



June 10th, 2016

Dear Friends,

Here is the 161st issue of our weekly gardening newsletter for Houston, the Gulf Coast and beyond. We really appreciate all of our readers hanging in there with us, sharing stories and inspiring us in so many ways.

Thanks so much!

This newsletter is a project of The Lazy Gardener, Brenda Beust Smith, John Ferguson and Mark Bowen (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](mailto: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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**POLLINATORS - WE CAN'T LIVE WITHOUT THEM**

*Go to your fields and your gardens, and you shall learn that it is the pleasure of the bee to gather honey of the flower,  
But it is also the pleasure of the flower to yield its honey to the bee.  
For to the bee a flower is a fountain of life,  
And to the flower a bee is a messenger of love,  
And to both, bee and flower, the giving and the receiving of pleasure is a need and an ecstasy.*

-- -- Extract from Kahlil Gibran's "The Prophet"

## BY BRENDA BEUST SMITH

Tithonia, above, is one of my favorite flowers. It's so happy, so visible from across the yard and now, its most valuable attribute -- it's an incredible triple-pollinator attractor -- bees, butterflies and hummingbirds. Pretty neat, eh?

Monday, June 20, kicks off National Pollinator Week. Talk about a word that has *tsunami'd* its way into our vocabulary -- starting with the honeybee's decline from Colony Collapse Disorder. Now every school child probably knows more about pollinators than most adults do. They're part of every curriculum.

Pollinators are animals that assist plants with reproduction -- bats, butterflies, moths, flies, birds, beetles, ants and bees. [The Simple Truth is: We Can't Live Without Them](#). Over 80% of Earth's flowering plants require pollinators to survive.

Think about it. Without pollinators, neither we, nor any of Earth's terrestrial ecosystems, would survive.

Study after study now reflects global declines in so many important pollinators for a variety of reasons, not the least of which is negative human intervention into their habitats. On the other hand, marked decreases in decline rates have been noted, as in the case of monarch butterflies.

How much do our habitat gardens help? While there are no definitive stats out yet, they certainly can't hurt.

In honor of National Pollinator Week, I conducted a random email survey\* of area public gardens, flower-laden nurseries and other area resources. I asked for a list of flowering plants that attract the most on-site hummingbirds & butterflies. Of course non-blooming plants are very important as well. But just focusing on flowering plants today.

Remember, I asked them to list those flowers that immediately come to mind as being the ones on which they usually see the MOST pollinators. I'm listing them all, even duplicates, so you'll know where to see/buy them in your specific area. I listed everyone who responded to my request.



*Pollinator-attracting plants, above l to r: Cardinal flower, buttonbush, bat-face cuphea and liatris.  
Below, l to r, joe-pye weed (an eupatorium), St. Elmo's Fire rusellia, Gregg's mistflower and Texas olive tree*



## HOUSTON ARBORETUM & NATURE CENTER - [houstonarboretum.org](http://houstonarboretum.org)

- Butterflies -- Native lantana (*Lantana urticoides*); mistflowers (*Conoclinium* sp.); beebalms (*Monarda* sp.); buttonbush (*Cephalanthus occidentalis*); gayfeathers (*Liatris* sp.); basketflower (*Centaurea americana*)
- Hummingbirds -- Turks cap (*Malvaviscus arboreus*); trumpet creeper (*Campsis radicans*); scarlet sage (*Salvia coccinea*); cardinal flower (*Lobelia cardinalis*); coral honeysuckle (*Lonicera sempervirens*)

## COCKRELL BUTTERFLY CENTER [hmns.org/cockerell-butterfly-center/](http://hmns.org/cockerell-butterfly-center/)

- Honey bees -- African Blue basil; pink cuphea; Mexican heather (little purple one); bulbine; partridge pea (*Chamaecrista fasciculata*)
- Hummingbirds -- 'Red Rocket' red rusellia; *Salvia leucantha* and other red tubulars.
- Butterflies -- Tithonia; purple coneflower; various eupatoriums; *Asclepias curassavica*. Swallowtails really like Mexican orchid tree (*Bauhinia mexicana*) and buttonbush.

## TREESEARCH FARMS [treesearchfarms.biz](http://treesearchfarms.biz)

- Bees -- African blue basil
- Butterflies -- 'Sweet Memory' & white duranta; blue mist flower; buddleias, coneflower; lantanas
- Hummingbirds -- Bottlebrush; hamelia; rusellia; cuphea ('David Verity'; pink & bat face)
- Butterflies & hummingbirds -- Porterweed (purple, blue & coral); Mexican bauhinia; old fashioned *Penta lanceolata*.

NOTE: Treesearch Farms is a wholesale grower. If you can't find any of these, call Treesearch and ask for a retailer near you. (Owner Heidi Sheesley has been a prime mover in both introducing and providing many super-hardy pollinator-attracting plants to our local nurseries and group plant sales).

## A COMMUNITY GARDEN IN MONTGOMERY COUNTY (from Carolyn Kosclskey), Montgomery County Master Gardener <http://www.mcmga.com/>

- Bees -- Basil ('African blue' & 'Purple Ruffles'); cucumbers; zinnias
- Hummingbirds -- zinnias

## THE BLUEBONNET HOUSE [bluebonnethouse@msn.com](mailto:bluebonnethouse@msn.com)

- Butterflies -- Butterfly weed; passionvine; coneflowers
- Butterflies & hummingbirds -- Porterweed; thryallis; firecracker plant (Rusellia firecracker or coral fountain plant *Russelia* x 'St. Elmo's Fire.' Dale thinks St. Elmo's is the hardier of these two)

## ENCHANTED NURSERIES [myenchanted.com](http://myenchanted.com)

- Butterflies -- Lantana; pentas; Gregg's mist flower
- Hummingbirds -- Texas olive; cuphea; Turk's cap; coral honeysuckle
- Butterflies & hummingbirds -- Duranta



## THE ARBOR GATE [www.arbortgate.com](http://www.arbortgate.com)

They listed their top overall pollinators for:

- Summer -- 'African Blue' basil; 'Blue Lady' rosemary and almond verbena
- Winter -- *Camellia sasanqua* and open-faced roses like 'Lemon Fizz' and 'Summer Wind'



**Bees are a must for a healthy garden. Our gardeners extraordinaire recommend -- to attract bees -- l to r, bulbine, 'pink cuphea, Mexican heather and African Blue' and 'Purple Ruffles' basil.**

\* \* \*

### SO, WHICH PLANTS ATTRACT POLLINATORS . . .

. . . at our largest botanic garden? Mercer Botanic Garden staffers list these as their Top 5 Blooming Pollinator-Attracting Plants:



1. *Echinacea purpurea* (purple coneflowers) - beloved by all bugs & butterflies; can bloom almost all year
2. *Solidago canadensis* (goldenrod) - fabulous in autumn; covered by bees and all sorts of critters
3. *Conoclinium coelestinum* (mist flower) - fabulous in autumn
4. Salvias (sages) - great tubular flowers for nectar and pollen
5. *Senna alata* (candlestick plant) - host plant of cloudless sulfur, orange-barred sulfur, and large orange sulfur butterflies

In addition to flowers listed above, Mercer staffers add these as must-have pollinators for home gardens:

- *Verbena* "Homestead" for butterflies
- Lion's Tail (*Leonotis leonurus*) for hummingers
- Firebush (or hummingbird bush / *Hamelia patens*) for hummingers, butterflies & bees

And, since I neglected to ask some of the above folks for their bee-attractors (a MUST for flowers in general), Mercer folks graciously also send a list specifically to attract bees: Mealycup sage (*Salvia farinacea* 'Henry Duelberg'), Gulf Coast penstemon (*Penstemon tenuis*); cigar plant, batface cuphea, beebalm, almond verbena, cosmos, buttonbush, false indigo, clasping leaf coneflower and blue mistflower.

**MERCER IS OPEN AFTER THE FLOODS** -- Despite the challenges of having been flooded multiple times, Mercer has announced it is open and visitors are welcome. You can see flowers listed above, and buy great pollinator plants, at Mercer Botanic Garden's big:

**Sat., June 18 Summer Color Sale, 9am-3pm, 22306 Aldine-Westfield.**

Also on that day's agenda: two workshops (\$10 each (preregister at 713-274-4166)

**10:30am - "All About Begonias Indoors & Out" & at noon - "Easy Care of Orchids"**

Mercer is kicking off **National Pollinator Week** with one-hour guided tours on Monday, June 20, focusing on butterfly host plants and nectar plants and the wide variety of pollinators at Mercer, such as bees, wasps, beetles, hummingbirds, and ants. Two tours are scheduled, beginning at 9:30 a.m. and 10:45 a.m.

\* \* \*



*I'd like to add my own yard's best pollinator attractors, above l to r: firespike, Mexican orchid tree (*Bauhinia mexicana*), porterweed and -- especially for bees -- coral vine*

So, what kind of activities do you have planned for Pollinator Week? One great family project for children (of all ages!) might be to start a notebook of varieties of plants and which pollinators you see attracted to each. Pictures, from photos or internet downloads, are a great start to researching pollinators observed.

*(\*Note: I do random email surveys from time to time and publish the results. Not all nurseries always respond, nor do I expect them to. However if you have a nursery and/or gardening enterprise and I did not query you, then probably I don't have your email address. If you'd like to be included, send your email to me at [lazygardener@sbcglobal.net](mailto:lazygardener@sbcglobal.net).)*

\* \* \*

**THIS JUST IN -- HOUSTON GARDENCRAWL** -- The Houston GardenCrawl is a biking event that will take place this Saturday (June 11) in 5-6 locations throughout the inner loop of Houston. Riders leaving from Market Square Park downtown will visit various area community gardens to hear about the projects. Live art and music. [DETAILS.](#)

\* \* \*



*Email questions & comments to Brenda at [lazygardener@sbcglobal.net](mailto:lazygardener@sbcglobal.net). Brenda's column in the LG&F Newsletter is based on her 45+ years as the Houston Chronicle's Lazy Gardener.*

## JOHN'S CORNER

## NEWS FROM THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF SOIL AND PLANTS





A study published in the journal AOB Plants (2015) has found that when plants of different populations were planted together that the total biomass yield was 30% more than, if only plants of the same population (species) were planted together.

They also found that the roots of the same plants were shorter in the same population. This suggests that there is some kind of detection and avoidance mechanism in place for plants of the same species. This lends evidence to what Organic gardeners have sworn for years, that when they have many different species of plants they grow better and have less insect and disease problems, use less water and require less fertilizer.

A study published in the journal Nature Chemical Biology (2016; 12 (6)) shows that fungi and plants developed biosynthetic pathways for complex molecules. One well-known group of these plant metabolites are the isoquinoline alkaloids. Today there are over 2,500 different types that have been identified. An example is the Poppy and barberry plants where we get the painkillers morphine or the cough remedy codein. The researchers discovered a new linkage mechanism for carbon atom transfer in fungi, which had never been seen before. This pathway appears to be a combination of plant biosynthetic principles and the non-ribosomal peptide synthetases commonly found in fungi. When a gardener uses toxic chemical fungicides we kill the fungi and we lose these benefits to our plants and the nutrition they provide.

A study in the journal Scientific Reports (2016; DOI 10) have found how plants such as stinging nettle protect themselves. The mineral calcium phosphate is used to provide the necessary bite to the stinging hairs of the rock nettle family. This same mineral is used in the bones and teeth of animals. This fibrous cellulose material is structurally similar to reinforced concrete and is densely incrustated with tiny crystals of calcium phosphate. Our native stinging nettles have stinging hairs hardened by glass-like silica (quartz).

The Pesticide Action Network has published a report summarizing all the research on pesticides and how they are harming our children, "Kids On The Frontline." It is very scary what commercial toxic chemical agriculture is doing to our children. One can read or download a copy of the report at: <http://www.panna.org/resources/kids-frontline>

Another study published in the journal EBioMedicine (2016; DOI:10) titled "Systems Nutrigenomics Reveals Brain Gene Networks Linking Metabolic and Brain Disorders". They found a range of diseases (diabetes, cardiovascular, Alzheimer's, attention deficit disorder and others) linked to the cheap fructose sweetener used in many products from the corn plant. They found hundreds of genes are damaged by fructose. They found most Americans consume about 27 pounds of high fructose corn syrup in 2014.

A study from The University of Washington published in the journal PLOS ONE (2016; 11 (5)) titled "Variable Nitrogen Fixation in Wild Populus". Multiple studies are showing that bacteria in and on our bodies are vital for human health, influencing nutrition, obesity, and protection from diseases. We are only beginning to study how important the microbiomes of plants are. They found that Poplar trees growing in rocky inhospitable soil harbor bacteria within them that provide valuable nutrients. This is the first direct evidence that nitrogen fixation can occur in the branches of trees, with no root nodules required.

Vertical gardens are becoming more popular. The book "The Vertical Garden" by Patrick Blanc has many great photographs. A new trend emerging is vertical forests. The Mountain Forest Hotel in Guizhou, China's Wanfeng Valley is a sky-high marvel created by Milan-based architect Stefano Boeri. The trees capture carbon and help clean and cool the air along with many other environmental benefits. For more information: <http://ecowatch.com/2016/06/01/mountain-forest-hotel/>

\* \* \*

## WEEKLY GARDENING EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS CALENDAR

### TO SUBMIT AN EVENT FOR THIS CALENDAR, PLEASE NOTE.

Events **NOT** submitted in the **EXACT** written format below may take two weeks or longer to be reformatted/retyped. After that point, if your event does not appear, please email us.

Submit to: [lazygardener@sbcglobal.net](mailto:lazygardener@sbcglobal.net)

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

SAT., JUNE 11: PLUMERIA SOCIETY OF AMERICA SHOW & SALE, 9:30am-3pm, Bay Area Community Center 5002 Nasa Road One Seabrook. Free. [theplumeriasociety.org](http://theplumeriasociety.org)

SAT., JUNE 11: EDIBLE LANDSCAPING WITH DANY MILIKIN OF EDIBLE EARTH RESOURCES, 10-11am, Buchanan's Native Plants, 611 E 11th. Free. 713-861-5702; [buchanansplants.com/events](http://buchanansplants.com/events)

SAT., JUNE 11: T-BUD GRAFTING OF CITRUS AND FRUIT TREES by SUE JEFFCO, 9:00-11:30 am, AgriLife Extension, Carbide Park, 4102-B Main St. (Hwy 519), La Marque. Galveston County Master Gardener event. Free, class size limited; pre-registration required: [galv3@wt.net](mailto:galv3@wt.net); <http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston/>

SAT., JUNE 11: PLANNING FOR YOUR SUCCESSFUL FRUIT TREE ORCHARD, by HERMANN AUER, 1 & 3pm, Galveston County AgriLife Extension, Carbide Park, 4102-B Main St. (Hwy 519), La Marque. Free, but register at [galv3@wt.net](mailto:galv3@wt.net); <http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston/>

SAT., JUNE 11: HERB LORE WITH DANY MILIKIN, 10-11am, Buchanan's Native Plants, 611 E 11th. Free. 713-861-5702; [buchanansplants.com/events](http://buchanansplants.com/events)

SAT., JUNE 11: COMPOSTING & SOIL PREPARATION FOR GARDENING, 9-11am, Montgomery County AgriLife Extension Office, 9020 Airport Rd., Conroe. \$5. Master Gardener class. [mcmga.com](http://mcmga.com), 936-539-7824

TUES.-SUN., JUNE 14-19: WORLD BROMELIAD CONFERENCE XXII, Show and Plant Sale 9am-5pm Fri. & 9am-4pm Sat., 4th Floor, Westin Galleria Hotel, 5060 W. Alabama. Bromeliad Society/Houston, Inc. & Bromeliad Society International event. [bsi.org](http://bsi.org)

THUR. JUNE 16: TOXIC HORTICULTURE CHEMICALS AND YOUR HEALTH by John Ferguson, 10am, Bay Area Welcome Neighbors Club, Bay Oaks Country Club, Clear Lake, Bay Oaks Dr. 713-823-6980

SAT., JUNE 18: DESIGN PRINCIPLES FOR LANDSCAPES, by KAREN LEHR, 9-11am, AgriLife Extension, Carbide Park, 4102-B Main St. (Hwy 519), La Marque. Galveston County Master Gardener event. Free, but registration required: [galv3@wt.net](mailto:galv3@wt.net); <http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston/>

SAT., JUNE 18: FAMILY/KIDS DAY IN THE GARDENS, 9-11am, Montgomery County AgriLife Extension Office, 9020 Airport Rd., Conroe. \$5/family. Master Gardener event. [mcmga.com](http://mcmga.com); 936-539-7824

SAT., JUNE 18: SUMMER COLOR SALE, 9am-3pm (free), ALL ABOUT BEGONIAS INDOORS & OUT WORKSHOP, 10:30am (\$10), & EASY CARE OF ORCHIDS WORKSHOP, noon (\$10). Mercer Botanic Gardens, 22306 Aldine-Westfield. Workshops register: 713-274-4166.

SAT., JUNE 18: EDIBLE LANDSCAPING WITH URBAN HARVEST, 10-11am, Buchanan's Native Plants, 611 E 11th. Free. 713-861-5702; [buchanansplants.com/events](http://buchanansplants.com/events)

TUE., JUNE 21: GROWING CUCURBITS by HERMANN AUER, 6:30 & 8:30pm, Galveston County AgriLife Extension, Carbide Park, 4102-B Main St. (Hwy 519), La Marque. Free, but register: [galv3@wt.net](mailto:galv3@wt.net); [aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston](http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston/)

WED., JUNE 22: NEWS FROM THE CHIHUAHUAN DESERT RESEARCH INSTITUTE, 7:30pm, Metropolitan Multi-Service Center, 1475 West Gray. Free. Houston Cactus & Succulent Society event. [hcsstex.org](http://hcsstex.org)

WED., JULY 6: EDIBLE LANDSCAPE by RON RICHTER, 10:30am, [Glazier Senior Education Center](http://www.pct3.com/senior-centers/glazier-senior-center), 16600 Pine Forest Lane. Free. [www.pct3.com/senior-centers/glazier-senior-center](http://www.pct3.com/senior-centers/glazier-senior-center)

SAT., JULY 9: FLORAL GARDENING IN MONTGOMERY COUNTY. 9-11am, AgriLife Extension Office, 9020 Airport Road, Conroe. Master Gardener event. \$5. 936-539-7824 or <http://www.mcmga.com/>

SAT., JULY 9: ALL ABOUT GINGERS WITH LINDA FIELDS, 10-11am, Buchanan's Native Plants, 611 E 11th. Free. 713-861-5702; [buchanansplants.com/events](http://buchanansplants.com/events)

SAT., JULY 23: PLUMERIA SOCIETY OF AMERICA SHOW & SALE, 9:30am-3pm, Fort Bend Country Fairgrounds 4310 Texas Highway 36, Rosenberg. [theplumeriasociety.org](http://theplumeriasociety.org)

SAT., JULY 23: AQUAPONICS, by ROBIN COLLINS, 9-10am; Galveston County AgriLife Extension Building, Carbide Park, 4102-B Main St. (Hwy 519), La Marque. Master Gardeners event. Free, but register: [galv3@wt.net](mailto:galv3@wt.net); <http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston/>

SAT., JULY 30: SUCCESSFUL FALL VEGETABLE GARDENING by LUKE STRIPLING, 9-11:30 am, Galveston County AgriLife Extension Building, Carbide Park, 4102-B Main St. (Hwy 519), La Marque. Master Gardeners event. Free, but register: [galv3@wt.net](mailto:galv3@wt.net); <http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston/>

SAT., AUG. 6 : PECKERWOOD INSIDER'S Tour, 10am, 20559 FM 359 Road, Hempstead. Garden Conservancy event. \$10. Register: [peckerwoodgarden.org](http://peckerwoodgarden.org), 979-826-3232; [info@peckerwoodgarden.org](mailto:info@peckerwoodgarden.org)

MON. AUGUST 22, ORGANIC METHODS IN GARDENING- THE SOIL FOOD WEB, by John Ferguson, South Montgomery County Friends of The Library (SMCFOL), 2 PM, Mitchell Library, 8125 Ashland Way, The Woodlands, Sari Harris, 281-681-0470

WED., AUG 31: CHILDREN'S PHOTO AND PRESCHOOL PICTURE CONTESTS ENTRY DEADLINE. Matzke Butterfly Garden competition. Contest rules: [matzkebutterflygarden.blogspot.com/](http://matzkebutterflygarden.blogspot.com/)

SAT, SEPT 24: FALL SALE (LANDSCAPE PLANTS, PERENNIALS & FALL VEGETABLES). OVERVIEW AT 8 am; SALE FROM 9 am- 1 pm. BRING YOUR WAGON AND COME EARLY FOR THE BEST SELECTION. 3033 Bear Creek Drive. Free. Details: <http://hcmga.tamu.edu/Public/pubSales.aspx> 281-855-5600

SAT, SEPT 24: HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS FALL LANDSCAPE PLANTS, PERENNIALS & VEGETABLES SALE. Overview 8am; sale: 9am-1pm. 3033 Bear Creek Drive. Free. [hcmga.tamu.edu/Public/pubSales.aspx](http://hcmga.tamu.edu/Public/pubSales.aspx); 281-855-5600

TUES., OCT. 11: GROWING PLUMERIAS, 7:30pm, Cherie Flores Garden Pavillion, Hermann Park Conservancy, 1500 Hermann Dr. Free. Plumeria Society of America event. [theplumeriasociety.org](http://theplumeriasociety.org)

OCT. 21-23: AMERICAN ROSE SOCIETY SOUTH CENTRAL DISTRICT CONVENTION. [houstonrose.org](http://houstonrose.org).

**If we inspire you to attend any of these events,  
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**THE LAZY GARDENER & FRIENDS NEWSLETTER!**

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THIS NEWSLETTER IS MADE  
POSSIBLE BY THE FOLLOWING SPONSORS





## **ADOPTABLE DOGS OF THE WEEK:**

The Montgomery County Animal Shelter is at capacity; dogs need to be adopted, fostered immediately:

**URGENT! DOGS NEED OUT!**

These DOGS dogs need OUT! Some have been at the shelter FOR 5 MONTHS! It is not fair to keep them in kennels their entire lives. Adoptions fees are \$10 for spayed/neutered dogs and \$25 for dogs at the shelter for over 60 days. Please opt to adopt or foster one. You would truly be saving a life.

**MCAS**  
Montgomery County Animal Shelter

<https://www.facebook.com/mcaspin/photos>

<http://www.woodlandsonline.com/npps/story.cfm?nppage=58247>

## 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 periodic 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. 50% off pomegranates, apples, asian pears and selected antique roses.** (Offer good for retail purchases of this product (101 Sherbrook Circle, Conroe TX). Expires 06/30/16.