



March 6, 2015

Dear Friends,

Here is the 97th 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: Exciting offerings at Mercer's March Mart - the brand new Daytona series of dwarf vitex shrubs or small trees, left, and Kaempferia 'Red Leaf' - a collector's ginger. Right, an Epidendrum and other orchids started gardener Tim Fleck on his greenhouse journey.

MARCH MART TIME! . . . AND A GARDENER'S JOURNEY

BY BRENDA BEUST SMITH

One of the Texas Gulf Coast's largest horticultural events is coming up March 20-21.

March Mart is a project of [The Mercer Society](#), a volunteer group that not only helps fund activities at [Mercer Botanic Gardens](#), 22306 Aldine-Westfield, it is an extraordinary cheerleading squad-plus for the now 325 acre-living plant library open free to the public almost year-round in North Harris County.

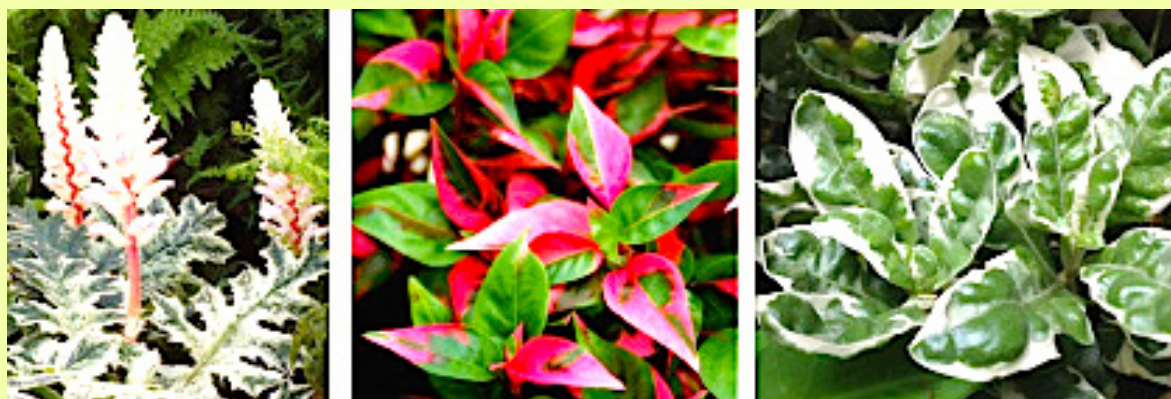
March Mart, at Mercer Botanic Gardens, offers over 2000 varieties of plants, many unavailable at local nurseries, many raised right on-site, and all recommended specifically for our growing environment.

Wagons will be available but, to be on the safe side, take your own. It's also a good time to have plant problems diagnosed, or to pick up recommendations on special problem spots you need to landscape. I'll have more on special events at the sale next week. In the meantime, here are a few of the plant offerings. Get there early. Supplies of rare things may be limited. Details:

<http://www.hcp4.net/Community/Parks/Mercer/MarchMart>



Mercer's "Annuals & Perennials" offerings will include, left to right, new varieties like Echinacea 'Milkshake,' Echinacea 'Marmalade,' and old favorites like Pentas lanceolata 'Starburst' and Petunia 'Laura Bush'



SHADE LOVERS - Left to right: Acanthus 'Whitewater' - Variegated Bear's Breeches (limited supply!), Alternanthera ficoidea "Party Time" and Alternanthera ficoidea "Snow Queen." Alternanthera's also known as Joseph's Coat.



Mercer's interesting selections of deciduous magnolias (large shrubs to small trees) include, left to right, Magnolia x 'Sunset Swirl', M. 'Blushing Belle,' M. sprengeri 'Eric Savill' and M. stellata 'Pink Stardust.'

By the way, members of The Mercer Society (themercersociety.org) get first grab at plants, so you might want to look into joining!

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✓ GREAT RESOURCES - Gaye Hammond, a Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Public Education Committee wants to share word of the free *Green Trends* e-letter (<http://tinyurl.com/po76zrb>). Altho it's published by Harris County AgriLife, anyone can receive this e-letter to learn about new gardening/horticulture trends on the horizon, such as the "Top Performers in the 2014 Harris County Flower Trials" and other study/trials results. She also recommends their blog: <http://agrilife.org/harrishort/>

So I don't leave you hanging - the 2014 Trials winner included coleus varieties 'Redhead,' 'Coleosaurus,' 'Kong Lime Sprite' and 'Dipt in Wine'; lantana varieties 'Bandito Orange Sunrise,' 'Little Lucky Lemon Cream,' 'Bandana Red' and 'Lucky Sunrise Rose,' and 'Zahara Yellow Improved' and 'Raspberry' zinnias.

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Kathy Huber was the official ribbon-cutter, kicking off the 2015 80th Annual Azalea Trail, the longest continuously-held azalea trail in the nation. The Trail continues Sat.-Sun., March 7-8, with tickets available at all homes, gardens and other sites. Details: www.riveroaksgardenclub.org.

✓ **Kathy Huber Update** - It was so neat to receive all those OH NO! email responses to the note last week about Kathy Huber's retirement as Houston Chronicle Garden Editor. Although no word has been issued about a replacement (and rumor is there will not be one), here are two good news items:

1. The Chronicle Garden Calendar will continue to be published.
2. Kathy has agreed to do a once-a-month column. YEH! The first one will be in print Saturday. (Or, you can read "[Small blue bulbs are star flowers](#)" online).

* * *

✓ **Tool Drive for Community Gardens** - If you have unused gardening tools just hanging around taking up space, many a community garden in the area could probably use them. Urban Harvest will be accepting donated tools at the Sat., Mar. 14, 8am-noon, Eastside Farmers Market, 3000 Richmond, at the Information Booth. Contact Urban Harvest's [Community Gardens Coordinator](#) if you have questions.

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✓ **Love having articles by writers whose whose way with words I truly respect. One is below. Tim Fleck of Houston Chronicle and Houston Press fame, has - in his mature years - turned to gardening, even going so far as to entering the world of greenhouses - much to the amazement of many longtime friends.**

I'm thinking about Tim's final paragraph below as I look out on my yard while writing this column. So many plants that normally die completely back are still full of healthy leaves: firespikes, thryallis, shrimps, even my beloved Brazilian red cloak still has a little green foliage.

Actually, I wish the coral vine had died back, it's entirely too rambunctious and will probably become a major problem now.

Nature always bats last!



Left to right, firespike, thryallis, shrimp plants, Brazilian red cloak and coral vine.

* 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.

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Spotlighting . . . Our Gardeners

Lazy Gardener and Friends Newsletter



Maybe greenhouses (and orchids!) should come with a caution label:
"WARNING! Might become addictive!"

A GARDENER'S EVOLUTION

BY TIM FLECK
Timwfleck@yahoo.com

For me, the hardest part of anything is figuring out what you need, and that's particularly true of gardening - an open-ended process starting with puttering around with one or two orchids. As you get proficient at keeping them alive, multiplying quickly explodes to dozens of plants. In this climate, you don't need an outdoor greenhouse for a handful of tropicals. A sunlit breakfast room will do for the four months of the year where temperatures are too cool for their comfort.

In my intermediate stage, I hauled plants in and out of the house throughout winter, after weatherizing a front porch with plastic sheeting, space heater, and humidifier. The house looked like an indoor jungle during cold spells. I lost plants when I didn't have time to bring them in or a freeze snuck up on me. When I sold my Heights place and moved to Lindale Park, I faced it: I needed an outdoor greenhouse.

I started with a Palram "Flower House," a 6 x 8-foot tall, 6.5 foot wide Chinese-made glorified tent with clear plastic and vinyl walls and spring-up carbon support rods, purchased at a local nursery for about \$140. It worked fine for a winter with a space heater but the door flap zippers and ventilation window soon corroded. It was cramped. I needed more space.

An internet search found a Palram prefab greenhouse with aluminum frame and clear double insulated carbonate panels. Price: \$450. A bear to assemble, even with two people, it is attractive with a peaked roof and spacious interior - tall enough to stand or walk around in, or to sit in to read or admire your collection. Equipped with a space heater and extension cord, it's a cozy little meditation room as well as plant refuge.

If you love tropicals, having year-round blooms and a place to garden on even the dreariest winter days, soon it becomes indispensable. I'm even considering buying a second greenhouse and attaching the two, something like a habitation module for living on Mars. Doesn't need to be airtight on Earth,

Rarely does a project exceed my expectations, but this one certainly has. Just another step in a gardener's evolution.

* * *

Tim added this PS in an email: "*The sunshine did arrive and the tomato seedlings and potted young plants are soaking it up!*" He reported that even tho we've had a few light freezes, this has been the least extreme winter in Houston in at least five years, by his figuring." (His tomato seedlings? Brandywine, Cherokee Purple and Black Krim.)

JOHN'S CORNER

Organic Fertilizers and Nutrients - 28





ASHES

I was asked a question this week about using ash from cremated animals as a feedstock for composting and whether it was good or bad. Hence today's topic on ashes.

There are many types of ashes available both commercially and from our own yards. Some of these can be very good and useful while others may cause problems.

The most common ash is from the burning of wood products. This may be logs in our fireplace or fire pits or ash from the drying of wood by lumber companies. These types of ash differ.

When natural gas prices are high many lumber companies burn their waste bark products for heat to dry the lumber. This ash is typically alkaline and low nutrients since the feed stock (barks) is low in nutrients. When used in small amounts it does not affect the soil pH and will supply a few nutrients. It is sometimes available in large quantities for free as it is a waste product that companies must dispose of. In some areas large amounts of this ash are used to harden and stabilize soil or as an ingredient in plaster or concrete.

The second type of wood ash is from our fireplaces or fire pits in our yards where we burn wood (logs and limbs). This ash has more nutrients than barks and can provide nutritional benefits. I have been using it for years (decades) in my own garden on an alkaline clay soil without any problems. The key is to use only small amounts per square foot of soil and let nature naturally assimilate the nutrients into the soil.

The third type of wood ash is from electrical generating plants where wood chips are burned for energy to make electricity. In general this ash is similar to fireplace ash above. However, generating plants often get wood from ground up pallets or construction materials that may have contaminants on them that end up in the ash. Occasional usage will not cause problems as here is a tremendous dilution effect of any toxics and many toxics are destroyed by the heat of burning.

Our next type of ash is from burning charcoal briquettes in our bar-b-que pits. These briquettes have been treated with chemicals to make them burn slowly and evenly. Most of the chemicals are destroyed during the burning but a few remain. I have experimented using this type of ash, comparing it to fireplace ash. In all my tests it seemed to have mild negative effects of soil and plant growth for a few weeks. My recommendation is to avoid using it.

The 5th type of ash is from cremating animals and is a high quality ash. This ash is often available from universities, animal control facilities, animal research facilities, etc. where dead animals are cremated (burned) for health and safety and to reduce the volume of material to be handled and disposed of. All animals from insects to fish and mankind are extremely rich in nutrients. Hence this type of ash can be used as a fertilizer whether applied directly to the soil or as an ingredient in composting.

The next type of ash one may encounter is from the burning of garbage. This is a common disposal method in the country where one does not have access to trash pick-up. The possibility of toxic materials in the ash depends on many factors, but in general, it is very high and one should not use in gardening.

Another ash that is sometimes available occurs when garbage (Municipal Solid Waste or MSW) is incinerated (burned) rather than land filling it. The ash material is toxic and should be avoided.

Our last common ash is from the burning of coal to produce electricity. This ash is extremely alkaline (worse than Drano), full of heavy metals, and often radioactive components found in the coal where all these toxics become concentrated. It should never be used in gardening or horticulture. *WARNING: Many companies that sell mulch products in the Houston and Gulf Coast area use coal ash to chemically burn their products black.*

APPLICATION

Ashes can be sprinkled lightly over our flower beds and watered in. If left on plant leaves very long in may chemically cause burn spots.

One way to apply ash is to make a special spreader. One needs a large plastic coffee container. Use a torch or hot stove and heat up a large nail, and then use it (use pliers to hold the nail so that you do not burn yourself)

to melt holes in the lid about one inch apart. Place the ash into your new shaker and close the lid. As one shakes it the fine ash falls out in small amounts and can be spread around the base of plants without getting it on the leaves. When finished there will be pieces of charcoal left in the container. These leftover pieces work good in a soil mix for containers and hanging baskets as they help aerate the soil and hold moisture.

The method I use to apply my fireplace ashes is simple and effective.

I collect the ash from my fireplace and place the ash into a 5 gallon bucket with a lid on it to keep it dry. When there is a breeze and just before it rains, I remove the lid and use my electric blower. I aim the airstream from the blower over the bucket and slowly lower it until it starts sucking out the ash and scatters it into the wind.

Note: Do not aim the airstream directly into the bucket or it will get all over you.

The wind will carry a very fine dusting of ash all over the yard. The rain (or sprinklers) will wash the ash into the soil so it does not burn plant leaves. The minerals are returned to the soil where the microbes will make them available to the plants. The later of ash is so small per square foot that it does not affect the pH of the soil.

The next time I need to get rid of ash I wait till the wind is blowing from a different direction so eventually the whole yard is covered. I have been doing this for years with great results.

SUMMARY:

There are many types of ashes available. These ashes can be bad or good depending on the source and type.

PROS:

- source of a few major nutrients
- small amounts of minor and trace elements
- releases nutrients relatively quickly
- helps light sandy soils hold moisture
- inexpensive to free
- recycles a waste product

CONS:

- often very alkaline
- may chemically burn plants
- may release nutrients too quickly
- often dusty when dry
- some type of ash are toxic

WEEKLY GARDENING EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

CALENDAR

TO SUBMIT EVENTS: Find a similar event in our calendar below and copy the format EXACTLY.

Then you can add additional information. Email to lazygardener@sbcglobal.net

Any other formatting will result in a delay in publication. Events will not be picked up from newsletters.

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

Sat-Sun., Mar. 7-8: Spring Home & Garden Show Gardening Programs. Waterway Marriott 1601 Lake Robbins Dr., Sat., 10:30-11:30am, Recovering From the 2015 Polar Vortex! by Randy Lemmon; Sat., 11:30am-12:30pm Make A Splash this Spring with Perennial Color by Mark Bowen, 12:30-1:30 pm; Mulch - The Secret Weapon for Beautiful Gardens by John Ferguson; Sun., 12:30-1:30pm, Water Conservation: Water for Today, Water for Our Future by Bob Dailey. <http://www.woodlandsshow.com>

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://thewoodlandstownship-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., Mar. 7: NatureFest, 9am-3:30pm, Jesse H. Jones Park & Nature Center, 20634 Kenswick Dr., Humble. Free. Details: 281-445-8588; www.hcp4.net/community/parks/jones

Sat, Mar. 7: Urban Harvest's Starting a Community or School Garden Class #1 of 2, 9-11:30am. \$20. University of St. Thomas, Welder Hall. Room TBD, 3800 Montrose Blvd. Details: 713-880-5540 or www.urbanharvest.org.

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

Sun., Mar. 8: Landscaping with Texas Native Shrubs and Vines by Glenn Olson. 3-5pm, Houston Arboretum & Nature Center, 4501 Woodway Drive. \$20. Details: www.houstonarboretum.org.

Tues, Mar. 10: Plumeria Society of America quarterly meet, 7pm, Garden Center, 1500 Hermann Drive in Hermann Park. Details: www.theplumeriasociety.org

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.

Thurs., Mar. 12 : Fertilizers and Soil Additives by Dr. Robert Unruh, 7:30pm, St. Andrews Episcopal Church parish hall, 1819 Heights Blvd. Free. Houston Rose Society event. Details: www.houstonrose.org

Thurs., Mar. 12: Hummingbirds 101 with Cliff Shackelford, 7:30 p.m., L.G.I. Lecture Hall, McCullough Jr. High School, 3800 S. Panther Creek Dr., The Woodlands. Free. Co-sponsors The Woodlands Township, The Woodlands G.R.E.E.N., Nature's Way Resources & Waste Management. Details: [Hummingbirds 101](#) or 281-201-3800.

Sat., Mar. 14: City of Houston STAR Master Composter program begins. 20-hour, 10am-2pm class meets alternate Saturdays through May 9, City of Houston Building Resource Center, 1002 Washington. Details: <http://www.greenhoustontx.gov/gbrceducation-2015spring.pdf>

Sat., Mar. 14: Growing Vegetables in Containers 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

Sat-Sun., Mar. 14-15 & 21-22: Spring Native Plant Sale, 9am-4pm, Houston Arboretum & Nature Center, 4501 Woodway Drive. Free. Also Mar. 21-22. Details: <http://houstonarboretum.org/events/spring-native-plant-sale/>.

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

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

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>

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

Fri., Mar. 20: March Mart Plant Sale, noon-4pm. Mercer Botanic Gardens, 22306 Aldine Westfield Road, Humble. Free. Details: <http://www.hcp4.net/community/parks/mercer>

Sat., Mar. 21, March Mart Plant Sale. 8am-4pm. Mercer Botanic Gardens, 22306 Aldine Westfield Road, Humble. Free. Details: <http://www.hcp4.net/community/parks/mercer>; 281-443-8731

Sat., Mar 21: MCMGA Spring Plant Sale, Montgomery Co. Extension Office, 9020 Airport Road, Conroe. 8am: Program; 9am-1pm: Sale Details: 936-539-7824 or www.mcmga.com

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

Sat., Mar., 21: Tomball Garden Club Annual Plant Sale, 9am-2pm, Grannys Komer, 201 Market St. (near Tomball Depot), Tomball. Details: tomballgardenclub@yahoo.com, T281-259-9159

Mar. 21-22: Spring Native Plant Sale, 9am-4pm, Houston Arboretum & Nature Center, 4501 Woodway Drive. Free. Details: <http://houstonarboretum.org/events/spring-native-plant-sale/>

Sun., Mar. 22: Earth Kind Plants by Margaret Lloyd-Bingham, 2-4pm, Mercer Arboretum & Botanical Garden, 22306 Aldine-Westfield Rd., Humble. Free. Cypress Creek Daylily Club event. Details. 713-697-0362. agcar@swbell.net.

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

Wed., Mar. 25: Cypress Creek Daylily Club Plant Sale. 9:30am-6pm. Klein United Methodist Church, 5920 FM 2920, Spring. Free. Details. 713-697-0362. agcar@swbell.net.

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. 28: Roses and Companion Plants by Gaye Hammond, 10am and 2pm, The Enchanted Gardens, 6420 FM 359, Richmond, and Enchanted Forest Nursery, 10611 FM 2759, Richmond. Free. Details: www.myenchanted.com

Sat, Mar. 28: Urban Harvest's Starting a Community or School Garden, Class #2 of 2, 9-11:30am. \$20. University of St. Thomas, Welder Hall. Room TBD, 3800 Montrose Blvd. Details: 713-880-5540 or www.urbanharvest.org.

Sat., Mar. 28: Garden Villas Garden Club Annual Plant & Garden Accessories Sale, 9am-1pm, Garden Villas Paetk Community Center, 6720 S. Haywood. Free. Details: bbums50@aol.com or 713-545-2926.

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

Sun, Mar. 29: Urban Harvest's Restoring Nature Through Permaculture Class 1 of 4, 1-6pm. \$238. U of Houston Central Campus, 4800 Calhoun, McElhinney Hall, Room 106. Details: 713-880-5540 or www.urbanharvest.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

Thurs., April 2: Planting for Bees and Butterflies by Fort Bend Master Gardeners Entomology Group, 9:30 am, Municipal Utility Building, 805 Hidden Canyon Drive, Katy. Free. Nottingham Country Garden Club Program. Details: nottinghamgardenclub.org; 713-870-5915.

Sat., Apr. 4: Perennials - Best Picks for Texas, 10:15am, Cornelius Nursery, 2233 S. Voss Rd. Free. Details:

www.corneliusnurseries.com/events

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).

Thurs., Apr. 9 : Roses in the West - A Must See, 7:30pm, St. Andrews Episcopal Church parish hall, 1819 Heights Blvd. Free. Houston Rose Society event. Details: www.houstonrose.org

Thurs., Apr. 9: Purple Martins: Aerial Insectivores with Mary Anne Weber, 7:30 p.m., L.G.I. Lecture Hall, McCullough Jr. High School, 3800 S. Panther Creek Dr., The Woodlands. Free. Co-sponsors The Woodlands Township, The Woodlands G.R.E.E.N., Nature's Way Resources & Waste Management. Details: [in the Woods Nature Lecture](#) or 281-201-3800.

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

Sat., Apr. 11: Plants for Butterfly and Hummingbird Gardens, 10:15am, Cornelius Nursery, 2233 S. Voss Rd. Free. Details: www.corneliusnurseries.com/events

Sat, Apr. 11: Urban Harvest's Constructing the Home Vegetable and Fruit Garden. 9-11:30 am. \$45. University of St. Thomas, Welder Hall. Room TBD, 3800 Montrose Blvd. Details: 713-880-5540 or www.urbanharvest.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).

Sat., Apr. 18: Colorful Sun & Shade Plants from Burpee Home Garden, 10:15am, Cornelius Nursery, 2233 S. Voss Rd. Free. Details: www.corneliusnurseries.com/events

Sat., Apr. 18 : Houston Rose Society Rose Show, 12:30 pm, St. Andrews Episcopal Church parish hall, 1819 Heights Blvd. Free. Houston Rose Society event. Details: www.houstonrose.org

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](tel: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

Sat., Apr. 25: Easy Care Flowers, Top Picks from "Proven Winners," 10:15am, Cornelius Nursery, 2233 S. Voss Rd. Free. Details: www.corneliusnurseries.com/events

Sat., Apr. 25: Urban Harvest's Organic Pest Control, 9-11:30am. \$45. University of St. Thomas, Welder Hall. Room TBD, 3800 Montrose Blvd. Details: 713-880-5540 or www.urbanharvest.org.

Sat., May 9: Cypress Creek Daylily Club Flower Show. 1-4pm. Mercer Arboretum & Botanical Barden, 22306 Aldine-Westfield Rd., Humble. Free. Details. 281-356-2543 billyandjeanlewis@sbcglobal.net

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

Tues., May 12: Plumeria Society of America quarterly meet, 7pm, Garden Center, 1500 Hermann Drive in Hermann Park. Details: www.theplumeriasociety.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](tel: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](tel: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](tel: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](tel:281-485-3821), [713-419-6661](tel:713-419-6661), paynesinthegrassdaylilyfarm.com

Sun., May 17: Shimek's Open Gardens, 8am-6pm, 3122 Country Road 237, Alvin. Details: [281-331-4395](tel:281-331-4395) or [832-489-4395](tel: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](tel: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

Sat., June 13: Plumeria Society of America Sale, 9:30am-3pm, Bay Area Community Center, 5002 NASA Parkway, Seabrook. Details: theplumeriasociety.org

Tues., July 14: Plumeria Society of America quarterly meet, 7pm, Garden Center, 1500 Hermann Drive in Hermann Park. Details: www.theplumeriasociety.org

Sat., July 25: Plumeria Society of America Sale, 9:30am-3pm, Fort Bend County Fairgrounds, Richmond. Details: theplumeriasociety.org

Tues., Oct. 13: Plumeria Society of America quarterly meet, 7pm, Garden Center, 1500 Hermann Drive in Hermann Park. Details: www.theplumeriasociety.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!

TO SUBMIT EVENTS: Find a similar event in our calendar below and copy the format EXACTLY.

Then you can add additional information. Email to lazygardener@sbcglobal.net

Any other formatting will result in a delay in publication. Events will not be picked up from newsletters.

THIS NEWSLETTER IS MADE
POSSIBLE BY THE FOLLOWING SPONSORS



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.



COUPON: Nature's Way Resources. 20% off Garden Mix Light

Plus. <http://natureswayresources.com/products.html> . (Offer good for retail purchases of this product by the cubic yard at Nature's Way Resources (101 Sherbrook Circle, Conroe TX). Expires 03/15/15.