



May 2, 2014

Dear Friends,

Here is the 56th 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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The Houston Cactus & Succulent Society's big May 10-11 Sale will offer great-for-Houston plants such as, left to right, Aloe, *Adenium obesum* and *Agave kissho Kan*.

WATER RATIONING - IT'S COMING . . . TIME TO PLANT CACTUS! . . . BUT NOT "HAPPY TREES"

by Brenda Beust Smith

Is your area on water rationing? If not, don't relax. It's coming.

As of April 23, 2014, the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality's report on Public Water Systems either now limiting - or planning to limited - water usage to avoid shortages includes parts of Brazoria, Chambers, Fort Bend, Galveston, Harris, Hockley, Jefferson, Liberty and Montgomery Counties . . . to name just a few.

You can see the full list, along with specific sites within these counties at:

<http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/drinkingwater/trot/droughtw.html>

Not trying to be holier-than-thou, but we lazy gardeners are definitely ahead of the game. For years, we've been eliminating (through death) any plants that object to being totally ignored (translation: not watered) all summer long.

The rest of you better jump on board. Sprinkler systems aren't going to be much help when water rationing comes to your area. And don't think neighbors won't report you. They will.

Now time to:

* Reroute washing machine water and air conditioner condensation water into the garden.



* Experiment with rain barrels. They can be as utilitarian as a large garbage can positioned beneath a roof V where rain water pours down, or as decorative as this one above at right that helps keep plants alive in Mel Basham's gardens.

Rain barrels are readily available and come with soaker hose attachments that can be laid throughout beds. The City of Houston's Green Houston website offers rain barrels at reduced rates. Order deadline is Friday, June 6. Details on this and similar city projects: <http://www.codegreenhouston.org/>

Know of any other rain barrel programs? Do share.

In the meantime, if you need to put in new plants, select those have the lowest water requirements. Often these are touted as drought-tolerant, low-water, or xeriscape plants. But beware!

Xeriscaping is a great technique for Central and East Texas gardeners who have extremely well draining soil. Our rich-yet-heavy gumbo clay soil tends to hold water, especially during our spring and fall monsoons. This means any plants recommended for a xeriscape (low-water) garden must be in a raised, or extremely well-drained area here.

Email me at lazygardener@sbcglobal.net and I'll send you a list of my Favorite Lazy Gardener Plants (for sun and shade) for this area. No guarantees these will survive a horribly dry summer, but as a general rule they pretty darn hardy.

Rain gardens, which will route this excessive rainfall into our subsoils, are also a win-win solution.

Have a low spot where water stands after a rain? Don't fill it in. Dig it deeper. Two- to three-foot in the center if you can with sides sloping outward.

Fill with rocks or gravel. Into the gravel plant flowers like crinum, giant white spider lilies and Louisiana iris. If

anyone knows it's a hole in the ground, you haven't done it right. If you see water, it needs to be deeper. The foliage should make it look like a ground level planting with a gravel mulch.

Rain gardens are an efficient way of keeping rainwater on our properties and out of city flood drains where lawn and garden chemicals are wreaking havoc in our bayous (and contributing to flooding).

But, perhaps more important to us homeowners, they allow water to drain off other areas - that might suffer from too wet soils - and filter down into our subsoils. This is particularly true if you put one in a low spot where water already stands after a rain.

Subsoil water supplies will:

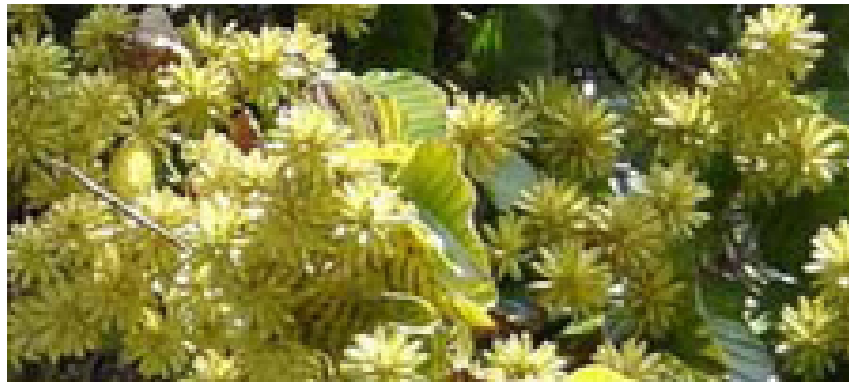
1. help prevent subsidence (do you have cracked walls inside the house and cracked sidewalks/driveways outside? That's subsidence and it's happening all over due to excessive concrete and water withdrawn for various reasons)
2. provide moisture for trees and other plants during summer droughts and
3. keep roots of plants in other surface areas from rotting during prolonged rains.

Totally a win-win situation. Email me for a free design for such a garden.

Or, you can take heart from our Society Spotlight today and switch to more cacti and succulents which thrive in our hot dry summers.

As with any other plant, the key to success is selecting the right varieties for our unique subtropical area. A great place to start is the Houston Cactus & Succulent Society's Spring Sale, Sat.-Sun., May 10-11, 9am-5pm at the Metropolitan Multi-Service Center, 1475 W. Gray. Details: www.hcsstex.org

Then follow the advice of our local experts below on planting and caring for your new plants.



DON'T PLANT "ASIAN HAPPY TREES" OR YOU WON'T BE

From Mercer Arboretum & Botanic Garden's Director Darrin Duling comes this warning about *Camptotheca*, above, being marketed as Asian Happy Tree - an ancient, very valuable medicinal plant native to China.

Two years ago Mercer removed its 30' tall *Camptotheca* from the Tropical Garden. They are still pulling up seedling. Fortunately, Darrin says, it doesn't look like any made it into the Cypress Creek riparian zone, adding "We believe that this species is dangerously invasive in our region and we recommend that it not be planted here." He considers it a "major garden pest without even going into the havoc it could wreak on our ecosystem

here."

This should serve as a warning to all of us. If you're planting something not native to this area, be sure you've purchased from a reputable source or have researched it. Just because something grows well in other areas does not mean it will grow well here, or not turn into a highly invasive, kudzu-like planting in our subtropical area.



More great choices at the Houston Cactus & Succulent Society's sale: *Cylindropuntia imbricata*, *Drimiopsis kirkii*. Also, *Euphorbia millii* and, below, *Opuntia* spp.

The 10 Biggest Mistakes Newcomers Make Trying to Grow Cactus & Succulents in the Greater Houston Area.

by Liliana Cracraft, Paulette Patterson, Stan Russ, Dave Thomas, Noreen Tolman, and Richard Stamper. Houston Cactus & Succulent Society.

1. Over watering. Water plants in well-drained soils in summer every 10-14 days. More often in sandy soils; less in heavy (clay) soils. Best summer tip: check 2-3" below the surface before watering. It should be dry. If in doubt, don't water.
2. Not watering enough. In winter, reduce irrigation. A little water prevents loss of roots.
3. Not providing the proper amount of sun light. Not all cacti and succulents can take full sun. Many grow in shelter from rocks, larger plants, etc. Young barrel and columnar cacti and some yuccas can sunburn. Scars are permanent. Best tip: Protect tender plants with 30% shade cloth. Too little sun creates pale, sickly, or abnormally-looking plants (etiolation). Best tip: Rotate plants to expose the whole plant to the same amount of light.
4. Trying to grow plants not suitable for Houston's weather. Choose Agaves, Opuntias (prickly pears), Aloes, Haworthia, Gasteria, Kalanchoes and Euphorbia. Many Echeverias, Sempervivums (hen & chicks), Sedum, Lithops, Pleiospilos (living stones), and a number of cacti can die in our summer heat. Best tip: Protect plants in winter below 40° F.
5. Failure to use the proper soil mix. Many nursery peat-based mediums are hard to water. Use a commercial cactus potting soil mixed with perlite, sand, or small gravel.
6. Ignoring the plant's requirements for growth. A fertilizer for tropical plants is perfect. If your plant is variegated (light or pale green tinging towards white or silver), use a fertilizer with a lower content of nitrogen.
7. Leaving plants root-bound too long. Water will have a hard time penetrating the mass. Roots cease to acquire nutrients. Best tip: Repot when roots begin to show through the draining hole.
8. Poor planning when landscaping. Build a raised bed by mounding the soil. Or construct a large in-ground planter elevated 8-12". A good general fast draining-but-not-too-lean soil blend: expanded shale or pea gravel, with sharp sand and compost. Plant early in the spring if possible. Shelter plants under netting until fairly well established. Best tip: Lay down one or two layers of weed block. Cut Xs in the weed block and plant your plants through these Xs. Use gravel, decomposed granite or clean crushed stone as a mulch/dressing for a finish treatment.
9. Planting Incompatible plants in a dish garden. Use plants that prefer similar growing conditions so they can be watering at the same time. Good examples: Golden Barrel (Echinocactus), and White Lace (Echinocereus) cacti, or succulents with elongated or thick fleshy leaves. Use plants with the same growing seasons - Zebra Plant (haworthias) and Black Head (aeonium) for winter, or Jade Plant (crassula) with Hen & Chicks (sempervivum, echeveria).
10. Burning plants due to phototoxicity. Cactus & succulents seldom get infested by insects (such as scale). Best tip: remove insects by hand, isolate plants with scale or other insects, and protect plants from the sun.

*Note: If you haven't seen your specialty plant group in our "Society Spotlight," it could be we do not have valid email address for you. To make sure your group is contacted, email us at lazygardener@sbcglobal.net

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

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

JOHN'S CORNER



Soil Amendments #21 - Rice Hulls

Rice hulls have been used for thousands of years as a soil amendment in farming and gardening. Rice hulls (rice husks) are the hard protective covering of the grains of rice and are composed of lignin with a very high (45%) silicon (Si) content. Rice hulls are the left over product from the milling of rice to obtain the grain we eat. Worldwide there are millions of tons of rice hulls produced every year that have to be disposed of.

Rice hulls are available in several forms: fresh rice hulls, par boiled rice hulls, aged rice hulls, composted rice hulls, ground rice hulls, and rice hull ash.

Fresh rice hulls - these are straight from the milling process, they are very light weight and porous and often contain viable seeds. They tend to increase the pH when used as soil amendments and in general they perform poorly until they break down. They also often attract rodents.

Ground rice hulls - these are fresh rice hulls that have been ground into a powder to reduce the volume of material that must be transported and disposed of. This form is often used as a fiber source (low quality) for both human and animal food products. In this form it burns easily and is often used as a fuel, producing rice hull ash as the left over product. They tend to increase the pH when used as soil amendment.

Par-boiled rice hulls - these are fresh hulls that have been sterilized by using steam and are free of seeds and pathogens that are killed by the heat. These may be combined with other amendments such as pine bark, vermiculite, etc. up to 40% by volume, and they have positive effects with respect to plant growth when used in containers. This amendment is often used in mixes for containers as it is very slow to decompose, hence there is less shrinkage of the potting media. At a soil proportion level above 40% it tends to have negative effects for most species.

Aged rice hulls - this is the most common form of rice hulls one finds. The mills just pile up the hulls into very large piles and let them sit for months before disposal. This aging turns the hulls brownish. They tend to increase the pH when used as soil amendment. Above 40%, it tends to have negative effects for most species.

Composted rice hulls - these are rice hulls that have been composted by either aerobic or anaerobic methods. Due to the high silicon content, they are very slow to break down. If aerobic methods are used, the rice hulls are mixed with other feedstocks to compost properly. They turn a dark brown color, have a lower carbon to nitrogen ratio, and the pH becomes increased slightly. Anaerobic composting is usually done by burying the rice hulls in a pit for months to years where they slowly decompose. Under these conditions they darken (sometimes become black) and become slightly acidic. In both methods if done correctly, the seeds are killed. Composted rice hulls work better in most applications.

Rice hulls have many other uses that include: rice hull ash, biochar, building material, animal bedding, silicon source for industry, fertilizer component, insulation material, fuel, making beer, filler in cheap pet foods, pillows, biodegradable nursery pots, absorbents, body powders, etc.

Conclusion: Rice hulls can be a useful soil amendment for many gardeners when used properly. The most

common usage is to till them into heavy clays to physically change the soil properties before planting a new garden. This was a common practice before we had good compost available and rice hulls were more easily available.

PROS:

- comparable to perlite in water holding capacity per weight but higher air-porosity and no dust as with perlite
- improves soil physical properties
- improves a soils aggregation, porosity, tilth
- easy to spread
- renewable resource
- feedstock for making compost
- some types can be certified "organic"
- relatively inexpensive

CONS:

- quality, type, and value varies greatly
- low cation exchange capacity (CEC)
- work poorly by themselves
- nutrient content is insignificant
- blows in wind if used as a mulch
- availability limited to rice growing areas
- slow to breakdown
- does not stimulate beneficial microbial activity as compared to other organic amendments

WEEKLY EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS CALENDAR

(Events in Houston unless otherwise noted. No events picked up from other newsletters or media releases. Submit written in the format below, specifically earmarked for publication in the Lazy Gardener & Friends Newsletter.)

Sat., May 2: Oleander Festival Kickoff Luncheon honoring the new Jane Long Oleander. Moody Gardens Hotel, Galveston. Reservations and details: 409-770-4321 or <http://oleander.org/>

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

Sat., May 3: Houston Hemerocallis Society and Houston Area Daylily Society Daylily Sale, 10am-4pm or sell-out, St. Andrews Episcopal Church, 1819 Heights Blvd. Details: 281-469-4109, lorisgarrett@comcast.net or www.ofts.com/hhs

Sat., May 3: Drip Irrigation by Fort Bend Master Gardeners, 8:30-11am. Demonstration gardens open for tour. Fort Bend County Extension Office, 1402 Band Rd, Rosenberg. \$15 (\$25 couple). Details: 281-342-3034; brandy.rader@ag.tamu.edu; fortbendagrilife.org or www.fbmng.com

Sat., May 3: Native Plants - Texas Style Clinic, 10:15 a.m. Cornelius Nurseries, 1200 N. Dairy Ashford and 2233 S. Voss. Contact: www.corneliusnurseries/clinics

Sat., May 3: Garden to Kitchen Demos, all day, Sunshine Farm, 5800 Jackson Road, Montgomery. Details: www.goodcleanlivin.com or www.goodcleanlivin.com.

Sat., May 3: Mercer Arboretum & Botanic Garden's 40th Anniversary Garden Party and Auction, 6pm, Mercer Arboretum & Botanic Gardens, 22306 Aldine Westfield Road, Humble. Reservations: 281-443-8731.

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

Fri.-Sat., May 3-4: 2014 Oleander Festival and Grand Oleander Sale, 10am-4pm, Moody Gardens Visitor Center, 7 Hope Blvd., Galveston. Details: www.oleander.org

Sun., May 4: Growing Tropical Trees by Dianne Norman, 1:30-3:30pm, Wabash Feed & Garden Store, 5701 Washington Ave. Details: wabashfeed.com, 713-863-8322, dianne@wabashfeed.com

Tues, May 6: Aquaponics by Jim Bundscho, noon, Agrilife Extension Office, 3033 Bear Creek Dr. Harris County Master Gardener event. Free. Details: 281-627-6818

Tues., May 6: Soil Management for Home Gardens by Dr. Joe Novak, 6-8pm, White Oak Conference Center, 7603 Antoine Dr. \$30 Near Northwest Management District event. Details: 713-895-8021, , info101@nnmd.org or www.nnmd.org/Programs/GardeningWorkshops.shtml

Sat., May 10: Sugar Land Garden Club Annual Spring Garden Tour, East New Territory Subdivision, Sugar Land. 9am-3pm. Map and details: <http://sugarlandgardenclub.org/>

Sat., May 10: Space City Hibiscus Society Sale, 1-4pm, Nessler Center, 2010 5th Ave. N. Texas City. Details: www.spacecityahs.org

Sat, May 10 - Brazosport Daylily Society sale, St. Mark Lutheran Church, Lake Jackson. Details: 979-297-1889, ninaimperial@comcast.net; Nancy Freshour, 979-285-9664, www.facebook.com/brazosportdaylilysociety

Sat., May 10: Cypress Creek Daylily Society Show (no sale), Mercer Arboretum & Botanic Gardens, 22306 Aldine-Westfield, 281-356-2534.

Sat., May 10: Culinary Herbs by Fort Bend Master Gardeners, 8:30-11am. Demonstration gardens open for tour. Fort Bend County Extension Office, 1402 Band Rd, Rosenberg. \$15 (\$25 couple). Details: 281-342-3034; brandy.rader@ag.tamu.edu; fortbendagrilife.org or www.fbmng.com

Sat., May 10: Rainwater Harvesting by Jim Jahnke. 9-11:00 a.m. at Galveston County AgriLife Extension in Carbide Park, 4102 Main, La Marque. Free. Galveston County Master Gardener event. Email reservations to galv3@wt.net. Details: www.aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston

Sat., May 10 Shrubs: Roses & Azaleas Clinic, 10:15 a.m. Cornelius Nurseries, 1200 N. Dairy Ashford and 2233 S. Voss. Contact: www.corneliusnurseries/clinics

Sat.-Sun., May 10-11: Houston Cactus & Succulent Society Spring Sale, 9am-5pm, Metropolitan Multi-Service

Center, 1475 W. Gray. Details: www.hcsstex.org

Sun., May 11: Plant a Butterfly Feeder Hanging Basket, 2-4pm, \$65, Houston Arboretum & Nature Center, 4501 Woodway Dr. Details: www.houstonarboretum.org

Tues., May 13: Insects in Your Garden, 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>

Tues., May 13: Garden Pests - Identify and Manage! by Dr. Joe Novak, 6-8pm, White Oak Conference Center, 7603 Antoine Dr. \$30 Near Northwest Management District event. Details: 713-895-8021, , info101@nnmd.org or www.nnmd.org/Programs/GardeningWorkshops.shtml

Wed., May 14: Butterfly Gardening, noon-2pm, Mercer Arboretum & Botanic Gardens, 22306 Aldine Westfield Road, Humble. Bring lunch. Details: 281-443-8731, www.hcp4.net/mercer.

Thurs., May 15: Insects in Your garden, 6:30pm, Trini Menenhall Sosa Community Center, 1414 Wirt Rd. Harris County Master Gardener event. Free. Details: 281-627-6818

Thurs., May 15: Greening the Prairie by Lisa Gray: 7:30-9 pm, Houston Arboretum, 4501 Woodway. Free. Native Plant Society of Texas/Houston chapter event. Details: www.npsot.org/houston.

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/>

Sat., May 17: Lone Star Daylily Society Show/Sale, 1-4pm, Alvin Senior Center 309 West Sealy, Alvin. Details: Details: www.lonestardaylilysociety.org

Sat., May 17: Galveston County Fruit Growers Tour, 9am-noon. Free. Details: Galveston County AgriLife Extension, 281-534-3413; galv@wt.net or www.aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston.

Sat., May 17: Insects in Your Garden, 10am, Maude Smith Marks Library, 1815 Westgreen Blvd., Katy. Harris County Master Gardener event. Free. Details: 281-627-6818

Sat., May 17: Perennials Clinic, 10:15 a.m. Cornelius Nurseries, 1200 N. Dairy Ashford and 2233 S. Voss. Contact:

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. Details: <http://paynesinthegrassdaylilyfarm.com>

Sun., May 18: Lone Star Hibiscus Society Sale, 1-4pm, Knights of Columbus Hall 702 Burney Rd. Sugar Land. Details: www.lonestarahs.org

Sun., May 18: Shimek's Daylily Bloom Fest Open Garden, 8am-6pm, 3122 County Road 237, Alvin. Free. Details: 281-331-4395, neshimek@comcast.net or www.cityscope.net/~neshimek

Mon., May 19: Harris County Master Gardeners at Precinct 2's Open Garden, 8:30-11am, Genoa Friendship Garden, 1202 Genoa Red Bluff Rd. Program at 9:30am. . Free. Details: <https://hcmga.tamu.edu/Public/pubP2.aspx>

Wed., May 21: Birds in Our Area by Paul Fagala, Wild Birds Limited, 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., 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. Details: <http://myenchanted.com/>

Sat., May 24: Butterfly & Hummingbird Gardens & Landscape Design Clinics, 10:15 a.m. Cornelius Nurseries, 1200 N. Dairy Ashford and 2233 S. Voss. Contact: www.corneliusnurseries/clinics

Tues., May 27: Insects in Your Garden, 6:30pm, Recipe for Success, 4400 Yupon St. Harris County Master Gardener event. Free. Details: 281-627-681

Tues., May 27: Insects in Your Garden / Open Garden Day, 9-11:30am, AgriLife Extension Office, 3033 Bear Creek Dr. Harris County Master Gardener event. Free. Details: 281-627-6818

Sun., June 1: Space City Hibiscus Society Sale, 1-4pm, East Harris Co. Activity Center 7340 Spencer Highway, Pasadena. Details: www.spacecityahs.org

Sun., June 8: Lone Star Hibiscus Society Sale, 1-4pm, Knights of Columbus Hall 702 Burney Rd. Sugar Land. Details: www.lonestarahs.org

Thurs., June 12: Garden Destinations Within Driving Distance by Debra Bagley, 7:30pm, St. Andrew's Episcopal Church Parish Hall, 1819 Heights Blvd. Houston Rose Society event. Free. www.houstonrose.org.

Sat., June 14: Bolivar Peninsula Plant Sale and Bazaar, 11am-4pm, free, Bay Vue United Methodist Church, 1441 Jane Long Highway (Hwy 87), Crystal Beach. Details: 409-684-2634

Thurs., June 19: Plants That Like Wet Feet by Mary Carol Edwards, 7:30-9 pm, Houston Arboretum, 4501 Woodway. Free. Native Plant Society of Texas/Houston chapter event. Details: www.npsot.org/houston.

Sat., June 21: 4th annual Tomato & Vegetable Contest, Kingwood Garden Center, 1216 Stonehollow Drive, Kingwood. Details: 281-358-1805 or www.Kingwoodgardencenter.com

Sat., July 12: Texas Rose Rustlers Meeting, 10am-3pm, Mercer Arboretum & Botanic Gardens, 22306 Aldine-Westfield, Humble. Free, open to public. Details: www.texasroserustlers.com or 281-443-8731.

Sat, July 26 : The Plumeria Society of America Show & Plant Sale, 9 to 3pm, Ft. Bend County Fairgrounds, 4310 1st Street, Rosenberg. Details: www.theplumeriasociety.org

WANT YOUR EVENT IN THE LG&F CALENDAR? PLEASE NOTE!

You have to send it to us!

EVENTS WILL NOT BE PICKED UP FROM OTHER NEWSLETTERS OR MEDIA RELEASES.

All submitted events should be written in the exact format used for events above and must be specifically labeled for publication in LAZY GARDENER AND FRIENDS NEWSLETTER. Email to: lazygardener@sbcglobal.net

Need speakers for your group? Or tips on getting more publicity for events?

Brenda's 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) 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 co-editor 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.





<http://wabashfeed.com/>



<http://myenchanted.com/>



<http://microlifefertilizer.com/>



<http://natureswayresources.com/>



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