



February 2,, 2014

Dear Friends,

Here is the 46th 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. Thanks so much for your interest.

Please or sign yourself up to receive this newsletter by clicking the "Join Our Mailing List" link just below. We will never sell or share our mailing list to protect the privacy of our subscribers.

Enjoy!

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WHEN IT FREEZES, THINK HERBS . . . AND BUTTERFLIES

BY BRENDA BEUST SMITH



Exotic butterflyweed, left - if protected in winter - may harbor creatures harmful to Monarchs. It needs to die back! Dill, center, and fennel are two great herbs for attracting butterflies to home gardens.

Did you protect your butterflyweed plants?

I hope not! Please don't if we have any more freezes. You may be doing more harm than good.

In a Jan. 29, 2014, AP article, ["Monarch Butterflies Drop, Migration May Disappear."](#) Mark Stevenson notes the Monarch population wintering in Mexico has plunged to its lowest level since studies began in 1993. U.S. and Canadian experts are warning the migration might disappear altogether.

They blame genetically-modified crops, urban sprawl, illegal logging in Mexico and home gardeners. True, we're at the "least-guilty" end. But we are in there.

Monarch cluster by the thousands on a single tree, so they're counted by the total area they cover. The largest measured Mexican pine/fir-covered area, according to the World Wildlife Fund, was 44.5 acres in 1995. Last year, the measured area was totaled 1.65 acres, down from 2.93 acres three years earlier. Yes, that's 1+ acre now. Pretty drastic.

Those of us who visited the Monarchs' Mexico wintering sites helped slow the illegal logging by providing Mexican villagers with income they so desperately need. But the drug violence has all but stopped tourists from going down there.

So how does covering our butterflyweed in winter affect the Monarch? Exotic butterflyweed (the colorful flowered type we like to grow) is a great plant for gardens. But we MUST allow it to die back to the ground in winter to kill the harmful-to-Monarchs parasites it also harbors over the winter months. Read more about why in ["Are We Gardeners a Threat to Monarchs?"](#)

Exotic butterflyweed will return in spring with the healthy the new growth and flowers Monarchs so desperately need.

How did your herb plants survive the cold?

Herbs are funny plants. We all think we should be growing them. Feel slightly guilty if we aren't growing any. Try them from time to time. Wonder why they die. Give up. Feel guilty cause we're not growing any. Try again.

As fun as it would be to blaviate about growing herbs, the real truth is that my expertise lies in knowing where the real experts are.

If I've learned one thing from multiple interviews with successful home herb growers, it's that you HAVE to know

your own area, make sure you get local growing advice and check all statewide or national (beware!) planting tips against a local source.

That's why, when [Cindy Meredith of The Herb Cottage in Hallettsville](#) sent a list of her herbs that survived our recent bouts with temperatures in the 20s, I figured these are worth passing on.

True, Hallettsville isn't a Gulf Coast environ. But it is less than 2 hours due east of us, with the same freezing temps, so herbs surviving in Cindy's garden should survive here - provided ours are planted in a raised bed, on a slope, in containers or in another "extremely" well drained site. (good example of where "local requirements make a HUGE difference.)

A little later this spring, we'll have our own Lone Star Unit/Herb Society of America expound on common mistakes made when trying to grow herbs around the Greater Houston area.

Good example: most of our herbs are planted in the late fall and thrive through the winter months. In summer, many if not most either die, or go dormant, or look really peaked. (Always makes me think of Australia. Backwards growing climates!)

Cindy's herbal freeze-results:

NO DAMAGE AT ALL:

Bay tree, chives, garlic chives, germander, marjoram, oregano (Hot & Spicy; Greek oregano, Mexican oregano, *Poliomintha longiflora*), Provence lavender, rosemary, salad burnet, santolina, tansy, thyme (French & English), Jerusalem sage, white sage (*Salvia apiana*), winter savory and yarrow (native).

SLIGHT DAMAGE TO LEAVES, SOME WILTING:

Bergaarten sage, cilantro, fennel, mullen, parsley (flat-leaf, curly), dill (fernleaf) and soapwort. (Brenda's note: fennel and dill are great in summer for butterflies)

DIDN'T SURVIVE BUT NOT SURPRISED - THEY'RE IFFY IN OUR AREA ANYWAY:

African basil, fern-leaf lavender, nasturtium, root beer plant (Hoja sante) and rose lemon grass. (Some in this last group might return, Cindy says, but she'd be surprised. She's lost them in the past.)

DIED BACK BUT EXPECT THEM TO RETURN :

Apple mint, black pepper basil, comfrey, lemon eucalyptus, Moroccan mint, peppermint and spearmint

Address your questions to Cindy on her blog: <http://theherbcottage.blogspot.com/>

Any different experience on "herb survival" in your gardens?

Speaking of herbs,

Judy Barrett's "[Homegrown](#)" February newsletter has a lot of great herbal tips. Just be sure to check any actual planting information against a local source as Central Texas does not have the same ecology (drainage, soil, etc.) as our Greater Houston area's subtropical pocket. But this free online newsletter is always a delight to read: <http://homegrowntexas.com/>

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Please read, and consider signing, the petition to establish a Houston Botanical Garden: <http://www.houstonbotanicgarden.org>.

THE LAZY GARDENER'S GUIDE ON CD . . . also based on Brenda's Chronicle column - when to do what in Greater Houston area gardens. PDF file on CD. \$20. Make checks payable to Brenda B. Smith and mail to: Lazy Gardener's Guide on CD, 14011 Greenranch Dr., Houston, TX 77039-2013.

Check out our Calendar of Garden Events below. Don't see your group's activity listed? That's because no one sent it to us! Make sure your events are listed by emailing them to lazygardener@sbcglobal.net. Events will not be picked up from other publications.

John's Corner

Soil Amendments - Rock Wool



This week I want to continue talking about soil amendments of volcanic origin and discuss Rock Wool. Like so many things in life there is a lot of variation in the products sold under the generic name Rock Wool. Rock Wool is mainly used in hydroponics and to a lesser degree as a general soil amendment. Sometimes it is called stone wool or mineral wool.

To make Rock Wool, a type of igneous rock (most commonly basalt) is re-melted and turned into long fibers as it is cooled. This is done by injecting steam into the molten rock or by using a technique called spinners where the liquid rock is spun off into thin long strands and allowed to cool and harden as fibers (think of cotton candy).

These fibers are then coated with some type of resin to help them stick together and pressed into a mat with different densities based on the desired properties of the Rock Wool. Rock Wool is often produced in slabs, blocks, cubes, etc., similar in appearance to bats of fiberglass insulation.

Being an inert rock product, rock wool has a zero cation exchange capacity (CEC) and essentially a neutral pH. The finished product can have a 97% porosity. This requires a grower to provide nutrients in a liquid form and carefully control moisture.

The physical properties of the Rock Wool depend on the orientation of the fibers (whether they are horizontal or vertical). Root development of plants grown in rock wool is often better and fuller if the fibers are horizontal; however, roots become longer and less spread out if the fibers are vertical.

Rock wool is naturally yellow to green in color but is often brown to gray from the resins used to glue the fibers together

Other common uses for rock wool include fire proofing material, insulation, filtration media and sound proofing products. Rock wool is also used in products from brake pads to gaskets. In Europe it has been used as a planting media on green roofs.

Best usage is in hydroponic gardening systems and not as a soil amendment. For more information see the book: "Gardening Indoors with Rock Wool" by Alyssa Bust and George Van Patten.

PROS:

- will not break down (rot or decompose) hence does not lose its porosity
- does not compact
- has no offensive odors
- available in many shapes and sizes
- drains slowly giving growers more control over watering (also holds water well in case of a power outage or pump failure in hydroponics)
- high capillary action allows water to wick into the medium from below
- rapid germination of seeds and rooting of cuttings
- loosens the density of heavy clay soils (will take a lot, expanded shale is a better and lower cost option)
- neutral in pH so it does not change the acidity or alkalinity of soil
- free of pathogens
- as an soil amendment it reduces crusting , cracking and swelling of soils helping with tilth
- can be sterilized (heat or treating with chemicals) and reused in hydroponics
- can be cut up after it has been used in hydroponics and used as a soil amendment
- easy and convenient to use with almost unlimited supply of raw materials to make it

CONS:

- as in any mineral fiber it is an eye, skin and lung irritant and one should always wear a breathing mask and gloves
- must carefully control moisture to prevent root rot and anaerobic conditions or to prevent drying out
- no natural nutrient availability, requiring users to provide all nutrients through irrigation
- has a low buffer capacity to prevent pH change
- variable benefits depending on your soil and where you live
- requires pre-treatment before using in hydroponics or soils
- a few producers use limestone during the melting and spinning phase hence they tend to be alkaline and the pH must be neutralized before usage

WEEKLY EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS CALENDAR

(Events in Houston unless otherwise noted)

Sat., Feb 1. "Rose Pruning Workshop," Fort Bend County Saturday with the Master Gardeners, Fort Bend County Agrilife Extension Office, 1402 Band Road, Suite 100, Rosenberg. 9 - 11 am. Details, 281-341-7068 or <http://www.fbmjg.com/>.

Sat., Feb. 1: "Edibles: Fruits and Berries in the Garden," free clinic, 10:15 am, both Cornelius Nursery locations, 1200 N. Dairy Ashford and 2233 S. Voss. <http://www.calloways.com/clinics>

Sat., Feb. 1: "Antique Roses," 10am, free, Jesse H. Jones Park & Nature Center, 20634 Kenswick Dr., Humble. Details: <http://www.hcp4.net/jones> or 281-446-8588

Sat., Feb. 1: "Introduction to Beekeeping" by John Berry. 1:30-3:30 pm, Wabash Feed, 5701 Washington Ave. Free. Details; www.wabashfeed.com

Sat., Feb. 1: Houston Audubon Society's 5th Annual Bolivar Tree Giveaway, 9-11am, Smith Oaks Bird Sanctuary, High Island. Proof of High Island or Bolivar Peninsula residency required (utility bill or driver's license). 5 tree per person limit. Follow arrow signs from SH 124 and 7th to Sanctuary on Old Mexico Road. <http://houstonaudubon.org/>

Tue., Feb.4: "Empress of the Garden - Old Garden Roses - The Ultimate Plant" by Mike Shoup of the Antique Rose Emporium, noon, Harris County Texas Agrilife Extension Office, 3033 Bear Creek Dr. 11:30 am - \$5 hamburger lunch available. Details: 281-855-5600 or <http://harris-tx.tamu.edu/hort>

Wed., Feb. 5: "Garden Daze" 4-session series begins with Horticultural Coordinator Teri MacArthur, 8:30-10:30am, free, Jesse H. Jones Park & Nature Center, 20634 Kenswick Dr., Humble. Session details: <http://www.hcp4.net/jones/> or 281-446-8588. Future meetings on Wednesdays, Feb. 12, 19, 26.

Thur., Feb. 6: 29th Annual Fort Bend County Vegetable Conference, 8 am - 4pm. Hosted by Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Services of Brazoria, Fort Bend, Galveston, Harris, Wharton, and Waller Counties at Building "B&C" of the Fort Bend County Fairgrounds, 4310 Hwy. 36 South, Rosenberg. Conference presentations will include: Building Soils from the Ground Up, Improve Yields and Quality with Season Extenders, Crop Rotation Strategies, Niche Varieties from Garden to Fork, Pesticide Laws and Regulations Update, Grow It and Sell It!, and Integrated Pest Management - Biological Control Methods. 281-342-3034 or <http://fortbend.agrilife.org>.

Thur., Feb 6: "Angraecoids" by Brenda Oviaat, 7:30 pm, First Christian Church 1601 Sunset Blvd. Houston Orchid Society event, free. Details: Debbie Peterson fgdebbie@gmail.

Sat., Feb. 8: "Grow Astonishing Indoor Orchids" clinic, free, 10:15am, both Cornelius Nursery locations, 1200 N. Dairy Ashford and 2233 S. Voss. Details: <http://www.calloways.com/clinics>

Sat., Feb. 8: "Bed Preparation Basics" by Mark Bowen, 1:30-3:30 pm, Wabash Antiques & Feed, 5701 Washington. Free. Details: 713-863-8322. <http://wabashfeed.com/>

Sat., Feb. 8: "Make Your Bed" by Mike Debrowski of Soil Menders Products, 10am, Enchanted Forest, 10611 FM 2759, Richmond, FEE? DETAILS: 281.937.944. Repeated: 2 pm, Enchanted Gardens, 6420 FM 359, Richmond, FEE? Details: 281-341-1206. <http://myenchanted.com/>

Mon., Feb. 10: "What to Plant and Do Now" by Terry Garner, 6:30 pm, Houston's Multi-Service Center, 1475 W. Gray, Houston. Free, Houston Urban Gardeners event. Details: <http://www.houstonurbangardeners.org/>.

Mon., Feb. 10: Houston Urban Gardeners (HUG) Seed Swap, Warm Weather Seeds. 5:30-6:30 pm,

MultiService Center, 1475 West Gray. Free. Bring small bags/envelopes, pen, warm weather seeds, seedling and/or bulbs (preferably vegetable/native plants). 6:30 pm - HUG meeting begins: "What to Plant and Do Now" by Terry Garner. Details: <http://www.houstonurbangardeners.org/>

Feb. 11-18: "Spring Vegetable Gardening," Harris County Green Thumb Gardening Series: Feb. 11 - 6:30-8:30 pm at Clear Lake Park Meeting Room, 5001 NASA Parkway, Seabrook: Feb. 15 - 10 am-noon at Maude Smith Marks Library, 1815 Westgreen Blvd., in Katy: Feb. 18 - 6:30-8:30 pm at both Clear Lake Park Meeting Room in Seabrook and at Trini Mendenhall Sosa Community Center, 1414 Wirt Rd. in Houston. Details: <http://harris-tx.tamu.edu/hort>

Wed., Feb. 12: "Pre-Hispanic Uses of Cacti and Succulents Among Indigenous People" by Liliana Rodriguez Cracraft, Houston Cacti and Succulent Society. Noon-2 pm., Mercer Arboretum & Botanic Garden Lunch Bunch event, 22306 Aldine-Westfield, Humble. Free but reservations required: 281-443-8731.

Wed., Feb. 12: "Sugar, Sex and Poison: Shocking Plant Secrets Caught on Camera" by William Cullina, Coastal Main Botanical Gardens Executive Director. 9:30 am - Coffee, 10 am - Lecture, St. Martin's Episcopal Church, 717 Sage Road, Houston TX. The 2014 Nancy Stallworth Thomas Horticulture Lecture, presented by the Garden Club of Houston. Free. Details: <http://www.gchouston.org>

Thur., Feb. 13: Rose Pruning Demonstration by Houston Rose Society Rosarians, 7:30 pm, St. Andrew's Episcopal Church parking lot, 1819 Heights Blvd, Houston (enter on W19th near Yale St.). Free. Details: www.houstonrose.org.

Thur., Feb. 13: "Weed Free-Organically" by Jay White, organic grower and "potager" (kitchen garden) expert, 7 pm, Ina Burdrett Conservation Education Building, Pineywoods Native Plant Center, 2900 Raguet St., Nacogdoches. Stephen F. Austin State University Gardens' Theresa and Les Reeves Lecture Series. Rare plant raffle. Free. Details: 936-468-1832 or grantdamon@sfasu.edu.

Sat., Feb. 15: Harris County Precinct 2 Master Gardeners Fruit and Citrus Tree Sale, Pasadena Fairgrounds, 7600 Red Bluff Rd. in Pasadena. 8 am- Plant Overview by Heidi Sheesley, Treeseach Farms; 9 am-1 pm - Sale. Details: <http://hcmga.tamu.edu/Public/>

Sat., Feb. 15: Fort Bend Master Gardener Preview of Vegetable-Herb Sale, 9-11 am, Bud O'Shieles Community Center, 1330 Band Road, Rosenberg. Details: 281-341-7068 or www.fbmjg.com.

Sat., Feb. 15: Invasives Beware" mapping of species crowding out native varieties, 2-4pm, free, Jesse H. Jones Park & Nature Center, 20634 Kenswick Dr., Humble. Details: <http://www.hcp4.net/jones/> or 281-446-8588

Sat., Feb. 15: Brazoria County Master Gardeners 8th Annual Fruit and Citrus Tree Sale, 8am-noon, Brazoria County Fairgrounds, 901 Downing St. Angleton. Details: txmg.org/brazoria or 979-864-1558 x. 110.

Sat., Feb. 15: Basics of Landscape Design, 10am, Enchanted Forest, 10611 FM 2759, Richmond. Details: 281.937.944. Repeated: 2 pm, Enchanted Gardens, 6420 FM 359, Richmond. Details: 281-341-1206. www.myenchanted.com

Sat., Feb. 15: Trees for Houston Urban Fores-Tree Keeper Course 2014, 9 am-noon, Trees for Houston, 10401 Stella Link (Clark Condon Associates Building). \$20. Details & register: <http://www.treesforhouston.org/> or brooke@treesforhouston.org

Sat., Feb. 15: Earth-Kind Gardening Practices for Texas, 10:15 am at both Cornelius Nursery locations, 1200 N. Dairy Ashford and 2233 S. Voss. <http://www.calloways.com/clinics>

Sun., Feb. 16: Rainwater Harvesting Workshop by Joe Blanton, Houston Arboretum, 4501 Woodway, Houston. Two-session workshops session repeated during day. Fees and registration: Details: 713-681-8433 or www.houstonarboretum.org

Mon., Feb. 17: Harris County Precinct 2 Master Gardeners Open Garden Day, 8:30-11 am, Genoa Friendship Garden, 1202 Genoa Red Bluff Rd., Houston. 9:30 am - "Growing Tomatoes and Peppers in Our Area" by Guy Lazarus. Master Gardeners Q&A. Free, children welcome. Details: <http://hcmga.tamu.edu>

Tuesday, Feb. 18: "Help! One-on-One With Randy Lemmon" (Saturday-Sunday morning "GardenLine" host on NewsRadio 740 KTRH). 10am, Knights of Columbus Hall, 702 Burney Hall, Sugar Land, free. Sugar Land Garden Club event. Details: www.sugarlandgardenclub.org or 281-937-7075.

Wed., Feb 19: Harris County Master Gardener Tomato & Pepper Sale Preview" by Jean Fefer, 7 pm, Harris County AgriLife Extension Office auditorium, 3033 Bear Creek Dr. Free. Details: <http://harris-tx.tamu.edu/hort>

Wed., Feb. 19. "Landscape Pruning - Plants and Trees" by Robert "Skip" Richter, Harris County AgriLife Extension Agent, 10 am, Clear Lake Park meeting room, (on the lakeside), 5001 Nasa Parkway, Seabrook. Harris County Master Gardeners at Precinct 2 Wednesday Lecture Series. Free. Details: <http://hcmga.tamu.edu>

Fri., Feb. 21: "Winter Tree ID" Workshop with Teri MacArthur, 1-3pm, Jesse H. Jones Park & Nature Center, 20634 Kenswick Dr., Humble. Free. Details: <http://www.hcp4.net/jones/> or 281-446-8588

Fri., Feb. 21: Growing Azaleas and Camellias by Leon Macha, 10am, Enchanted Forest, 10611 FM 2759, Richmond. Details: 281.937.944. Repeated: 2 pm, Enchanted Gardens, 6420 FM 359, Richmond. Details: 281-341-1206. <http://myenchanted.com/>

Sat., Feb. 22, : Fort Bend Master Gardeners Vegetable-Herb Sale. 9 am-noon (or sell-out), 1402 Band Road, Rosenberg (in front of greenhouse behind Agriculture Center). Details: 281-341-7068 or www.fbmga.com.

Tue., Feb. 25: Open Garden Day in Harris County Demonstration Gardens, Bear Creek Extension Office, 3033 Bear Creek Dr. 10 am - "Spring Vegetable Gardens" talk in raised bed area for adults; special children's activities. Garden tours, Master Gardeners Q&A. Free. Details: <http://harris-tx.tamu.edu/hort>

Sat., Mar. 1: "Secrets to Your Best Tomatoes Ever" by Tom LeRoy, 10am, Enchanted Forest, 10611 FM 2759, Richmond. Details: 281.937.944. Repeated: 2 pm, Enchanted Gardens, 6420 FM 359, Richmond. Details: 281-341-1206. <http://myenchanted.com/>

Sat.-Sun, Mar. 1-2: Spring Branch African Violet Club's 33rd Annual Show and Spring Sale, Judson Robinson, Jr., Community Center, 2020 Hermann Park Drive. Mar. 1 - Show 1-5pm; sale 9am-5pm. Mar. 2 - show and sale 10am-4pm. Q&A, violets include standards, miniatures and trailers, Gesneriads such as Episcias and Streps, supplies. Details: Karla Ross, 281-748-8417 or kjwross@yahoo.com

Sun., Mar. 2: "Designing Your Dream Backyard Wildlife Habitat" by Joe Blanton, 3-5pm, \$65, Houston Arboretum, 4501 Woodway, Houston. Reservations: 713-681-8433 or www.houstonarboretum.org

Wed., Mar. 5: March Mart Preview: noon - 2 pm, Mercer Arboretum & Botanic Gardens. 22306 Aldine-Westfield, Humble. Lunch Bunch event. Free but reservations required: 281-443-8732, www.hcp4.net/mercer

Thurs., Mar. 6: "Will My Orchid Ever Bloom Again?" by Bruce Cameron, Orchid Obsession owner, 10 am, MUD Building #81, 805 Hidden Canyon Drive, Katy. Nottingham Country Club Garden Club program. Free. Details: 281-

579-7017, 281-578-5558 or www.nottinghamgardenclub.org

Fri.-Sun., Mar. 7-9: 79th Annual Azalea Trail, 11 am-5 pm, four homes and gardens, River Oaks and Tanglewood areas; River Oaks Garden Club Forum of Civics, 2503 Westheimer; Bayou Bend Gardens, 6003 Memorial Dr., and Rienzi, 1406 Kirby Dr. River Oaks Garden Club event. Ticket details www.riveroaksgardenclub.org or 713.523.2483

Sat., Mar. 8: March Mart Preview. 10 am-noon at Mercer Arboretum & Botanic Gardens, 22306 Aldine-Westfield, Humble. PowerPoint presentation of plants March Mart, March 14-15. Free but reservations required: 281-443-8731.

Sat., Mar. 8: "How to Grow Orchids, Bromeliads and Other Air Plants" with Zac Stayton, 9 - 11am, Houston Museum of Natural Science, 5555 Hermann Park Dr., Tickets \$23. Details: <http://www.hmns.org/>

Sat., Mar. 8: Growing Citrus in Containers by John Panzarella, 10am, Enchanted Forest, 10611 FM 2759, Richmond. Details: 281.937.944. Repeated: 2 pm, Enchanted Gardens, 6420 FM 359, Richmond. Details: 281-341-1206. <http://myenchanted.com/>

Sun., Mar. 9: Landscaping with Texas Native Plants by Joe Blanton, 2-5pm, \$65, Houston Arboretum, 4501 Woodway, Houston. Reservations: 713-681-8433; www.houstonarboretum.org

Fri.-Sat., Mar. 14-15: March Mart, Mercer Arboretum & Botanic Gardens, 22306 Aldine-Westfield, Humble. Fri. - 8 am-4 pm.; Sat. - 8 am-3 pm. One of the Texas Gulf Coast area's largest and most anticipated horticultural events; 2,000+ varieties of plants rarely found, many grown by Mercer volunteers. Cultivation and care info available. Proceeds benefit Mercer. Details: 281-443-8731 or www.hcp4.net/mercer

Sat., Mar. 15: The Grass is Always Greener-Organic Lawn Care by Mike Serant, 10am, Enchanted Forest, 10611 FM 2759, Richmond. Details: 281.937.944. Repeated: 2 pm, Enchanted Gardens, 6420 FM 359, Richmond. Details: 281-341-1206. <http://myenchanted.com/>

Sat.-Sun., Mar. 15-16: Houston Arboretum & Nature Center Spring Native Plant Sale, 9am-5pm, 4501 Woodway. Details: 713-681-8433 or www.houstonarboretum.org.

Sat., Mar. 22: "Planting" Porches and Patios, 10 am, Enchanted Forest, 10611 FM 2759, Richmond. Details: 281.937.944. Repeated: 2 pm, Enchanted Gardens, 6420 FM 359, Richmond. Details: 281-341-1206. <http://myenchanted.com/>

Sat.-Sun, Mar. 22-23: Peckerwood Gardens 2014 Open Week, 20571 FM 359, Peckerwood, TX (near Hempstead). \$10, no reservations required. Plant sale noon-5pm, guided tours at 1pm and 3pm. 979-826-3232 or <http://peckerwoodgarden.org/events> or 979-826-3232

Mar. 29: Nottingham Country Garden Club Plant Sale, 9am-1pm, Villagio Center, Westheimer Parkway at Peek, Katy, TX. Free admission. Details: 281-579-7017, 281-578-5558 or www.nottinghamgardenclub.org

Sat., Mar. 29: "Planting a Butterfly Garden" with Soni Holladay, 9 - 11am, Houston Museum of Natural Science, 5555 Hermann Park Dr., Tickets \$23, Members \$17. Details: <http://www.hmns.org/>

Sat., Mar. 29: Spring Fairy Garden Workshop, 10 am, Enchanted Forest, 10611 FM 2759, Richmond. Details: 281.937.944. Repeated: 2 pm, Enchanted Gardens, 6420 FM 359, Richmond. Details: 281-341-1206. Free but reservations required. www.myenchanted.com

Sat., Apr. 5: Easy Care Roses by Robbi Will, 10 am, Enchanted Forest, 10611 FM 2759, Richmond. Details: 281.937.944. Repeated: 2 pm, Enchanted Gardens, 6420 FM 359, Richmond. Details: 281-341-1206. <http://myenchanted.com/>

Sat., Apr. 12: Attracting Hummingbirds by Mark Klym, 10 am, Enchanted Forest, 10611 FM 2759, Richmond. Details: 281.937.944. Repeated: 2 pm, Enchanted Gardens, 6420 FM 359, Richmond. Details: 281-341-1206. <http://myenchanted.com/>

Sat., Apr. 15: Cockrell Butterfly Center Spring Plant Sale, 9am - noon (or sold out!), Houston Museum of Natural Science, 5555 Hermann Park Dr., 7th level of the parking garage, Details: <http://www.hmns.org/>

Sat., Apr. 26: Choosing the Right Vine by Margaret Sinclair, 10 am, Enchanted Forest, 10611 FM 2759, Richmond. Details: 281.937.944. Repeated: 2 pm, Enchanted Gardens, 6420 FM 359, Richmond. Details: 281-341-1206. <http://myenchanted.com/>

Sat., May 3: Know Your Enemy (garden bugs), 10 am, Enchanted Forest, 10611 FM 2759, Richmond. Details: 281.937.944. Repeated: 2 pm, Enchanted Gardens, 6420 FM 359, Richmond. Details: 281-341-1206. www.myenchanted.com

Fri.-Sat., May 3-4: Houston Pond Society and Lone Star Koi Club, 2014 Water Garden and Pond Tour, 10 am-6 pm. Self-guided tour. Tickets \$10 available at any of the 30± private water gardens and (starting April 26) at Nelson Water Gardens in Katy (<http://nelsonwatergardens.com/>). Details: <http://houstonpondsociety.org/>, <http://lonestarkoi.com/> or 713-822-5515.

Sat., May 17: Creating a Backyard Wildscape by Tricia Bradbury, 10 am, Enchanted Forest, 10611 FM 2759, Richmond. Details: 281.937.944. Repeated: 2 pm, Enchanted Gardens, 6420 FM 359, Richmond. Details: 281-341-1206. <http://myenchanted.com/>

Sat., May 24: Enjoy a Night Blooming Garden, 10 am, Enchanted Forest, 10611 FM 2759, Richmond. Details: 281.937.944. Repeated: 2 pm, Enchanted Gardens, 6420 FM 359, Richmond. Details: 281-341-1206. <http://myenchanted.com/>

NOTE: PLEASE SUBMIT EVENT NOTICES - IN THE EXACT FORMAT LISTED ABOVE - TO: lazygardener@sbcglobal.net

*Need speakers for your group? Or tips on getting more publicity for events?
Brenda has two free booklets that might help: "[Lazy Gardener's Speakers List](#)"
of area horticultural/environmental experts, and "[Lazy Gardener's Publicity Booklet](#)"
(based on her 40+ years of her Houston Chronicle "Lazy Gardener" coverage of area events)
Both are available free for the asking. Email specific requests to: lazygardener@sbcglobal.net.
Please help us grow by informing all your membership of this weekly newsletter!*

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 a coordinator and occasional article contributor.

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.

GREEN THUMB JOBS:

MERCER SOCIETY LOOKING FOR A "GROWER"

The Mercer Society has an opening for a grower to acquire, propagate and grow plant materials to be used for the Society's plant sales among other duties in its collaboration with Mercer Arboretum & Botanic Gardens. For a more specific job description and applicant qualifications, email msociety@hcp4.net.



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Save 20%: Redeem this coupon for a big discount on Nature's Way Resources "Herb Mix" (<http://natureswayresources.com/>). 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.

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