



July 4, 2014

Dear Friends,

Here is the 64th 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.

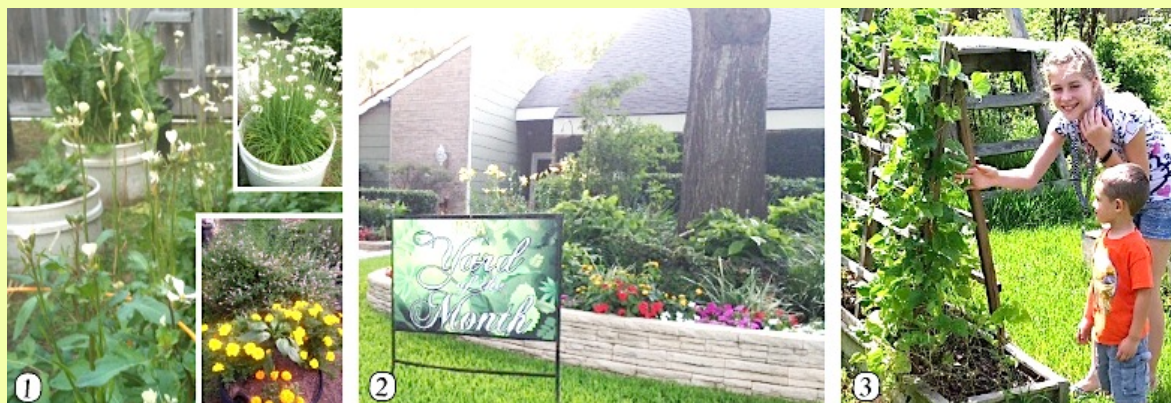
Please or sign yourself up to receive this newsletter by clicking the "Join Our Mailing List" link just below. We will never sell or share our mailing list to protect the privacy of our subscribers.

Enjoy!

[JOIN OUR MAILING LIST!](#)

## GETTING HIGH(ER) WITH GARDENING & SAGO WATCH

by **BRENDA BEUST SMITH**



**No more deep bending to plant-weed-harvest: #1. In Uncle Henry's backyard, white buckets sans bottoms are filled with good soil and thriving edibles like these white-blooming chives (bottom inset). Top inset, marigolds in the bell peppers discourage last year's destructive caterpillars. (In background, rosemary).**

**#2. Patty Sendelbach's raised front yard flowerbeds won Yard of the Month.**

**#3. Our cousins Lillie and Bubba easily pick green beans from "ladder" plantings.**

## WHO NEEDS "ACCESSIBLE GARDENING"? EVERYONE!

By **BRENDA BEUST SMITH**

Last week some [delightful senior gardeners shared tips on reaping harvests](#) from their successful gardens. Their only concession to "accessible gardening": some moderately raised beds.

"Accessible gardening" is the popular term for techniques/ tools that make gardening easier for those with challenges - trouble bending, squatting, reaching, lifting. Some such challenges come naturally with age. Others arrive a lot earlier.

Add "lazy" to those categories. Truth is, "accessible techniques" work for ALL of us. Almost always they make gardening easier, more fun, more versatile . . . definitely win-win.

The whole point of this column is not to tell you when, what or how to plant.

The point is hopefully to help folks realize that traditional techniques and methods of gardening should not stop anyone from growing plants - if that's what you want to do.

Many studies to ignore have now proven that working with, being around, or just being able to see, "nature's green" (whether flowers, edibles, trees, etc.) can be a major plus factor in good health and healing.

Step one: forget everything you know about traditional garden design.



**#1. These door-hanging-shelves with coco-fiber liners were filled with soil and planted (Better Homes & Gardens: [www.bhg.com/blogs/everydaygardeners/tag/vertical-vegetable-gardening](http://www.bhg.com/blogs/everydaygardeners/tag/vertical-vegetable-gardening)). #2. Shelby's grandson built this raised planter box on a table with a Home Depot kit. Shelby filled it with good soil, begonias and moss rose for a fun colorful display. The open "knee area" underneath is ideal for anyone who needs to sit while gardening. #3. Curved or C-shaped gardens require fewer movements to reach all sections.**

There is no one answer for everyone. If it works for you, it's right.

Step two: Forget about actual plants for a minute. Think about yourself. Think outside the box. What stops you from growing things you'd like to grow?

\* Bending? Get plants up higher. Think raised beds, vertical gardens, wall gardens, hanging baskets - perhaps on pulleys for raising/lowering if space is limited.

\* Reaching? Make raised gardens narrower. Use pots, or any container that works for you.

\* Grasping? Children's gardening tools are easier to grasp. Wrap foam around tools. Investigate new ergonomic tools. Google "accessible gardening" and "accessible gardening tools." One website (among thousands): [www.accessiblegardeningtools.com](http://www.accessiblegardeningtools.com).



**#1. Remember Lillie and Bubba from the top of this column? Their convenient bean "rack" was built by Robert Powers of Rafter X Construction ([rafterxconstruction.com](http://rafterxconstruction.com)). #2. Urban Harvest Education Director**

**Chris LaChance shot this clever "pallet" herb garden. Extra boards are added to create "troughs" (don't make them water-tight!) that are then filled with coco-fiber and soil. Note the cute herb name labels!**

Aside from carrots and corn, most flowers and edibles do not require deep soil. Or long straight rows. Many work beautifully in well-drained containers (so they're high enough to easily harvest/cut) set among other regular garden plants.

Position wire frames against a convenient sunny wall within each reach for cucumbers, grapes, peas, tomatoes, climbing spinach, cucumbers, grapes, peas, beans, sweet peas, squash, cantaloupe, small watermelons, and any of the flowering vines, soft stalk bloomers or groundcovers.

Also consider plastic or wooden crates (maybe with coco-fiber liners to hold in the soil), plastic gutters, storage tubs, reclaimed bricks . . . anything else come to mind? Just don't forget those drainage holes. They're a must.

The limited space of containers will often "bonsai" (reduce the size of) roots, making normally larger plants easier to grow in smaller spaces.

Most of us who grow vegetables overplant anyway, and end up with far more harvest than we can possibly use. True you may have to use only a few seeds out of a packet, and that alone can be pretty painful. Plant the extra seeds in paper cups. Give these to a nearby school, nursing home, church, etc.

Google "Accessible Gardening" for more tips and ideas. Join Urban Harvest and Houston Urban Gardeners for valuable advice.

If you know of successful outside-the-box solutions to "want-to-grow-but-can't garden because . . ." - do share!

Most of us don't live on farms anymore and nor do we need to put up enough vegetables and fruit to last through the cold winter months.

Why in the world are we still trying to garden as if we do?

\* \* \*

*Brenda Beust Smith's new column in the Lazy Gardener & Friends Houston Area Garden Newsletter is based on her 45-year Houston Chronicle's Lazy Gardener writings. Details: [lazygardenerandfriends.com](http://lazygardenerandfriends.com).*

*Brenda's group lectures include: "How to Reduce the Size of Your Front Lawn (to Save Water) Without Infuriating Your Neighbors," "Landscaping for Security," "10 Commandments of Lazy Gardening," and "What's Blooming in the Lazy Gardener's Garden." Details: [lazygardener@sbcglobal.net](mailto:lazygardener@sbcglobal.net)*

\* \* \*



**A healthy green sago will develop yellowish or brown fronds (inset) when attacked by Cycad Scale ([Texas A&M Photos](#))**

# Spotlighting our . . .

## Local Plant Experts!

*Lazy Gardener and Friends Newsletter*

### MANY SAGO PALMS WILL DIE

(if action by owners is not taken)

By Patrick Hudnall

[Texas Gulf Coast Fern Society](#)

Many homes are landscaped with Sago Palms. Not actually palms, these plants are cycads. (Cycads are very distant relatives of ferns but some are often mistaken for them.)

Over the past few years, an increasing number of sago fronds have developed a whitish substance, or have turned brown or yellow instead of dark green. This most likely is "Cycad Scale" (*Aulacaspis yasumatsui*) a native of Thailand and currently found in many US states. Populations of this scale readily reach high densities, causing necrosis of fronds and eventually plant death.

In nearly all cases your friendly yard maintenance guy will be of no help and may in fact bring the pest to your property from a previous customer.

Researchers have found that horticultural oils applied to foliage and trunks of infested cycads greatly reduce the scale insect populations. Cycad scale management utilizing foliar Neem oil or d-Limonene treatments are effective, but control may not be achieved without several fall, winter and spring, applications.

Periodic use of oils may be required to help with subsequent re-infestations. Greater scale mortality can be achieved by mixing oils with a contact insecticide, such as spinosad or pyrethrum.

Two natural enemies of cycad scale have been released in Florida. These are a predaceous beetle, and a parasitic wasp.

Homeowners should practice plant sanitation in pruning infested plants. In many cases the crawler stage, that look like small white specks, can be spread from plant to plant by pruning equipment or by infested clippings that are not discarded properly. A good practice is to clean pruning equipment before moving to new plants. Crawlers are readily carried by wind currents and can be blown for great distances to other Sago Palms. I experience good control by pruning all infested fronds, and thoroughly spraying the entire trunk, pouring some into the root zone.

Successive pruning to control the scale may stress the plant, though it may otherwise die. Unfortunately, the cycad scale insect is an unusually hard pest to control. The scale shell remains on the plant long after the insect itself dies and previous scale sites may still look chlorotic, so when control is achieved it may not be obvious to the observer. The scale can quickly re-infests plants. This may be at least partly due to its presence on the roots, where it is even harder to control.

If you have an infestation of this pest, and do nothing about it, it will spread from your house to your neighbor's Sago Palms.

#### LONG TERM OUTLOOK FOR CYCAD SCALE

A factor in this problem is that "Sago Palms" have for many years been grown as low maintenance plants. They are quite drought-resistant, have low fertilizer requirements, and had relatively few pest problems prior to the invasion of cycad scale.

Homeowners who prize their Sagos are willing to invest considerable effort in managing this scale, while others question whether such effort is justified for what they conceive as a 'low maintenance plant. A long-term strategy may involve the use of cycads that are resistant or not preferred by the cycad scale.

For example, *Dioon spinulosum* gives an effect in the landscape that is similar though larger to that of Sago Palms. This species is almost never attacked by cycad scale, though is less frost tolerant. *Dioon edule* is nearly as hardy, though smaller in stature. Increasingly popular and increasingly available Cardboard Palms *Zamia furfuracea* are equally susceptible to cycad scale as are the small Florida *Zamias*.

Primary Reference: University of Florida Pest Alert

\* \* \*

\*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](mailto:lazygardener@sbcglobal.net)

\*\*\*

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

## John's Corner

### Organic Fertilizers and Nutrients - 6



This week I want to continue with specific organic fertilizers and look at seaweed based products. The best seaweed products come from the ocean and contain all the nutrients found in seawater. The seaweed may come from harvesting of seaweed beds and sometimes from beach cleanups. As in all products the quality varies. Some products may be diluted with water while others may use weed from freshwater lakes that do not have the same nutrients. As a result, price, quality and value varies greatly.

Seawater has over 90 elements in it, hence seaweed products also have the same elements. During its growth the seaweed may concentrate some of these nutrients and make many other useful compounds.

In general, seaweed based organic fertilizers in addition to the primary nutrients generally contain over 60 trace minerals. They will also contain several important plant growth stimulators (these include auxins, hormones, gibberellins, indoles, and cytokinins).

Seaweed fertilizers work best when applied directly on the foliage as a foliar fertilizer. When one uses seaweed fertilizers gardeners regularly report increased cold hardiness in their plants and increased resistance to powdery mildew and black spot.

If the roots of transplants are soaked in a seaweed solution for a few hours before planting, it makes an excellent stimulator and starter solution.

Dr. T. L. Senn of Clemson Universities Department of Horticulture, wrote about foliar feeding in detail in his book *Seaweed and Plant Growth*, ISBN: 0-939241-01-3, 1987. In this great little book he explains the powers of seaweed as a fertilizer and root stimulator and how foliar feeding can be used to supplement a fertilization program.

A trick I learned many years ago while driving through San Antonio and listening to a local organic gardening radio show hosted by Bob Webster was in using seaweed to control spider mites. I grow a lot of lantanas for the butterflies and they often get riddled by spider mites when the weather gets hot and dry. So the first thing I did upon returning home was purchase a bottle of Microlife Super Seaweed. The leaves of my lantanas were white from spider mite damage so I was able to test his recommendation immediately. I sprayed the plants down and in a few days new green growth appeared. I sprayed a couple additional times and did not have a recurrence of spider mites. Now I always spray Super Seaweed as a preventative and no longer have problems with spider mites.

#### SUMMARY:

Seaweed products are a great tool for gardeners. They provide nutrients not found in most fertilizers as well as hormones that help the plant grow stronger and faster. They help strengthen a plants natural immune system resulting in less insect and disease problems. When used in food production they increase anti-oxidants and other compounds that promote human health.

**PROS:**

- seaweed products are fast acting when used as a foliar application
- contain many minor and trace elements
- contain powerful plant growth hormones
- natural root stimulator
- often contain carbon as an energy source for the microbes
- nitrogen and other nutrients are in a readily available form for plants and microbes
- increases microbial diversity
- strengthen a plant's immune system

**CONS:**

- Usually a liquid concentrate that has to be mixed before use
- quality varies greatly between brands

**QUESTION:** For a coupon for a free bag of "Composted Native Mulch" to the first five respondents with the correct answer:

"Some of the algae that live on the surface of the soil have shown the ability to fix nitrogen from the air into the soil, IF there is a certain nutrient (element) present. What is that nutrient?"

**Hint:** It is used as a catalyst in the process.

**CARBON IN PLANTS**

The trivia question a couple weeks ago was: "Which element do plants require the most of? The answer is carbon (C). Several readers asked for an explanation.

If we look at all plants the answer is carbon. However if we only look at aquatic plants (they have lots of water in their structure) the answer might be Oxygen (O) or Hydrogen (H). So there is a variation between species.

If we look at the major components of most terrestrial plants, they can be broken down into glucose, cellulose, lignin and some proteins. The amount of these also varies between species, for example a tree will have more lignin than a annual flower. Additionally, all plants have water (H<sub>2</sub>O) in their cells, roots and stems that are not part of the plant. If the water is removed and we look at what is left they are primarily molecules made of carbon chains. A few examples are:

Glucose C<sub>6</sub>H<sub>12</sub>O<sub>6</sub> - has six carbon atoms as its base units

Cellulose (C<sub>6</sub>H<sub>10</sub>O<sub>5</sub>)<sub>n</sub> - has six carbon atoms as its base units

Lignin (C<sub>32</sub>H<sub>34</sub>O<sub>11</sub>)<sub>n</sub> - has 32 carbon atoms as its base units

Proteins (composed of amino acids that all have carbon as their base unit)

We can look at the vascular tissue, the cambium layers and the bark of the plant all of which are composed of molecules based on chains of carbon atoms.

Typically for trees we see the following breakdown:

50% Carbon

42% Oxygen

6% Hydrogen

1% Nitrogen

1% Other

When we look at *all the molecules* that compose a plant or tree, carbon is the most common element. This is why wood burns so well as carbon in the wood is combined with oxygen from the air and produces energy (heat and light). Carbon in decaying organic matter is the energy source for microbes and other soil life, carbon is the base unit for humus that is so critical for good soil health.

**Editor's note:** We will post the answer to last week's question in next week's newsletter. Stay tuned!

## 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., July 5: Grow Delicious Tomatoes for Fall, 10:15am, Cornelius Nursery, 1200 N. Dairy Ashford and 2233 S. Voss. Free. <http://www.corneliusnurseries/clinics>**

**Sat., July 5: Preserving Summer Harvest** by Lisa & Jim Jenkins, 10am-4pm, Sunshine Farm, 5800 Jackson Rd., Montgomery. Free. Details: Sunshine Farm

**Wed., July 9: Secrets of Brewery Plants** by Southern Star Brewery, noon-2pm, Mercer Botanic Garden, 22306 Aldine Westfield, Humble. 8am-3pm. Free. Details: [www.hcp4.net/mercer](http://www.hcp4.net/mercer)

**Sat., July 12: Bird Friendly Backyard**, 10:15am, Cornelius Nursery, 1200 Dairy Ashford and 2233 S. Voss. Free. <http://www.corneliusnurseries/clinics>

**Wed., July 16: 7:30pm. "Soil Food Web, How Organic Gardening Works", by John Ferguson**, Cross Creek Ranch Community Room, Fulshear.

**Wed., July 16: Fall Vegetable Gardening**, 6:30pm, Clear Lake Park Meeting Room, 5001 Nasa Parkway, Seabrook. Free. Harris County Master Gardeners Precinct 2 event. Details: <https://hcmga.tamu.edu>, 281-855-5600

**Wed., July 16: Foods from the Americas by Sally Luna**, 7 pm, Metropolitan Multi Service Center, 1475 West Gray. South Texas Unit Herb Society of America event. Free. Details: [herbsociety-stu.org](http://herbsociety-stu.org)

**Wed., July 16: Sustainable Gardening Rainwater Harvesting, Composting and Organic Gardening** by Mary Karish, 10am, Clear Lake Park Meeting Room, 5001 Nasa Parkway, Seabrook. Free. Harris County Master Gardeners Precinct 2 event. Details: <https://hcmga.tamu.edu>, 281-855-5600

**Sat., July 19: Texas Rose Rustlers Meeting**, 10am-3pm, Mercer Arboretum & Botanic Gardens, 22306 Aldine-Westfield, Humble. Free, open to public. Details: [www.texasroserustlers.com](http://www.texasroserustlers.com) or 281-443-8731. (Note date change from previously published)

**Sat., July 19: A homeowner's Guide to Weed Control** by Anna Wygrys, 9-11:30am, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Office, 4102-B Main St. (FM 519), La Marque. Galveston County Master Gardener event. Details: 281-534-3413.

**Mon., July 21: Open Garden Day with Harris County Master Gardeners at Precinct 2**, 8:30-11am, Genoa-Friendship Garden, 1202 Genoa Red Bluff Rd. Free. 9am program for adults, children. Harris County Master Gardeners Precinct 2 event. Details: <https://hcmga.tamu.edu>, 281-855-5600

**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](http://www.theplumeriasociety.org)

**Sat., July 26: Mercer Botanic Gardens' Summer Color Plant Sale and Conference**, 22306 Aldine-Westfield, Humble. Conference, 8am-3pm. \$65. 11am-Plant Sale opens to public. Conference registration: 281-443-8731. Details: [www.hcp4.net/mercer](http://www.hcp4.net/mercer)

**Fri.-Sat., Aug. 8-9: Houston Orchid Society 35th Annual Summer Workshop**, St. John the Divine Episcopal Church, 2450 River Oaks Blvd. "Northern Caribbean Species and Hybrids" by Claude Hamilton; "Mysteries of Orchid Pollination" by Thomas Miranda; "Orchid Growing in Texas" by Todd Miller. Fees and details: [houstonorchidsociety.org](http://houstonorchidsociety.org)

**Wed., Aug. 13: Orchid Growing 101** by Bruce Cameron, noon-2pm, Mercer Botanic Garden, 22306 Aldine Westfield, Humble. 8am-3pm. Free. Details: [www.hcp4.net/mercer](http://www.hcp4.net/mercer)

**Sat., Aug. 23: "Organic Gardening, Making your Yard Safe for Children and Pets"**, Woodlands Home and Garden show, John Ferguson, 11:30 am, Woodlands Marriott Hotel

**Sat.-Sun., Aug. 23-24: 12th Annual Fall Home & Garden Show**, 9am-7pm Sat., 10am-6pm Sun., The Woodlands Waterway Marriott, 1601 Lake Robbins Dr. Garden speakers Mark Bowen, John Ferguson, Randy Lemmon & Brenda Beust Smith. Details: [www.woodlandsshows.com](http://www.woodlandsshows.com)

**Sun., Aug. 24: "Q&A with the Lazy Gardener" by Brenda Beust Smith**, 11:30am on stage with cuttings give-away, noon-4pm in booth, Woodlands Home & Garden Show (see above).

**Sat., Sept. 27: Texas Rose Rustlers 2014 Fall Cutting Exchange**, 10am, [Brookwood Community](http://BrookwoodCommunity.com), Brookshire. To request cuttings of specific antique roses, email: [thetexasroserustlers@texasroserustlers.com](mailto:thetexasroserustlers@texasroserustlers.com). Details: [texasroserustlers.com](http://texasroserustlers.com)

**Sat., Sept. 27: Sugar Land Garden Club Fall Festival and Plant Sale**, 8:30am-1pm, Knights of Columbus Hall, 702 Burney Road, Sugar Land (new location). Details: [www.SugarLandGardenClub.org](http://www.SugarLandGardenClub.org); Diana Miller, 713-724-3113, [dmiller@realtor.com](mailto:dmiller@realtor.com)

**Thurs., Oct. 2: Garden Club of Houston Bulb and Plant Mart Early Bird Shopping and Party, 4:30-7:30, St. John the Divine Episcopal Church, 2450 River Oaks Blvd. \$20. Details: [www.gchouston.org/BulbPlantMart.aspx](http://www.gchouston.org/BulbPlantMart.aspx). (Note new site)**

**Fri., Oct. 3: Garden Club of Houston Bulb and Plant Mart**, 9am-5pm; St. John the Divine Episcopal Church 2450 River Oaks Blvd. Free. Details: [www.gchouston.org/BulbPlantMart.aspx](http://www.gchouston.org/BulbPlantMart.aspx). (Note new site)

**Sat., Oct. 4: Garden Club of Houston Bulb and Plant Mart**, 9am- 2pm, St. John the Divine Episcopal Church 2450 River Oaks Blvd. Free. [www.gchouston.org/BulbPlantMart.aspx](http://www.gchouston.org/BulbPlantMart.aspx). (Note new site)

**Sat.-Sun., Oct. 4-5: Spring Branch African Violet Club Annual Fall Sale**, 10am-4pm Sat., 10am-3pm Sun, Judson Robinson Jr. Community Center, 2020 Hermann Dr. Free. Details: Karla Ross, 281-748-8417, [kjwross@yahoo.com](mailto:kjwross@yahoo.com)

**Thur., Oct. 9: "Soil Biology and Gardening", "Mulches and Compost", "Backyard and Small Scale Composting" by John Ferguson**, Mercer Arboretum, 9am - 3 pm, Texas Gulf Coast Gardeners Class.

**Fri.-Sat., Oct. 10-11: The Southern Garden Symposium**, St. Francisville, LA.  
<http://www.southerngardensymposium.org/>

**Tues., Nov. 18: "Ten Commandments of Lazy Gardening" by Brenda Beust Smith**, 10am, Knights of Columbus Hall, 702 Burney Road, Sugar Land. Sugar Land Garden Club event. Details: [sugarlandgardenclub.org](http://sugarlandgardenclub.org)

**WANT YOUR EVENT IN THE LG&F CALENDAR? YOU HAVE TO SEND IT TO US!**

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

To ensure rapid publication, submit events in the exact **STRAIGHT LINE** format used above so they can be copied and pasted right in. Events **NOT** submitted in our format will take longer to get published as someone has to reformat and retype them. Email to: [lazygardener@sbcglobal.net](mailto: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](mailto:lazygardener@sbcglobal.net). Please help us grow by informing all your membership of this weekly newsletter!*



<http://microlifefertilizer.com/>



<http://www.fslandscaping.net/>



[www.grandifloraservices.com](http://www.grandifloraservices.com)



<http://natureswayresources.com/>

**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.

Brenda recently ended her decades-long stint as Production Manager of the Garden Club of America's **BULLETIN** magazine. Although still an active horticulture lecturer and broad-based freelance writer, Brenda's main focus now is **THE LAZY GARDENER & 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.



**COUPON: Buy three antique roses and get one free at Nature's  
Way Resources [www.natureswayresources.com](http://www.natureswayresources.com) .**

**Offer Expires: 07/31/14**