



February 9, 2014

Dear Friends,

Here is the 47th 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.

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ALLIGATORS & ROSES - WHAT MORE DO GARDENER'S NEED?

BY BRENDA BEUST SMITH



More cold ahead, says Big Al, left above with his friend Gary Saurage, center and right, Double Delight rose from Nell Evans and Monstone from Rich Baer.

Groundhog vs. alligator: Punxsutawney Phil can breathe easier. Big Al agrees. Six more weeks of winter.

It's not that we don't believe the famed groundhog. It's just that, here in Texas, we gardeners think an alligator has a better perspective for us. This is important, after all.

It's hard to argue with Al, who - at 1,000 lbs - is the largest alligator in captivity. He's living out a comfortable old age at [Gator Country](#) on I-10 East at Beaumont in the caring hands of famed gator rescuer [Gary Saurage](#).

Most important, Big Al has 100% -accuracy prediction rate of the arrival/non-arrival-yet of spring. The 'hog's rate is less than 50%, according to the Farmer's Almanac.

Of course, Big Al has genetics on his side. His favorite food is Kentucky Fried Chicken. He won't turn it down once - and not until - all danger of winter has passed.

Gators are physically unable to eat, their bodies cannot digest food, until their weather-radar approves. If the gators aren't eating, know there are more freezes ahead.

Big Al's ignoring his KFC. So put off planting anything tender for a while.

(By the way, Gary adds, this is also the time when most alligator shows are filmed. As long as the water temperature is below 68° alligators can't eat you, so aren't dangerous. Who else would tell you these things?)

Anyone have any other favorite Spring indicators for us gardeners?

VALENTINE'S DAY - PRUNE GRAFTED ROSES!

Whenever Houston's late Bulb Lady, Sally McQueen Squire, gave her popular talk on Planting (Bulbs) By the Holidays, she always delighted in reaching Valentine's Day. She first carefully detailed which bulbs are planted on which holidays. Then she'd ask . . .

"Why don't we plant bulbs on Valentine's Day?"

When foreheads wrinkled, she'd quip, "Because that's the day we prune our roses!"

Most roses we grew in Houston back then were grafted roses. These are those on which stock that produced fabulous flowers in eye-popping colors has been grafted onto super-hardy rootstocks.

Pruning grafted roses around Valentine's Day helps them develop strong stalks and the most beautiful flowers. Otherwise, stalks may grow lanky with fewer blooms. (Own-root, shrubby roses like antiques and Knockout don't need to be pruned at all, unless you want to do so to improve their shapes.)

Speaking of roses, since Valentine's Day is right around the corner, now an ideal time to introduce a new Lazy Gardener & Friends Newsletter feature.

We've asked all the specialty plant societies in the Greater Houston area to share growing tips with readers. Are you aware this area boasts 21 specific plant chapters as well as the headquarters for the Plumeria Society of America and the International Oleander Society?

Perfect way to kick off this new column, Baxter Williams of the [Houston Rose Society](#) - the largest rose society, in the nation! - gives us a bit of the philosophy here that does differ from other parts other country.

Wise rose growers will listen up! Rosarian Extraordinaire Baxter Williams is a former American Rose Society President and guru of the ARS Gardens in Shreveport, LA.

Now, our inaugural plant society column . . .

Spotlighting Our Plant Societies

Houston Rose Society



Baxter & Patsy Williams' rose garden in Pasadena.

GROWING ROSES ON THE UPPER TEXAS GULF COAST

by Baxter Williams, Houston Rose Society

<http://www.houstonrose.org/>

Anyone beginning to grow roses without having gained some knowledge directly from experienced rose growers is doomed to make some mistakes. So let me warn you of some, and then tell you where to gain good knowledge.

Mistakes:

1. Believe that, since your Mother grew pretty roses, you possess rose horticulture from birth.
2. Believe that, since you were born and grew up in Tyler, TX you possess rose horticulture.
3. Trust anything that you read from the Internet or books written outside the Houston area.
4. Believe anything that the teenager who works part time at the local nursery knows about roses.
5. Believe that the sales hype and colors shown in rose catalogs are correct for the Houston area.
6. Plant roses at ground level in our gumbo soil.
7. Think that roses are hard to grow.
8. Believe that "leaky pipes" are the best irrigation systems.
9. Buy roses that are in plastic sacks and expect them to grow as well as those found in local nurseries.

10. Avoid joining a local rose society, thinking that such is a waste of money, and going to meetings are boring experiences.

Solution:

Join the Houston Rose Society and the American Rose Society.

Drop by the Houston Rose Society's special "Pruning Demonstration" meeting, Thurs., Feb. 13 at 7:30pm, in the St. Andrew's Episcopal Church on 1819 Heights Blvd (at 19th Street). Demonstration rose plants are given away afterwards.

HRS meets the same time every second Thursday at this site. Visitors welcome. Meetings are informational (not business-oriented).Details: www.houstonrose.org. The Society meets on second Thursdays at 7:30 pm, and we do not conduct business when we meet.

Note! February 13 meeting is HRS' annual Pruning Demonstration meeting. Free demonstration plants are given away.

Baxter will give one of his delightful rose programs Saturday, March 8, at 4 pm at the [Galveston Home & Garden Show](#). He'll speak at 4 pm. The Houston Rose Society booth will be selling great-for-this-area roses throughout the show. Come early on Saturday and say hi. I'll be giving a program on Lazy Gardening at noon.

HOUSEKEEPING NOTE ON LAST WEEK'S COLUMN:

*** Pat Hasker reports none of the herbs in her Heights area garden died back during the 20+-degree bouts. Still going strong are her thyme, bay, sorrel, rosemary, spearmint, dill, three kinds of lavender (French and English), borage, garlic and onion chives, Chile Pequin pepper seedlings, and chervil. Also going strong: Texas tarragon/Mexican mint marigold but, she confesses, she covered this one. Writes Pat: "It's not the winters I worry about - I truly struggle to get most of these through the summers!" Yep! That's why winter is our best herb growing season.**

Next week's Society Spotlight will fall on Houston-based South Texas Unit/Herb Society of America

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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 - Humate

The past few weeks we have been discussing soil amendments of volcanic origins. This week I want to talk about humate as a soil amendment and the best humates come from areas with volcanic activity nearby when they were formed.

Humate is a form of organic matter that once was alive and has decomposed into the form we call humate and is a component of soil humus.

Humic substances (soil humus) are the most important part of healthy fertile soil!

Humic substances come from organic matter that has decayed (composted native mulches, compost, humates, and even some types of coal). A healthy soil should contain 4-8% organic matter by weight (8% by weight is about 25% by volume). Most gardeners have soil organic matter less than 2% and this is one of the reasons they experience poor growth, diseases, insect problems, drought problems, less heat and cold tolerance, etc. Humus substances are the most important part of soil organic matter composing 65-75% of the total and humates are one of these humic substances.

Humates are composed of chains of carbon atoms linked together into complex structures. The material we call humate is actually composed of several components; humic acid, fulmic acid, ulmic acid and humins. These components are all similar but distinguished by their solubility in water and the length of their carbon chains that form the molecules.

Note: Humate is the solid or chemical salt form of humic acid, fulmate is the solid or chemical salt form of fulmic acid, etc. and humins are the longest carbon chains and most resistant to further decomposition.

For those that want a little more technical explanation on the chemistry of humates see the paper: "Organic Matter, Humus, Humate, Humic Acid, Fulmic Acid and Humin: Their Importance in Soil Fertility and Plant Health" by Robert Pettit, PhD, Emeritus Associate Professor Texas A&M University. For those that want a detailed technical discussion see the book: "Humus Chemistry - Genesis, Composition, Reactions" by F. J. Stevenson, ISBN 0-471-59474-1

Humates were formed eons ago when ancient swamps with a large accumulation of organic matter were

covered by sediment or volcanic ash and exposed to heat and pressure (but not enough to form coal or oil). Over geologic time the organic matter became the product we call humates. Humates from volcanic regions tend to have many times more minerals than humates from non-volcanic areas or other sources. Humates are found all over the world in huge quantities. In the USA many of our Western states have large deposits of humates. A few years ago a huge deposit of humates was discovered in Texas near the Big Bend area with over 50 million tons of humate.

Humic acids are not generally soluble in water except under alkaline conditions. The molecular size of Humic acids range from 10,000-100,000 and they readily bind clay minerals to form stable organic clay complexes with a open lattice arrangement that can bind nutrients to them and prevent leaching. Some good humates can have over 60 mineral elements in them in a form that can be readily utilized by plants.

Note: Just like everything else in life there are different qualities of products sold as humates. Low quality = poor or even bad and negative results. Low quality humates also have low price points.

Fulmic acids are soluble in water (neutral, acidic or alkaline). Fulmic acids are much smaller than humic acids and range from 1,000-10,000 in size. Fulmic acids are much more chemically reactive than humic acids and have double the cation exchange (CEC) capacity of humic acids. Due to their smaller size fulmic acids are readily absorbed by plants through their stems, leaves and leaves. As they enter the plants the trace minerals in them are carried into the plant tissue where they can be used. Hence fulmic acids are a key ingredient for foliar fertilizer applications.

Humins are not soluble at any pH and are very large molecules 100,000-1,000,000 units in length. Humins in soil are the most resistant to decay and are very slow to breakdown. Humins greatly increase a soils water holding capacity, improve soil structure and stability, and function as an important part of the cation exchange capacity of soils, hence are a key component of fertile soils.

All life requires energy. Soil microorganisms get there energy from eating (combining carbon atoms with oxygen thus releasing energy just like when wood is burned in a fireplace). By eating carbon containing molecules found in humic substances, microbes get the energy for various metabolic processes from growing and reproducing, creating soil structure to fighting disease and pathogens.

All forms of humic substances improve a soils water holding capacity and the efficiency of how plants use the water. They also create soil structure that allows water and air to enter the soil holding the water in the root zone where plants can use it. Humic substance can easily hold over seven times their weight in water and some types up to 15X.

Note: Humic substances (humus) are destroyed by synthetic fertilizers, hence the more synthetic fertilizer one uses, the more the quality of the soil declines resulting in more disease and insect problems.

A question I often get asked is: what is the difference between compost and humates? Humates are not compost. A few years ago I looked at some data on compost on the USDA website, and it showed that even an average compost will contain over 350 pounds of humic substances (humus) per cubic yard of compost. These humic substances will contain humic acid, fulmic acid, ulmic acid and humin just like humates. As a result, there is a large overlap in function with humates. Compost also has complex sugars, carbohydrates and many other compounds that are required by microbes and plants that are not in humates. The biggest difference is that compost is alive with billions of beneficial microbes per pound of compost. Humates work best when used with a good compost to provide the diversity and quantity of microbes need to best utilize the resources contained in humates.

In summary, humates can be another great tool for all gardeners to use. In Houston we are lucky that San Jacinto Environmental Supply distributes a high quality humate product called "Microlife Humates Plus" in bags to the better area retailers.

PROS:

- provides energy and nutrients
- unlocks soil nutrients
- enhances root development
- improves soil structure
- enhances seed germination and survival
- improves a plants resistance to stress
- stimulates the growth of beneficial microbes
- increase the CEC (cation exchange capacity) of soils
- increases the water holding capacity of soils
- helps break down toxic pesticides and herbicides and reduces their effectiveness
- helps with soil aeration

CONS:

- some humates are made by extracting humic substances from the soil destroying the soil in the process
- may cause mild eye irritation
- may cause irritation to the mucus membranes and respiratory passages
- does not work well on cool soil with minimum temperatures below 55 degrees
- has to be mined and shipped a long way compared to other types of humic substances hence contributes to global warming and energy consumption
- more costly than other types of humic substances
- huge variation in quality and value depending on the source
- easy to over use, too much can stunt a plants growth or even kill plants

WEEKLY EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS CALENDAR

(Events in Houston unless otherwise noted)

Mon., Feb. 10: "What to Plant and Do Now" by Terry Garner, 6:30pm, 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. 5:30-6:30pm, 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 - 6:30-8:30pm 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 - 6:30-8:30pm 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-2pm., 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. 9:30am - Coffee, 10am - 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, 7:30pm, 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, 7pm, Ina Burdett 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. 8am: Plant Overview by Heidi Sheesley, Tresearch Farms; 9am-1pm: Sale. Details: <http://hcmga.tamu.edu/Public/>

Sat., Feb. 15: Fort Bend Master Gardener Preview of Vegetable-Herb Sale, 9-11am, Bud O'Shieles Community Center, 1330 Band Road, Rosenberg. Details: 281-341-7068 or www.fbmga.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 ext. 110.

Sat., Feb. 15: Basics of Landscape Design, 10am, Enchanted Forest, 10611 FM 2759, Richmond. Details: 281-937-9449. Repeated: 2pm, 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, 9am-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, 10:15am at both Cornelius Nursery locations, 1200 N. Dairy Ashford and 2233 S. Voss. <http://www.calloways.com/clinics>

Sat, Feb. 15: Container Herb Garden by Ed Dreier, 1:30-3:30pm, Wabash Antiques & Feed Store, 5701 Washington Ave. Free. Details: <http://wabashfeed.com/>, 713-863-8322 or Debbie@wabashfeed.com

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, 8:30-11am, Genoa Friendship Garden, 1202 Genoa Red Bluff Rd., Houston. 9:30am - "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, 7pm, 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, 10am, 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. 22: Growing Azaleas and Camellias by Leon Macha, 10am, Enchanted Forest, 10611 FM 2759, Richmond. Details: 281-937-9449. Repeated: 2pm, Enchanted Gardens, 6420 FM 359, Richmond. Details: 281-341-1206. <http://myenchanted.com/>

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

Sat., Feb. 22: "10 Most Effective Organic Solutions to Suburban Gardening" by John Dromgoole, 11:30am, Kingwood Garden Center, 1216 Stonehollow Drive, Kingwood. Details: 281-358-1805 or www.Kingwoodgardencenter.com

Sat., Feb. 22: "Orchids: Intermediate Class Potting, Dividing, Mounting," 2pm, \$35, Clown Alley Orchids, 3119 Lily St., Pasadena. Details: 281-991-6841 or www.clownalleyorchids.com

Sat., Feb. 22: Cypress Creek Daylily Club presents "Daylilies in the Landscape" by Rev. Marlow Shubert of Huntington, TX. 2:00-4:00 p.m., Mercer Arboretum and Botanical Gardens, 22306 Aldine-Westfield Road, Humble, TX 77338. Free and open to the public. For information, 281-351-8827. mary@springcreekdaylily.com

Tue., Feb. 25: Open Garden Day in Harris County Demonstration Gardens, Bear Creek Extension Office, 3033 Bear Creek Dr. 10am - "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: Spring Vegetable Gardening Open Gardens and Talk, 9-11am, Fort Bend County Master Gardener demonstration gardens, 1402 Band Road, Rosenberg. 10am: Informal lecture. Details: 281-341-7068 or <http://www.fbmj.com/>.

Sat., Mar. 1: "Secrets to Your Best Tomatoes Ever" by Tom LeRoy, 10am, Enchanted Forest, 10611 FM 2759, Richmond. Details: 281-937-9449. 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, 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-2pm, Mercer Arboretum & Botanic Gardens. 22306 Aldine-Westfield, Humble. Lunch Bunch event. Free but reservations required: 281-443-8732, www.hcp4.net/mercer

Wed., Mar. 5: Ants...Crazy and Fiery!!! by Dr. Paul Nester, Texas A&M, 9:30am, Gardeners By The Bay event at University Baptist Church, 16106 Middlebrook Drive. Details: Marjorie, 281-474-5051 or <http://gbtb.org>

Thurs., Mar. 6: "Will My Orchid Ever Bloom Again?" by Bruce Cameron, Orchid Obsession owner, 10am, 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, 11am-5pm, 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. 10am-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: Harris County Master Gardeners at Precinct 2's Annual Perennial, Herb and Tomato/Pepper Sale, 9am-1pm, 7600 Red Bluff Rd., Pasadena. 8am: "Plant Overview" by Heidi Sheesley, Treeseach Farms. Details: <https://hcmga.tamu.edu/Public/pubP2.aspx>

Sat., Mar. 8: Montgomery County Master Gardeners' Spring Plant Sale, 9am-1pm, Montgomery County Extension Office, 9020 Airport Road, Conroe. 8am: Program. Details: 936-539-7824 or <http://www.mcmga.com>

Sat.-Sun., Mar. 8-9 Galveston Home & Garden Show, Galveston Convention Center at the San Luis Resort, 5600 Seawall Blvd, Galveston. Sat. 8, 10am-6pm; Sun. 11am-4pm. Speakers: Christopher Wiesinger, Brenda Beust Smith, Tom LeRoy, Baxter Williams, Jan Brick and Michael & Nicole Graham. Fees, details: www.galveston.com/homeandgardenshow

Sat., Mar. 8: Growing Citrus in Containers by John Panzarella, 10am, Enchanted Forest, 10611 FM 2759, Richmond. Details: 281-937-9449. Repeated: 2pm, 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

Tues., Mar. 11: "Irrigation," 6:30pm, Clear Lake Park Meeting Room, 5001 Nasa Parkway, Seabrook. Harris County Master Gardeners at Precinct 2 event. Free. Details: <https://hcmga.tamu.edu/Public/pubP2.aspx>

Fri.-Sat., Mar. 14-15: March Mart, Mercer Arboretum & Botanic Gardens, 22306 Aldine-Westfield, Humble. Friday: 8am-4pm.; Saturday: 8am-3pm. Cultivation and care info available. 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: 281-937-9449. 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

Wed., Mar. 17: Harris County Master Gardeners at Precinct 2's Open Garden Day, 8:30-11am, Genoa Friendship Garden, 1202 Genoa Red Bluff Rd. 9:30am: "Pruning and Garden Cleanup" program. Master Gardeners Q&A. Free. Details: <https://hcmga.tamu.edu/Public/pubP2.aspx>

Wed., Mar. 19: "How to Grow Peppers in the Southeast Region" by Gene Spiller, 10am, Clear Lake Park Meeting Room, 5001 Nasa Parkway, Seabrook. Harris County Master Gardeners at Precinct 2 event. Free. Details: <https://hcmga.tamu.edu/Public/pubP2.aspx>

Sat., Mar. 22: "Planting" Porches and Patios, 10am, Enchanted Forest, 10611 FM 2759, Richmond. Details: 281-937-9449. Repeated: 2pm, 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 (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, 10am, Enchanted Forest, 10611 FM 2759, Richmond. Details: 281-937-9449. Repeated: 2pm, Enchanted Gardens, 6420 FM 359, Richmond. Details: 281-341-1206. Free but reservations required. www.myenchanted.com

Sat., Apr. 5: 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. 5: Easy Care Roses by Robbi Will, 10am, Enchanted Forest, 10611 FM 2759, Richmond. Details: 281-937-9449. Repeated: 2pm, Enchanted Gardens, 6420 FM 359, Richmond. Details: 281-341-1206. <http://myenchanted.com/>

Sat., Apr. 12: Attracting Hummingbirds by Mark Klym, 10am, Enchanted Forest, 10611 FM 2759, Richmond. Details: 281-937-9449. Repeated: 2pm, Enchanted Gardens, 6420 FM 359, Richmond. Details: 281-341-1206. <http://myenchanted.com/>

Sat., Apr. 26: Choosing the Right Vine by Margaret Sinclair, 10am, Enchanted Forest, 10611 FM 2759, Richmond. Details: 281-937-9449. Repeated: 2pm, Enchanted Gardens, 6420 FM 359, Richmond. Details: 281-341-1206. <http://myenchanted.com/>

Sat., May 3: Know Your Enemy (garden bugs), 10am, Enchanted Forest, 10611 FM 2759, Richmond. Details: 281-937-9449. Repeated: 2pm, 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, 10am-6pm. Self-guided tour. Tickets \$10 available at 30± 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, 10am, Enchanted Forest, 10611 FM 2759, Richmond. Details: 281-937-9449. Repeated: 2pm, Enchanted Gardens, 6420 FM 359, Richmond. Details: 281-341-1206. <http://myenchanted.com/>

Sun., May 18: Celebration of Daylilies, 9 a.m. - 5 p.m., Payne's in the Grass Daylily Farm, 2130 O'Day Road, Pearland, Texas 77581. Details: 281-419-6661, 281-485-3821, <http://paynesinthegrassdaylilyfarm.com>

Sat., May 24: Enjoy a Night Blooming Garden, 10am, Enchanted Forest, 10611 FM 2759, Richmond. Details: 281-937-9449. Repeated: 2pm, 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.



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



<http://wabashfeed.com/>



<http://myenchanted.com/>



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



<http://microlifefertilizer.com/>



<http://natureswayresources.com/>



Save 20%: Redeem this coupon for a big discount on Nature's Way Resources "Rose Soil" (<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.

Offer Expires: 02/16/14