakers List" of area horticultural/environmental experts is available free for the asking. Email your request to: [lazygardener@sbcglobal.net](mailto:lazygardener@sbcglobal.net).

## ABOUT US

### BRENDA BEUST SMITH

WE KNOW HER BEST AS THE LAZY GARDENER . . .

. . . but Brenda Beust Smith is also:

- \* a national award-winning writer & editor
- \* a nationally-published writer & photographer
- \* a national horticultural speaker
- \* a former Houston Chronicle reporter

When the Chronicle discontinued Brenda's 45-year-old Lazy Gardener" print column a couple of years ago, it

ranked as the longest-running, continuously-published local newspaper column in the Greater Houston area.

Brenda's gradual sideways step from Chronicle reporter into gardening writing led first to an 18-year series of when-to-do-what Lazy Gardener Calendars, then to her *Lazy Gardener's Guide* book and now to her *Lazy Gardener's Guide* on CD (which retails for \$20. However, \$5 of every sale is returned to the sponsoring group at her speaking engagements).

A Harris County Master Gardener, Brenda has served on the boards of many Greater Houston area horticulture organizations and has hosted local radio and TV shows, most notably a 10+-year Lazy Gardener run on HoustonPBS (Ch. 8) and her call-in "EcoGardening" show on KPFT-FM.

In addition to her position as Production Editor on the Garden Club of America's magazine and her freelance writing career, Brenda's latest venture is "THE LAZY GARDENER'S & FRIENDS HOUSTON GARDEN NEWSLETTER" with John Ferguson and Mark Bowen of Nature's Way Resources.

A native of New Orleans and graduate of St. Agnes Academy and the University of Houston, Brenda lives in Aldine and is married to the now retired Aldine High School Coach Bill Smith. They have one son, Blake.

Regarding this newsletter, Brenda is the lead writer, originator of it and the daily inspiration for it. We so appreciate the way she has made gardening such a fun way to celebrate life together for such a long time.

## **JOHN FERGUSON**

John is a native Houstonian and has over 27 years of business experience. He owns Nature's Way Resources, a composting company that specializes in high quality compost, mulch, and soil mixes. He holds a MS degree in Physics and Geology and is a licensed Soil Scientist in Texas.

John has won many awards in horticulture and environmental issues. He represents the composting industry on the Houston-Galveston Area Council for solid waste. His personal garden has been featured in several horticultural books and "Better Homes and Gardens" magazine. His business has been recognized in the Wall Street Journal for the quality and value of their products. He is a member of the Physics Honor Society and many other professional societies. John is the co-author of the book *Organic Management for the Professional*.

For this newsletter, John contributes articles regularly and is responsible for publishing it.

## **MARK BOWEN**

Mark is a native Houstonian, a horticulturist and organic specialist with a background in garden design, land restoration and organic project management. He is currently the general manager of Nature's Way Resources. Mark is also the co-author of the book *Habitat Gardening for Houston and Southeast Texas*, the author of the book *Naturalistic Landscaping for the Gulf Coast*, co-author of the *Bayou Planting Guide* and contributing landscape designer for the book *Landscaping Homes: Texas*.

With respect to this newsletter, Mark serves as the editor.

## **PABLO HERNANDEZ**

Pablo Hernandez is the special projects coordinator for Nature's Way Resources. His realm of responsibilities



include: serving as a webmaster, IT support, technical problem solving/troubleshooting, metrics management, quality control, and he is a certified compost facility operator.

Pablo helps this newsletter happen from a technical support standpoint.



<http://www.arborgate.com/>



<http://wabashfeed.com/>



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**Save 20%: Redeem this coupon for a big discount on Nature's Way Resources "Container Mix" ( <http://natureswayresources.com/products.htm> ). Please note: this offer is for bagged or bulk material purchases by retail customers only at Nature's Way Resources, located at 101 Sherbrook Circle, Conroe TX.**

**Offer Expires: 10/27/13**

