



October 10, 2014

Dear Friends,

Here is the 78th 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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Great lower growers include, left, dwarf bottlebrush (3' high) and, center, 'Shi Shi Gashura' camellia (4'-5').  
Right, bromeliads to amaze true aficionados.

## SMALL PLANTS FOR SMALL SPACES . . . PENETRATING PALM PERSPECTIVES . . . HEIRLOOM VEGETABLES . . . BEST OF THE BEST BROMELIADS

By **BRENDA BEUST SMITH**

Melanie Wiggins, author of one of my most favorite books *"They Made Their Own Law"* (about Bolivar Peninsula), emailed recently asking if I could recommend some super-hardy low-growers for her limited-space landscape.

It's so easy to throw out plant names. The trick then becomes finding them. So I queried local nurserymen to see what they actually have on their shelves right now that might be good for Melanie's garden.



Among the now-available dwarf varieties of favorites mentioned by more than one of the nurserymen below are new smaller introductions of, left to right above, pittosporum, 'Green Mound' juniper and drift roses. I had to look up this last recommendation. Drift roses are new low-growing landscape roses, chosen as "Louisiana Super Plant" selections for fall 2013

To help you actually find them, I'm listing the rest by the nurseries who responded to my queries. Google each plant for more details.



*Left to right, low-growing 'Shi Shi Gashura' camellia, dwarf Barbados cherry and Buddleia 'Blue Chip.'*

**MARY CUMMINGS, [RCW NURSERY](#):** dwarf burford holly, dwarf variegated pittosporum, 'Baby Gem' boxwood, Drift® rose, 'Julia Child' rose, ixora, dwarf citrus, Nandina ('Obsession,' 'Fire Power,' 'Blush,' 'Gulf Stream'), Dwarf Azaleas ('Jennifer,' 'Midnight Flare,' 'Gumpo,' 'Summer Rose,' 'Red Ruffles'), 'Green Mound' juniper, Mrs. Schiller's dwarf viburnum, dwarf Barbados cherry, 'Shi Shi Gashura' camellia, dwarf myrtus, spreading plum yew, and Buddleia 'Blue Chip.'



*More low-growers: left to right, dianella, dwarf bottlebrush, dwarf Indian hawthorne.*

**GARY LENDERMAN, [ENCHANTED LANDSCAPES & NURSERIES](#):** dwarf yaupon, dwarf Indian hawthorn, dwarf bottlebrush, dwarf oleander, holly fern, foxtail fern, dianella, society garlic, ginger tulips and creeping rosemary.

**JOSHUA KORNEGAY, [JOSHUA'S NATIVE PLANTS](#):** 'Purple Lady' IrEsine, Lysmachia aurea, trailing rosemary, Greek oregano, thyme, stemodia, sedums, Blue Daze, peacock ginger, Wire Vine (Muhlenbeckia), 'Party-time' Alternanthera and dwarf penta.

**MELANIE** will be one of the authors of books about Jane Long, the Mother of Texas who will be signing their tomes at the big Jane Long Festival, Sat., Oct. 11, at Fort Travis Seashore Park on Bolivar Peninsula, near the Bolivar Ferry Landing, across the Jane Long Highway (87) from the Bolivar Lighthouse. If you can stop by, the neat play "Pirates & Petticoats" will be staged around 1 p.m. I get to play Mary Burke Campbell, one of Jean Lafitte's captain's wives, who gets kicked out of the Long Camp on Bolivar for cussing. ( Tee, hee, hee.)

One tip on these plants above. You can't always go by labels. Sometimes labels are written for the nation as a whole. A plant that grows to 3 foot in Kansas might grow significantly larger in our subtropical area. Some labels indicate the size at which the plant performs best, which means YOU'RE supposed to keep it pruned to that size. Best to buy from a LOCAL nurseryman you trust who will know what a specific plant will do in your area.

**P.S. TO NURSERYMEN:** If you did not get a query email from me asking for recommendations, it means I don't have a valid email for you. I'm happy to promote our local independent nurserymen in these queries. But 1. you have to make sure I have your email, and 2. you have to respond immediately. I'm always running late.

\* \* \*

## PENETRATING PERSPECTIVE ON PALMS



Palm lover Brenda Fields of Merritt Island, FL, loved Grant Stephenson's recent column on [10 Important Things to Know When Growing Palm Trees.](#) But she wants to add one thought. Brenda recalls laughing when warned not to plant her 10 new Queen Palms too close to the house. She's not laughing now.

Brenda pays a small fortune every year having them trimmed to protect her house shingles during storm seasons. Both fronds and the large seed pods as well. These take a lot of muscle power to prune. But for women alone, she recommends self-shedding varieties, such as ponytails or fishtails.

\* \* \*

"HEIRLOOM VEGETABLE" usually refers to old cultivars still being grown by gardeners and by farmers in isolated or ethnic communities but not in large scale agriculture. Some say "heirloom" means 100 years old or older, others 50. Some mark the date 1945, when WWII ended and hybrid seed became more widespread. "Heirloom" varieties are open-pollinated - no GMO (genetically modified organism) seed. Popularity of heirlooms was, in part, spurred by the realization seed companies were gaining of control seed distribution by selling only varieties they select.

As a general rule - as long as they're grown in the right situations - heirlooms usually have high resistance to local insects, diseases and weather challenges. Note that word "local." You still need to select the right varieties for your area. A good source: The Arbor Gate's Sat., Oct. 11, "[Green Thumb Gardening](#)" radio advice show, 8-9 am, KSEV (700 AM)

The focus will be on Heirloom Vegetables with Pam Gunter of Gunter's Heirloom Vegetables. Sure to be among the heirlooms discussed are these three (pictured above) Beverly says have proven successful in the Greater Houston area:

- \* Michihill cabbage
- \* Green Glaze collards and
- \* Peachay Pak Choy.

\* \* \*



**BROMELIADS - BEST OF THE BEST** - Texas and Louisiana bromeliad growers will put eye-popping treasures on display at the Southwest Bromeliad Guild Show and Sale Sat.-Sun, Oct. 25-26, at the DoubleTree Hotel, 15747 John F. Kennedy Boulevard. Plants will go on public display 2-5pm Oct. 25, and 10am-3pm Oct. 26. The sale is open Oct. 25, 9am-5pm and Oct. 26, 10am-3pm. Free admission. Tip: see the show first, then visit the sale. Purchased plants cannot be taken into the show. Details: 281-633-9036. NOTE: Left to right above, *Tillandsia abdita* in pot, *Cryptanthus warasii*, *Neoregelia 'Zoe'*, and *Orthophytum burle-marxii*.

\* \* \*

*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)*

## JOHN'S CORNER



## ORGANIC FERTILIZERS AND NUTRIENTS - 14

### IRON SULFATE

From time to time we hear customers asking for iron sulfate ( $\text{FeSO}_4$ ) to green up their plants. Iron deficiency can often look similar to magnesium (Mg) deficiency, but it shows up on younger leaves as yellowish areas between the leaf veins. A lack of iron can cause yellowing of many plant species, however in Houston and along the Gulf Coast most of our soils have plenty of iron. The problem is that the iron is often not available to the plants.

Iron deficiency is often found in alkaline soils ( $\text{pH} > 8$ ), in soils low in organic matter (humus), and in soils near brick or concrete areas where calcium and magnesium can leach into the soil creating an imbalance resulting in the iron being locked up and unavailable to plants. We also find iron deficiency in areas where the water supply comes from aquifers high in calcium and magnesium. Repeated watering can lead to a build-up of these minerals and alkaline conditions. Additionally, cold soils can induce a temporary iron deficiency that will clear up when the soil warms up. Another cause of iron deficiency is starting to show up as we use more reclaimed water where dissolved bicarbonates cause the iron to be unavailable even at lower pH.

So what is iron sulfate? Iron sulfate is a naturally occurring mineral composed of iron (Fe), sulfur (S) and oxygen (O). It is also known as Ferrous sulfate and contains about 17-20 % iron. When used as a soil treatment, soil microbes will break the molecule into its components so that the iron and sulfur can be used by the plants.

One of the issues with iron is that it is chemically available in two common forms that we call ferrous or ferric, so I am going to have to mention a little chemistry to explain what happens. In the ferric form iron has a +3 electrical charge and is in the form most important to plants as it is readily soluble and easily absorbed. In the ferrous form iron has a +2 electrical charge and is insoluble above a  $\text{pH} > 7$  and readily combines with other atoms to form minerals that reduce its availability (precipitates out of solution). For those interested in the chemistry Ferrous sulfate (iron +2) is  $\text{FeSO}_4$  and Ferric sulfate (iron +3) is  $\text{Fe}_2(\text{SO}_4)_3$ .

#### SUMMARY:

It is best to get a soil test and confirm that the soil is low in iron before applying iron sulfate. It can correct an iron deficiency quickly if required, however if applied and not required, it can cause many other nutrients to be locked up and unavailable to plants.

Applying a good compost or composted native mulch will add organic matter, stimulate the microbes and earthworms naturally releasing the iron so that plants can use it.

#### PROS:

- good source of iron and sulfur
- inexpensive and readily available
- feeds soil microbes
- only apply as needed
- some types are water soluble and can be used as a foliar spray

#### CONS:

- low cost brands often use the wrong form of iron sulfate
- may stain concrete or other items
- low cost brands may contain contaminants
- better choices of iron supplements (e.g. greensand)

## WEEKLY GARDENING EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS CALENDAR

*Gardening events only. Events listed are in Houston unless otherwise noted.*

***Events must be written in the format used below, specifically earmarked for publication in the Lazy Gardener & Friends Newsletter." Email to [lazygardener@sbcglobal.net](mailto:lazygardener@sbcglobal.net)***

**Sat., Oct. 11: A Day of Bonsai Fall Show**, Mercer Botanic Gardens, 22306 Aldine-Westfield. Details: 281-443-8731

**Sat., Oct. 11: Cockrell Butterfly Center Fall Plant Sale**, 9am-noon, Museum of Natural Science, 5555 Hermann Park Drive. Free. Details: 713-639-4751; [www.hmns.org](http://www.hmns.org)

**Sat, Oct 11: Urban Harvest's Designing a Wildscape for Pollinators**. 9-11:30am. \$50. UH Central Campus, 4800 Calhoun, Charles McElhinney Hall #106. Details: 713-880-5540 or [www.urbanharvest.org](http://www.urbanharvest.org)

**Sat., Oct. 11: Galveston County Master Gardener Plant Sale**, Preview: 8-8:50pm, Sale: 9am-1pm, Wayne Johnson Community Center, Carbide Park, 4102 Main St./FM519, Lamarque. Details: [aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston](http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston)

**Sat., Oct. 11: Establishing Woody Ornamentals by Skip Richter**, 10am; Premier Sharpening, 2-5pm, The Arbor Gate, 15635 FM 2920, Tomball. Free. 281-351-8851, [www.arborgate.com](http://www.arborgate.com)

**Sat., Oct. 11: Long Lasting Fall and Winter Color**, 10:15am, both Cornelius Nursery locations. Free. <http://www.corneliusnurseries.com/events>

**Sun, Oct 12: Urban Harvest's Designing Bountiful Gardens Through Permaculture (series of 6 classes)**. First class: 12:30-5pm. \$404. UH Central Campus, 4800 Calhoun, Charles McElhinney Hall #106. Details: 713-880-5540 or [www.urbanharvest.org](http://www.urbanharvest.org)

**Mon., Oct. 13: Composting for the Home Garden by Dr. Joe Novak**, 6-8pm, White Oak Conference Center, 7603 Antoine Dr. Near Northwest Management District Fall Gardening Workshop. \$25. Registration/details: [www.nnmd.org](http://www.nnmd.org) or 713-895-8021

**Mon., Oct. 13: Composting and the New Master Composter Program**, 6:30pm, MultiService Center, 1475 W. Gray. Free. Houston Urban Gardeners event. Details: [www.houstonurbangardeners.org](http://www.houstonurbangardeners.org)

**Tues., Oct. 14: Trees,Choice & Maintenance**, 6:30pm, Clear Lake Park Meeting Room, 5001 Nasa Parkway, Seabrook. A Harris County Master Gardeners Precinct 2 event. Free. Details: <https://hcmga.tamu.edu>

**Tues., Oct. 14: Proper Care for Healthy Trees by John Warner**, 10am, The Arbor Gate, 15635 FM 2920, Tomball. Free. 281-351-8851, [www.arborgate.com](http://www.arborgate.com)

**Wed., Oct. 15: Fall Fertilization for the Landscape ,Ornamentals and Grasses by Skip Richter**. 10am,Clear Lake Park Meeting Room, 5001 Nasa Parkway, Seabrook. Harris County Master Gardeners Precinct 2 event. Free. Details:<https://hcmga.tamu.edu>

**Thurs., Oct. 16: Plant Propagation by Randy Johnson**, 7:30-9 pm, Houston Arboretum, 4501 Woodway. Free. Native Plant Society of Texas/Houston Chapter event. Details: [www.npsot.org/houston](http://www.npsot.org/houston)

**Thurs., Oct. 16: Herbs for Shade by Ann Wheeler**, 10am, The Arbor Gate, 15635 FM 2920, Tomball. Free. 281-351-8851, [www.arborgate.com](http://www.arborgate.com)

**Thurs., Oct. 16: Trees: Choice and Maintenance**, 6:30pm, Tracy Gee Community Center, 3599 Westcenter. Harris County Master Gardeners Precinct 2 event. Free. Details: <https://hcmga.tamu.edu>

**Thurs., Oct. 18, Conservation Conversation - Leaf Mulch Madness**,10am, Cypresswood Water Conservation Garden, 4107 Evening Trail Drive, Spring. Free. Details and reservations: [bpapp@wcid132.com](mailto:bpapp@wcid132.com)

**Sat., Oct. 18: Trees: Choice and Maintenance**, 10am, Maude Smith Marks Library, 1815 Westgreen Blvd., Katy. Harris County Master Gardeners Precinct 2 event. Free. Details: <https://hcmga.tamu.edu>

**Sat, Oct 18: Urban Harvest's Fruit Tree Basics**, 9-11:30am. \$50. UH Central Campus, 4800 Calhoun, Charles McElhinney Hall #106. Details: 713-880-5540 or [www.urbanharvest.org](http://www.urbanharvest.org)

**Sat., Oct. 18: Celebrate Herb of the Year by Chef Chris Crowder and Ann Wheeler**, 10am, Gunter's Heirloom Vegetables, 9am-1pm, The Arbor Gate, 15635 FM 2920, Tomball. Free. 281-351-8851, [www.arborgate.com](http://www.arborgate.com)

**Sat., Oct. 18: Fall Gardening Day with Texas A&M Extension Agents and Harris County Master Gardeners**, 9am-noon, Harris County Extension Office, 3033 Bear Creek Dr. \$15 before Oct. 3; \$20 after. Details: 281-855-5600, [www.facebook.com/HarrisCountyMasterGardeners](https://www.facebook.com/HarrisCountyMasterGardeners)

**Sat., Oct. 18: Earth-Kind Home Landscaping Class by Missouri City Green, Missouri City Parks & Recreation and Ft. Bend County Master Gardeners**, 9:30-11:30am, Missouri City Community Center, 1522 Texas Parkway. Free. Details: [www.missouricitygreen.org](http://www.missouricitygreen.org)

**Sat., Oct. 18: Fall Grasses**, 10:15 am, both Cornelius Nursery locations. Details: [www.corneliusnurseries.com/events](http://www.corneliusnurseries.com/events)

**Sun., Oct. 19: Ornamedibles by Angela Chandler**, 11am, The Arbor Gate, 15635 FM 2920, Tomball. Free. 281-351-8851, [www.arborgate.com](http://www.arborgate.com)

**Mon., Oct. 20, Open Garden Day with Harris County Master Gardeners at Precinct 2**. 8:30-11am, Genoa Friendship Garden, 1202 Genoa Red Bluff Rd. 9:30am: Educational Programs and Master Gardeners Q&A.Details: <https://hcmga.tamu.edu>

**Mon., Oct. 20: Soil Management for the Home Garden by Dr. Joe Novak**, 6-8pm, White Oak Conference Center, 7603 Antoine

Dr. Near Northwest Management District Fall Gardening Workshop. \$25. Registration/details: [www.nnmd.org](http://www.nnmd.org) or 713-895-8021

**Tues., Oct. 21: Trees: Choice and Maintenance**, 6:30pm, Recipe for Success, 4400 Yupon St. Harris County Master Gardeners Precinct 2 event. Free. Details: <https://hcmga.tamu.edu>

**Tues., Oct. 21: Succulents: Picky, Picky, Picky by Elizabeth Barrow**, 10am, Knights of Columbus Hall, 702 Burney Road, Sugar Land. Free. Sugar Land Garden Club event. Details: [www.sugarlandgardenclub.org](http://www.sugarlandgardenclub.org)

**Wed. Oct. 22: Succulents of Mpumalanga and Kwa Zuku-Natal by Jeff Paviatt**. 7:30pm, Metropolitan Multiservice Center, 1475 West Gray. Free. Houston Cactus & Succulent Society event. <http://hcsstex.org/>

**Sat, Oct 25: Urban Harvest's Self-Watering Container Gardening**. 9-11:30am.\$50. UH Central Campus, 4800 Calhoun, Charles McElhinney Hall #106. Details: 713-880-5540 or [www.urbanharvest.org](http://www.urbanharvest.org)

**Sat., Oct. 25: GardenLine Host Randy Lemmon**, 10am-noon, The Arbor Gate, 15635 FM 2920, Tomball. Free. 281-351-8851, [www.arborage.com](http://www.arborage.com)

**Sat., Oct. 25: Palm Society Gathering and Meyer Library Palm Garden Visit**, 2 pm, Bill and Kay Burhans residence, 5607 Sanford Road. Details: Paul Norris, [poollovers@comcast.net](mailto:poollovers@comcast.net)

**Sat., Oct. 25: Spring Bulbs - Fall Planting**, 10:15 am, both Cornelius Nurseries. Details: [www.corneliusnurseries/events](http://www.corneliusnurseries/events)

**Sat.-Sun., Oct. 25-26: Southwest Bromeliad Guild Show and Sale (Texas & Louisiana**, DoubleTree Hotel Houston Airport, 15747 JFK Blvd. Sale: 9am-5pm Sat.; 10am-3pm Sun. Show: 2pm-5pm Sat.; 10am-3pm Sun. Free. Details: Gene Powers, 281-633-9036.

**Tues., Oct. 28: Harris County Master Gardeners Open Garden Day**, 9-11:30am; **Trees: Choice and Maintenance**: 10am adult workshop/children's activities. Free. AgriLife Extension Office, 3033 Bear Creek Dr. Details: <https://hcmga.tamu.edu>

**Fri., Oct. 31: 3rd Annual Sustainable Landscapes Conference**, 8am-3pm, Big Stone Lodge, Dennis Johnson Park, 709 Riley Fuzzell Road, Spring. Details/reservations: 281-443-8731

**Fri.-Sat., Oct. 31-Nov. 1: 26th Annual Fall Festival of Roses**, Antique Rose Emporium, Independence. Details: [www.antiqueroseemporium.com](http://www.antiqueroseemporium.com)

**Sat. Nov. 1: 42nd annual Herb Society of America/South Texas Unit's Herb Fair**, 9am-3pm, Multi-Service Center, 1475 West Gray. Free. Details: [www.herbsociety-stu.org](http://www.herbsociety-stu.org). (note new site.)

**Sat., Nov. 1, "Fall Vegetable Gardening" by Fort Bend Master Gardeners Vegetable Specialists**, 10am, Demonstration Vegetable Garden, Agricultural Center, 1402 Band Road, Rosenberg. Free. Details: 281-341-7068 or [www.fbmg.com](http://www.fbmg.com).

**Sat., Nov. 1: Creating a Bird Friendly Backyard**, 10:15 am, both Cornelius Nurseries. Details: [www.corneliusnurseries/events](http://www.corneliusnurseries/events)

**Tues., Nov. 4: Cover Crops by Jean Fefer, Ph.D.**, noon, AgriLife Extension Office, 3033 Bear Creek Dr. Free. Harris County Master Gardener event. Details: <https://hcmga.tamu.edu>

**Wed., Nov. 5. Pumpkins, Squash and Gourds by Corrie Ten-Have**, 9am, University Baptist Church, 16106 Middlebrook Dr. Free. Gardeners By The Bay Autumn event. Details: Marjorie [281-474-5051](tel:281-474-5051).

**Thurs., Nov. 6: Mercer Botanic Gardens 40th Anniversary Distinguished Lecture: Dr. Peter Wyse Jackson on "Growing an Ark: The Expanding Role of Botanic Gardens in Plant Conservation."** 6:30 pm, Houston Museum of Natural Science, 5555 Hermann Park Drive Houston, Ticket details 713-639-4629 or [www.hmns.org/lectures](http://www.hmns.org/lectures).

**Thurs., Nov. 6, 2014: Perennials by Margaret Sinclair**, 9:30am, Municipal Utility Building, 805 Hidden Canyon Drive, Katy. Free. Nottingham Country Garden Club event. Details: [nottinghamgardenclub.org](http://nottinghamgardenclub.org) or 713-870-5915 or 979-885-6199

**Thurs., Nov. 6: Forcing Bulbs for the Holiday by Patricia Martin**, 930am, Marie Workman Garden Center, 112 West Spreading Oaks, Friendswood. Free. Details: 281-992-4438

**Sun., Nov. 9: Tree ID for the Novice**, 2pm- 5pm, Houston Arboretum & Nature Center, 4501 Woodway Drive. \$45. Details: [www.houstonarboretum.org](http://www.houstonarboretum.org).

**Wed., Nov.12: Herb Gardening for Home Use by Marilyn O'Connor**, noon-2pm, Lunch Bunch, Mercer Botanic Gardens, 22306 Aldine-Westfield, Humble. Details/reservations: 281-443-8731

**Sat., Nov. 15: Edible Wild Plants**, 9am-1pm, Houston Arboretum & Nature Center, 4501 Woodway Drive. \$65. Details: [www.houstonarboretum.org](http://www.houstonarboretum.org)

**Mon., Nov. 17, Open Garden Day, with Harris County Master Gardeners at Precinct 2** 8:30-11am, Genoa Friendship Garden, 1202 Genoa Red Bluff Rd. 9:30am: Educational Programs/ MG Q&A. Open garden/plant sale every Monday May-Oct. Free. Details: <https://hcmga.tamu.edu>

**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)

**Thurs., Nov. 20: Native Seed & Plant Swap and Social**, 7:30-9 pm, Houston Arboretum, 4501 Woodway. Free. Native Plant Society of Texas/Houston Chapter event. Details: [www.npsot.org/houston](http://www.npsot.org/houston)

**Sat.-Sun., Nov. 22-23: Heritage Gardeners in Friendswood 48th Annual Christmas Home Tour**, 1-5pm. \$10 pre-tour; \$15 tour day. One starting point: Marie Workman Garden Center, 112 West Spreading Oaks. Details: [heritagegardener.org](http://heritagegardener.org) or 713-534-7662.

**Tues., Nov. 25: Harris County Master Gardeners Open Garden Day**, 9-11:30am; **Protecting Plants in Winter**: 10am adult workshop, children's activities. Free. AgriLife Extension Office, 3033 Bear Creek Dr. Details: <https://hcmga.tamu.edu>

**Sun., Nov 30: Landscaping with Texas Native Trees, Shrubs & Vines**, 2pm-5pm, Houston Arboretum & Nature Center, 4501 Woodway Drive. \$45. Details: [www.houstonarboretum.org](http://www.houstonarboretum.org).



**Tues., Dec. 2: Harris County Vegetable Trials and Texas SuperStars Update by Skip Richter**, noon, County Extension Office auditorium, 3033 Bear Creek Dr. Free. Harris County Master Gardener event. Details: <https://hcmga.tamu.edu/Public/pubP2.aspx>

**Sat.-Sun., Dec 13-14: Winter Native Plant Sale**, 9am-4pm, Houston Arboretum & Nature Center, 4501 Woodway Drive. Details: [www.houstonarboretum.org](http://www.houstonarboretum.org).

**Sat., Dec. 20: Edible Wild Plants**, 9am-1pm, Houston Arboretum & Nature Center, 4501 Woodway Drive, Houston. \$65. Details: [www.houstonarboretum.org](http://www.houstonarboretum.org).

**Mon., April 21: What's Blooming in the Lazy Gardener's Garden by Brenda Beust Smith**, 10am, Walden on Lake Houston Club House. Lake Houston Ladies Club event. Non-member reservations required: Carol Dandeneau. #832-671-4475

### **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.**

Events submitted in the exact format used above will receive priority in inclusion in the calendar. Events **NOT** submitted in our format 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!*



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## **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.





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