



February 14, 2015

Dear Friends,

Here is the 94th issue of our weekly gardening newsletter for Houston, the Gulf Coast and beyond. This is 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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This Week: left to right, Happy Birthday to the Azalea Trail, time to shop for African violets and a bit of avocado hanky-panky!

AZALEAS . . . AFRICAN VIOLETS . . . THE SEX LIFE OF AVOCADOS. . .

BY BRENDA BEUST SMITH

This year marks a true milestone in a great Houston tradition - the Azalea Trail. It's the 80th birthday of this incredible gift to this community by the River Oaks Garden Club. Never doubt the amount of thought, energy and financial investment that goes into this annual trek through some of Houston's most beautiful gardens.



Left to right, Houston historical treasures and their incredible gardens open for the Azalea Trail: Rienzi (<http://www.mfah.org/visit/bayou-bend-collection-and-gardens>), Bayou Bend (<http://www.mfah.org/visit/bayou-bend-collection-and-gardens>) and the River Oaks Garden Club Forum of Civics (<http://www.riveroaksgardenclub.org/site/Forum.cfm>)

But, the Azalea Trail is so much more than that. It's an opportunity for all of us to benefit from the advice and solutions to landscaping dilemmas faced by the most talented (and expensive) landscapers in our area. We all face these gardening challenges:

- * Hiding unsightly views
- * Choosing plants for tiny (or huge) spaces
- * Areas too low, areas too high
- * Planting sites around pools or ponds
- * Coping with too much shade; too much sun

For example, the Forum of Civics (above right) is planted with the inner city urban gardener in mind. This National Register of Historic Places site (it was built in 1910 as a schoolhouse) offers a special focus on native plants, seasonal color and achieving privacy in an urban setting.

With your cellphone camera, or pad and paper in hand, you can search out vignettes or sites similar to those with which you are coping at home. The good news is that docents at each stop on the Trail are well informed, they can tell you the names of all the plants you'll be seeing.



At the Tupper Lake residence, left, look for this great kumquat planting, center. At the Briar Ridge residence, right, check out the terraced gardens creating a truly beautiful pool setting

Good example, this very effective, very productive planting of kumquats in such a tiny (roughly 2' x 18") site surrounded by concrete. Obviously they are doing quite well. Look for some spring color plantings at the base for the Trail. This is at the Tupper Lake house in Tanglewood.

This year four private homes and gardens will be open along with the historic Forum of Civics, Rienzi and Bayou Bend. You can "Ask the Experts" for gardening advice at the Forum, which will be open free to all visitors.

Tickets for all six Trail stops are \$15 before March 1, and \$20 after. Single admissions (available at each site) are \$5. Complete details: <http://www.riveroaksgardenclub.org/site/AzaleaTrail.cfm>. Proceeds help fund River Oaks Garden Club's many civic projects. (<http://www.riveroaksgardenclub.org/site/CivicContribution.cfm>)

Now what was that about the sex life of avocados?

Susan Wood is one of several readers who reported getting avocado trees from grocery store fruit to but no fruit. Susan's is now around five years old and 12 feet tall. She wants to know if having two trees to pollinate would help? Or can she hand-pollinate to get the common grocery store-sold Haas avocados to bloom?

Have to admit, the thought of hand pollinating all those avocado flowers boggles the mind! But don't get cross-

eyed yet. Save that for Angela Chandler's fascinating response to Susan in our spotlight below. Angela's "The Garden Academy" website is a must-read website for anyone gardening in the Greater Houston area.

Before we jump to that, however: one plea, one delight and two important upcoming events want to make sure you mark your calendars. Our calendar below is loaded with more.

* PLEA - STOP CREPE MYRTLE MURDER! You're just creating problems for yourself and being very ugly to this incredibly hardy tree. I've written about this so often, I'll let Greg Grant do it this time. This is from the current Buchanan's Native Plants newsletter: <http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/plantanswers/publications/stopthecrape.html>

* A DELIGHT FOR FRIENDS AND FANS OF JERRY SEYMORE AND JERRY'S JUNGLE GARDENS (<http://blog.chron.com/lazygardener/2011/04/treasure-trove-of-tropicals>). What a void Jerry has left for us gardeners when he retired his incredible semi-annual sale. Good news! Thanks to Jerry's daughter, Bobette Baker, treasures from his Jerry's tropicals collections are now available at Baker's Back Yard in Old Town Spring. Bobette is having a birthday party for her dad on March 28 at 1 pm, and all his plant fans/friends are invited. www.bakersbackyard.com

* Sat.-Sun., Mar. 14-15L Spring Branch African Violet Club's 35th Annual Show and Spring Sale at Judson Robinson Jr. Community Center, 2020 Hermann Drive. (Sat.: Show 1-5pm, Sale 9am-5pm. Sun.: Show & Sale 10am-3pm.) Details: Karla Ross, 281-748-8417, kjwross@yahoo.com

* Sat., Mar. 14: City of Houston's STAR Master Composter Program. This one is a ways off, but you need to register early: <http://www.greenhoustontx.gov/gbrceducation-2015spring.pdf>

We all need to applaud and thank our city officials when they offer ecology-conscious events. This 20-hour, 10am-2pm Master Composter Program will meet on alternate Saturdays through May 9 at the City of Houston's Green Building Resource Center, 1002 Washington Ave.



John Ferguson of Nature's Way Resources is one of many area experts who speak at the City of Houston's Green Building Resource, left. Right, don't forget to check out the green roof.

I particularly wanted to draw your attention to the City of Houston's Green Building Resource Center. Officially launched on Earth Day 2009, this project is devoted to encouraging more Greater Houston area residents to "Go Green." It would make a great field trip for any school, club, church, etc., children or adult group. Over 50 displays of recycling ideas, a library and free green material samples. If you are planning a new home or building, this is a Gold Level LEEDs Building. Details on the building or the course above: <http://codegreenhouston.org/>

Now, on to Angela and the sex life of avocados!



AVOCADOS "...SLIGHTLY CONFUSED ABOUT THEIR SEXUALITY"

BY ANGELA CHANDLER

www.thegardenacademy.com

www.facebook.com/pages/TheGardenAcademy/118766921485456

Avocados have a somewhat complicated pollination cycle. They are slightly confused about their sexuality! Their flowers are perfect (male & female parts), and so should be self-fruitful, right?

Two complications:

1. the flowers have a 2-day life cycle in which the male and female parts are not accessible at the same time.
2. there are Type A and Type B trees, and their sexual cycles are different.

A simplified explanation: In Type A, flowers open as females during the morning of Day One, close, then open as males the afternoon of Day Two. In Type B, flowers open as females in the afternoon of Day One, close, then open as males the morning of Day Two.

Type A females would benefit from the Type B males every morning and Type B females would benefit from Type A males in the afternoon.

Since not all of the flowers are the same ages, there should be some females open at the same time as some males on the same tree regardless of type. However, females are only receptive to pollen for about 2 - 4 hours, which narrows the pollination window.

A lot of texts stop there, and leave the impression that in a perfect situation, one would plant a Type A and a Type B for the best pollination and would have little chance of pollination otherwise.

But temperature changes things. The seemingly strict rule of sexual cycles only applies in tropical locations where temperatures are consistently above 70 degrees. In our climate, where cool temperatures can persist during the bloom time, the female and male cycles can become irregular, creating MORE of an opportunity for overlap. This results in having enough receptive females and pollen-shedding males open at the same time for pollination, regardless of type.

Of course, a mature avocado may present hundreds of thousands of blooms, where only a few hundred will be successfully pollinated and produce fruit, but that is what we are looking for; 200 - 400 perfect, organically grown, creamy avocado fruits.

For the record, Haas is a Type A. Mexicola and Mexicola Grande are also Type A. I have had almost no luck finding out the type of the "found" Mexican varieties. But since we benefit from the irregularity of the sexual cycles due to the avocados blooming during our cool winters, we should still have good crops from them, even if we plant only one type.

The problem with a seedling grown Haas is that it may be 10 - 15 years from seed before it will bloom and produce. It is also not a terribly hardy cultivar. So, all things considered, if we don't have a harsh winter for the next 5 or 10 years, she may have fruits from her Haas. In the meantime, I would plant one of the hardy Mexican varieties as an insurance policy.

If you have more questions, email Angela at: achandler@thegardenacademy.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. * Brenda's "LAZY GARDENER'S GUIDE" - a when-to-do-what in Greater Houston area gardens - is now available on CD only (pdf file). \$20. Checks payable to Brenda B. Smith and mailed to: Lazy Gardener's Guide on CD, 14011 Greenranch Dr., Houston, TX 77039-2103.

JOHN'S CORNER

Organic Fertilizers and Nutrients - 26

MINERAL SANDS - PART 2

There are many types of mineral sands (sometimes called rock dusts) used in horticulture and gardening. Each offers different nutrients and benefits. Today I want to look at another mineral sands of igneous or volcanic origin. The most common in the Gulf Coast region is granite sand, basalt sand, and lava sand to a lesser degree. This week we will look at basalt sand.

Basalt Sand - This sand comes from the breakdown of basalt. It can be produced naturally through weathering of the basalt rock or from the crushing of basalt to create a gravel product. Crushed basalt is often used on railroad tracks to create a base to support the trains.



Basalt is a smoother looking homogenous rock that is dark in color and composed primarily of minerals we call calcic plagioclase, augite, titaniferous magnetite and many other minerals. It is lower in quartz like minerals than granite and richer in minerals that contain magnesium (Mg) and iron (Fe). The molten magmas that form basalt cool very quickly hence large mineral grains do not have time to grow as compared to granite where the magma cools very slowly which allows lots of mineral grains to grow. A huge deposits of basalt is located just West of San Antonio near the town of Knippa.

Basalt varies from dark grey to black in color depending on the source (basalt from Texas is grey). Many of the black sands associated with volcanic islands are often basalt. Basalt is the most common volcanic rock on earth. Basalt rock are more common in the oceans and granites are more common on the continents.

The minerals (elements) in basalt vary a little depending on the source and are richer in the heavier elements than granite.

Some average values are:

45-55%	SiO ₂	Silicon dioxide (quartz mineral)
14%	Al ₂ O ₃	Aluminum oxide
10%	CaO	Calcium oxide
5-14%	FeO	Iron oxide
4-12%	K ₂ O	Potassium oxide
3.7%	NaO	Sodium oxide
5-12%	MgO	Magnesium oxide
0.5-2.0%	TiO	Titanium oxide
0.12%	P ₂ O ₅	Phosphorous oxide
0.05%	MnO	Manganese oxide

Basalts tend to be much higher in barium (Ba) and rare earths minerals than granite. They are other elements in basalt that vary that are in quantities of just a few parts per million or even parts per billion. I am sure many of you recognize the plant nutrients in basalt such as potassium, calcium, iron, magnesium, manganese, etc. As basalt breaks down these nutrients are quickly released by microbes in the soil and by chemical and physical weathering. Since basaltic magmas cooled quickly, mineral grains that are resistant to weathering did not have a chance to form hence basalts weather quickly as compared to granite. They often form brown to reddish colors as they weather due to the high iron content.

We use basalt sand in gardening for several reasons. The sand size particles can add structure to many soil types increasing aeration and infiltration of moisture. Also as the particle size becomes smaller there is an increase in surface area that allow more processes to act on it and release the nutrients quicker. Due to the higher quantity of certain nutrients basalt sand helps buffer the soil against becoming too acidic. The silicon (Si) in the basalt minerals weathers and hydrolyzes to a plant available form called silicic acid that strengthen plants.

Due to the minerals in basalt it has a higher Paramagnetic value. All materials of volcanic origin have varying degrees of this property. From observational data all over the world and thousands of samples, it was found soils that are paramagnetic tend to be more fertile, have higher productivity and have less weed, insect and disease pressure than soils that are not paramagnetic. This will be discussed in future articles.

SUMMARY:

Basalt sand is another tool in a gardeners tool box. It is often occasionally used as an ingredient in high quality soil blends to increase the soils mineral content.

PROS:

- source of a few major nutrients
- good source of iron and magnesium
- small amounts of minor and trace elements
- releases nutrients moderately fast
- aerates heavy tight clay soils
- improves soils structure for many soils
- may be a source of Paramagnetism
- available in different sizes from dust to fine gravel
- fine sizes are often added to vermi-compost bins to use as grit
- buffers soils against acidity
- a few studies shows that it helps plants resist insects and disease better

CONS:

- very heavy in weight hence shipping charges are high
- releases some nutrients quickly
- may be dusty when dry
- may weather and stain concrete or other rocks reddish brown
- more expensive than other nutrients sources
- benefits are relatively unknown hence not widely available (low availability)

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*

Sat., Feb. 14: Harris County Master Gardener Fruit Tree Sale, 9am-1pm, Campbell Hall, Pasadena Fairgrounds, 7600 Red Bluff Rd., Pasadena. Details: hcmga.tamu.edu/Public/pubSales.aspx

Tues., Feb. 17: Plant a Diverse Garden by Chris LaChance, 10am, Knights of Columbus Hall, 702 Burney Road, Sugar Land. Sugar Land Garden Club event. Details: <http://sugarlandgardenclub.org/>

Tues., Feb. 17: Spring Vegetables-Harvesting Know How by Harris County Master Gardeners, 6:30-8:30pm, 930 Corbindale. Free. Details: <http://harris.agrilife.org/hort>. Register [281-855-5600](tel:281-855-5600)

Thur., Feb. 19: Spring Vegetables - Harvesting Know How by Harris County Master Gardeners. 6:30-8:30pm. Freeman Branch Library, 16616 Diana Lane, Free. Details: <http://harris.agrilife.org/hort>. Register [281-855-5600](tel:281-855-5600).

Thurs., Feb. 19: Registration deadline for the Sat., Feb. 21: Backyard Basics: The Food Garden, 9-11am, Bud O'Shieles Community Center, 1330 Band Rd, Rosenberg. \$15. Fort Bend AgriLife Extension and Fort Bend Master Gardeners event. Details/Registration: fortbend.agrilife.org/backyard-basics or 281-342-3034.

Fri., Feb. 20: Rose Pruning by Baxter Williams, 10-11am, Thomas A. Glazier Senior Education Center, 16600 Pine Forest Lane. Free. Details: 713-274-3250; <http://www.pct3.hctx.net/senior/glaziersec.aspx>

Sat., Feb. 21: Brazoria County Master Gardeners Fruit and Citrus Tree Sale. Details: brazoria.agrilife.org

Sat., Feb. 21: Composting for the Home Garden by Dr. Joe Novak, 9-11am, White Oak Conference Center, 7603 Antoine. Near Northwest Management District event. \$20. Details/registration: www.nnmd.org or 713-895-8021.

Sat., Feb. 21: Texas Tuff landscape Plants - Blooming and Beautiful by Sandra Duvall, 9-11:30am, and Kitchen Gardening" by Mary Demeny, 1-3pm, Galveston County AgriLife Extension in Carbide Park, 4102 Main, La Marque. Galveston County Master Gardener event. Free. Reservations: 281-534-3413; galv3@wt.net. Details: www.aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston

Sat., Feb. 21: Organic Gardening and Landscaping Seminar by Mike Serant, John Ferguson and Dany Millikin. 9 a.m. to noon. The Woodlands Township, 2801 Technology Forest Dr., The Woodlands. An Organic Horticulture Benefits Alliance regional seminar. Free, but registration is required [Organic Gardening and Landscaping Seminar](http://www.aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston) or call [281-210-3800](tel:281-210-3800)

Sat., Feb. 21: Spring Vegetables - Harvesting Know How by Harris County Master Gardeners. 10am-Noon. Maude Smith Marks Library, 1815 Westgreen Blvd. Katy, TX. Free. Details: <http://harris.agrilife.org/hort>. Register [281-855-5600](tel:281-855-5600).

Sat., Feb. 21: Earth-Kind Gardening for Texas, 10:15am, Comelius Nursery, 2233 S. Voss. Details: comeliusnurseries.com/events.

Sat., Feb. 21: Pepper Variety Talks by Pam Dunker, 1:30-3:30pm, Wabash Feed & Garden Store, 5701 Washington Ave. Free. Details: www.wabashfeed.com

Sun., Feb. 22: Constructing the Home Vegetable and Fruit Garden by Dany Millikin, 9-11:30am, Westbury Community Garden, 12581 Dunlap St., \$35. Details: 713-880-5540, www.urbanharvest.org/classes-calendar

Tues., Feb. 24: Harris County Master Gardeners Open Garden Day, Spring Vegetable Gardening: 9am- noon: 10am adult workshop, children's activities. Free. AgriLife Extension Office, 3033 Bear Creek Dr. Details: <https://hcmga.tamu.edu>

Tues., Feb. 24 "The ABC's of Home Composting" by Ken Steblein, 9-11am, Galveston County AgriLife Extension in Carbide Park, 4102 Main, La Marque. Galveston County Master Gardener event. Free. Reservations: 281-534-3413; galv3@wt.net. Details: www.aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston

Wed., Feb. 25: Growing Milkweed Dinners for Monarchs by Barbara Willy, Native Prairies Association of Texas, 6:30 pm, 3015 Richmond Avenue, 1st floor. Details: shen.gcmn@gmail.com

Thurs., Feb. 26: Preview of Fort Bend County Master Gardeners Feb. 28 Vegetable-Herb Plant Sale, 9-11am, Bud O'Shields Community Center, 1330 Band Road, Rosenberg. Free. Details: www.fbmjg.com or 281-341-7068

Sat., Feb. 28: Harris County Master Gardener Tomato & Pepper Sale & Symposia. AgriLife Extension office, 3033 Bear Creek Dr. Details: <http://hcmga.tamu.edu/Public/pubSales.aspx>

Sat., Feb. 28: Fort Bend Master Gardeners Vegetable-Herb Plant Sale, 9am-noon or sell-out, Agricultural Center Greenhouse, 1402 Band Road, Rosenberg. Details: www.fbmjg.org or 281-341-7068.

Sat., Feb. 28: Soil Management for the Home Garden by Dr. Joe Novak, 9-11am, White Oak Conference Center, 7603 Antoine. Near Northwest Management District event. \$20. Details/registration: www.nnmd.org or 713-895-8021

Sat., Feb. 28: Successful Organic Gardening by Michael Serant, Suzanne Chapman and Danny Milikin, 9am-noon, Kingwood Community Center, 4102 Rustic Woods Dr., Kingwood. \$5. [Register here](#). Details: 281-855-5600

Sat., Feb. 28: Spring Vegetable Gardening by Ray Sher, 9-11:30am, University of Houston Campus, 4361 Wheeler. \$35. Details: 713-880-5540, www.urbanharvest.org/classes-calendar

Sat., Feb. 28: Make Your Lawn Luxurious-Spring Lawn Care, 10:15am, Cornelius Nursery, 2233 S. Voss. Details: corneliusnurseries.com/events.

Mon., Mar. 2: Citrus Gardening with a Harris County Master Gardener, 1-2pm, Thomas A. Glazier Senior Education Center, 16600 Pine Forest Lane. Free. Details: 713-274-3250; www.pct3.hctx.net/senior/glaziersec.aspx

Tues., Mar. 3: Gardening for Jewels...Hummingbirds by Deborah Repasz, 6:30-8:30pm, Galveston County AgriLife Extension in Carbide Park, 4102 Main, La Marque. Free. Galveston County Master Gardener event. Details www.aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston.

Thurs., Mar. 5: History of Shangri La Botanical Gardens by Joseph Johnson, 9:30am, Municipal Utility Building, 805 Hidden Canyon Drive, Katy. Free. Nottingham Country Garden Club program. Details: nottinghamgardenclub.org; 713-870-5915 or 979-885-6199

Thurs., Mar. 5: Plant and Seed Swap, 10-11am, Thomas A. Glazier Senior Education Center, 16600 Pine Forest Lane. Free. Details: 713-274-3250; www.pct3.hctx.net/senior/glaziersec.aspx

Fri.-Sun., Mar. 6-8: 2015 80th Annual Azalea Trail.River Oaks Garden Club event. Details: <http://www.riveroaksgardenclub.org>

Sat., Mar. 7: Compost Class, 10-11am, The Woodlands Township Parks, Recreation and Environmental Services Campus, 2801 Millennium Forest Dr. The Woodlands. Free. Co-sponsors The Woodlands Township, Montgomery County Master Gardeners, Nature's Way Resources & Waste Management. Details: <http://thewoodlandstowship-tx.gov> or 281-201-3800

Sat., Mar. 7: Pest ID and Management in the Home Garden by Dr. Joe Novak, 9-11am, White Oak Conference Center, 7603 Antoine. Near Northwest Management District event. \$20. Details/registration: www.nnmd.org or 713-895-8021

Sat., Mar. 7: Successful Organic Gardening by Michael Serant, Boone Holladay and Danny Milikin, 9am-noon, Harmon Center, 226 Matlage Way, Sugar Land. \$5. [Register here](#). Details: 281-855-5600

Sat., Mar. 7: Starting a School or Community Garden Series, #1 of 2 by Becky Blanton, 9-11:30am, Urban Harvest, 2311 Canal St., \$50. Details: 713-880-5540, www.urbanharvest.org/classes-calendar

Sat., Mar., 7: Real Food, Garden-Grown Vegetables, 10:15am, Cornelius Nursery, 2233 S. Voss. Details: corneliusnurseries.com/events.

Sat., Mar. 7, Precinct 2, Harris County Master Gardeners Perennial, Pepper, Tomato and Herb Sale, Campbell Hall, Pasadena Fairgrounds, 7600 Red Bluff, Pasadena. 8am-Preview of Perennials by Heidi Sheesley, 9am-1pm- Sale. Details: <https://hcmga.tamu.edu>

Sat.-Sun., Mar. 7-8: Spring Branch African Violet Club 35th Annual Show and Spring Sale, Judson Robinson Jr., Community Center, 2020 Hermann Park Drive. Sat.: Show 1-5pm, Sale 9am-5pm. Sun.: Show & Sale 10am-3pm. Details: Karla Ross, 281-748-8417, kjwross@yahoo.com

Thurs., Mar. 12, Documenting Your Garden by Harris County Master Gardeners. 6:30-8:30pm. Barbara Bush Library, 6817 Cypresswood Dr., Spring Free. Details: <http://harris.agrilife.org/hort>. Register 281-855-5600.

Sat., Mar. 14: Growing Vegetables in Containers Garden by Dr. Joe Novak, 9-11am, White Oak Conference Center, 7603 Antoine. Near Northwest Management District event. \$20. Details/registration: www.nnmd.org or 713-895-8021.

Sat., Mar 14: Fashionista Flower Design, 10:15am, Cornelius Nursery, 2233 S. Voss. Details: corneliusnurseries.com/events.

Sat., Mar. 14: Open Days at Peckerwood Gardens, Hempstead. Garden Conservancy event. Tours 11am & 1pm. \$10. Details: peckerwoodgarden.org, 979-826-3232; info@peckerwoodgarden.org

Sat.-Sun., Mar. 14-15 Galveston Home & Garden Show, Convention Center, 56th street at Seawall Blvd. Horticulture speakers: Saturday 10:30am-Rainwater Harvesting-Jim Jahnke; 11:30-Tree Conservancy-Priscilla Files; 1-Roses-Baxter Williams; 2:30-Lazy Gardening-Brenda Beust Smith. Sunday 11:30-Growing Peppers-Gene Sepler; 12:30-Plumeria-Loretta Osteen. Other speakers, fees, hours: www.galvestonhomeandgarden.com

Tues., March 17: Hummingbirds! Allen or Rufous, it's all Selaphorus to Me. Details: <http://sugarglandgardenclub.org>

Mon., Mar. 16: **Open Garden Day** with Harris County Master Gardeners at Precinct 2, 8:30-11am, Genoa Friendship Garden, 1202 Genoa Red Bluff Rd. Details: <https://hcmga.tamu.edu>

Tues., Mar. 17, Documenting Your Garden by Harris County Master Gardeners, 6:30-8:30pm, Spring Branch Memorial Library, 930 Corbindale. Free. Details: <http://harris.agrilife.org/hort>. Register [281-855-5600](tel:281-855-5600).

Wed., Mar. 18: Texas SuperStars by Paul Winski, 10 am, Clear Lake Park Meeting Room, 5001 NASA Parkway, Seabrook. Harris County Master Gardeners at Precinct 2 event. Details: <https://hcmga.tamu.edu>

Tues., Mar. 17: Honey Bees Around The Garden by Stewart McAdoo and Robert Marshall, 6:30-8:30pm, Galveston County AgriLife Extension in Carbide Park, 4102 Main, La Marque. Free. Galveston County Master Gardener event. Details www.aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston

Thurs., Mar. 19: Providing Homes for Outdoor Wildlife by a Texas Parks and Wildlife Urban Biologist, 11am-noon, Thomas A. Glazier Senior Education Center, 16600 Pine Forest Lane. Details: 713-274-3250; www.pct3.hctx.net/senior/glaziersec.aspx

Thur., Mar. 19. Documenting Your Garden by Harris County Master Gardeners. 6:30-8:30pm. Freeman Branch Library. 16616 Diana Lane, Free. Details: <http://harris.agrilife.org/hort>. Register [281-855-5600](tel:281-855-5600).

Sat., Mar. 21, Documenting Your Garden by Harris County Master Gardeners. 10am-Noon. Maude Smith Marks Library 1815 Westgreen Blvd. Katy, TX. Free. Details: <http://harris.agrilife.org/hort>. Register [281-855-5600](tel:281-855-5600).

Sat., Mar. 21: Save Water and Money with Drip Irrigation, 10:15am, Cornelius Nursery, 2233 S. Voss. Details: corneliusnurseries.com/events.

Sat., Mar. 21: The Culture and Care of Palms by O.J. Miller, 9-11:30am, and Minimize Tomato Stress Factors to Maximize Yields-Part 3 by Ira Gervais, 1-3pm, Galveston County AgriLife Extension in Carbide Park, 4102 Main, La Marque. Free. Galveston County Master Gardener event. Details www.aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston .

Tues., Mar. 24: 50 Ways to Live a Greener Life by Ken Steblein, www.aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston

Fri., Mar. 27: Plant Propagation by Jean Fefer Ph.D., 1-2pm, Thomas A. Glazier Senior Education Center, 16600 Pine Forest Lane. Details: 713-274-3250; www.pct3.hctx.net/senior/glaziersec.aspx

Sat., Mar. 28: Birthday Party for Jerry Seymore (Jerry's Jungle Gardens), 1pm, Baker's Back Yard, 417A Gentry St., Spring. Free. Details: www.bakersbackyard.com

Sat., Mar. 28: Nottingham Country Garden Club Annual Plant Sale, 10am-1pm, Villagio Courtyard, Westheimer Pkwy. @ Peek Rd. Details: nottinghamgardenclub.org; 713-870-5915 or 979-885-6199.

Sat., Mar. 28: Secrets to Spectacular Roses, 10:15am, Cornelius Nursery, 2233 S. Voss. Details: corneliusnurseries.com/events.

Sat., Mar. 28: Memorial Northwest Ladybugs Garden Club Plant and Tree Sale, 9am-2pm, Memorial Northwest Community Center Parking lot, 17440 Theiss Mail Route, Rd., Spring

Sat., Mar. 29: Open Days at Peckerwood Gardens, Hempstead. Garden Conservancy event. Tours 11am & 1pm. \$10. Details: peckerwoodgarden.org, 979-826-3232; info@peckerwoodgarden.org

Tues., Mar. 31: Vegetable Container Gardening by Robert "Skip" Ritcher, 1-2pm, Thomas A. Glazier Senior Education Center, 16600 Pine Forest Lane. Details: 713-274-3250; www.pct3.hctx.net/senior/glaziersec.aspx

Tues., Mar. 31: Tool Care by Tim Jahnke and Henry Harrison III, 6:30-8:30pm, Galveston County AgriLife Extension in Carbide Park, 4102 Main, La Marque. Free. Galveston County Master Gardener event. Details www.aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston.

Wed., Apr. 1: Orchid Gardening by John Stubbing, 11am-noon, Thomas A. Glazier Senior Education Center, 16600 Pine Forest Lane. Details: 713-274-3250; www.pct3.hctx.net/senior/glaziersec.aspx

Wed., Apr. 8: Hibiscus gardening by Marti Graves, 2-3pm, Thomas A. Glazier Senior Education Center, 16600 Pine Forest Lane. Details: 713-274-3250; www.pct3.hctx.net/senior/glaziersec.aspx

Thurs., Apr. 9: Basic Irrigation & Rainwater Harvesting by Harris County Master Gardeners. 6:30-8:30pm. Barbara Bush Library, 6817 Cypresswood Dr., Spring. Free. Details: <http://harris.agrilife.org/hort>. Register [281-855-5600](tel:281-855-5600).

Sat., Apr. 11: White Oak Garden Spring Plant Sale, 9-10am Presentation on featured plants by Heidi Sheesley, 10am-2pm Sale; White Oak Conference Center, 7603 Antoine Dr. Details: www.nnmd.org

Sat., Apr. 11: Open Days at Peckerwood Gardens, Hempstead. Garden Conservancy event. Tours 11am & 1pm. \$10. Details: peckerwoodgarden.org, 979-826-3232; info@peckerwoodgarden.org

Thurs., Apr. 16: Harris County Master Gardener Green Thumb Lecture on Basic Irrigation & Rainwater Harvesting. 6:30-8:30pm. Freeman Branch Library, 16616 Diana Lane. Free. Details: <http://harris.agrilife.org/hort>. Register [281-855-5600](tel:281-855-5600).

Sat., Apr. 18: Basic Irrigation & Rainwater Harvesting by Harris County Master Gardeners. 10am-Noon. Maude Smith Marks Library, 1815 Westgreen Blvd., Katy. Free. Details: <http://harris.agrilife.org/hort>. Register [281-855-5600](tel:281-855-5600).

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

Tues., Apr. 21: Basic Irrigation & Rainwater Harvesting by Harris County Master Gardeners. 6:30-8:30pm. Spring Branch Memorial Library, 930 Corbindale. Free. Details: <http://harris.agrilife.org/hort>. Register 281-855-5600.

Thurs., Apr. 23: Plants of the Bible by Jean Fefer Ph.D., 1-2pm, Thomas A. Glazier Senior Education Center, 16600 Pine Forest Lane. Details: 713-274-3250; www.pct3.hctx.net/senior/glaziersec.aspx

Sun., May 10: Open Days at Peckerwood Gardens, Hempstead. Garden Conservancy event. Tours 11am & 1pm. \$10. Details: peckerwoodgarden.org, 979-826-3232; info@peckerwoodgarden.org

Thurs., May 14: Basic Pest Control for Gardeners by Harris County Master Gardeners. 6:30-8:30pm. Barbara Bush Library, 6817 Cypresswood Dr., Spring. Free. Details: <http://harris.agrilife.org/hort>. Register 281-855-5600.

Sat., May 16: Basic Pest Control for Gardeners by Harris County Master Gardeners. 10am-Noon. Maude Smith Marks Library, 1815 Westgreen Blvd., Katy. Free. Details: <http://harris.agrilife.org/hort>. Register 281-855-5600.

Tues., May 19: Basic Pest Control for Gardeners by Harris County Master Gardeners. 6:30-8:30pm. Spring Branch Memorial Library, 930 Corbindale. Free. Details: <http://harris.agrilife.org/hort>. Register: 281-855-5600

Sun., May 17: Payne's in the Grass Daylily Farm Open Garden, 9am-5pm, 2130 O'Day Road, Pearland. Free. Details: 281-485-3821, 713-419-6661, paynesinthegrassdaylilyfarm.com

Sun., May 17: Shimek's Open Gardens, 8am-6pm, 3122 Country Road 237, Alvin. Details: 281-331-4395 or 832-489-4395; www.cityscope.net/~neshimek (under Open Gardens)

Thur., May 21: Basic Pest Control for Gardeners by Harris County Master Gardeners. 6:30-8:30pm. Freeman Branch Library, 16616 Diana Lane. Free. Details: <http://harris.agrilife.org/hort>. Register 281-855-5600.

Sat., May 23: Open Days at Peckerwood Gardens. Hempstead. Garden Conservancy event. Tours 11am & 1pm. \$10. Details: peckerwoodgarden.org, 979-826-3232; info@peckerwoodgarden.org

**If we inspire you to attend any of these events,
please let them know you heard about it in THE LAZY GARDENER & FRIENDS NEWSLETTER!**

**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

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!

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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, certified permaculturist 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 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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