



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

## **NEWS FROM THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF SOIL AND PLANTS**

**By John Ferguson**

**Subject: Spring Chores, Mulch And Turning Clay Into Soil**

I was at my farm a few days ago and I noticed the buds on my Buckeyes were swollen, a sure sign that spring is right around the corner. This made me think of the spring gardening chores I needed to get done.

After the freeze a few weeks ago, there is a lot of dead foliage that needs to be trimmed back. Last year I purchased a DeWalt battery powered hedge trimmer and it has become one of my favorite garden tools. It has a lot of power and will easily cut branches over ¼ inch thick. No more dragging a long extension cord all over the yard.

In my yard in Houston, I have several species of Salvia's that cover a large portion of my yard that are now dead sticks. In years past I would have to use my hands or hand pruners to cut them a tedious time-consuming task.

I now use the hedge trimmer to cut them into 3-4-inch-long pieces that just fall to the ground adding to the mulch layer. After a few passes, they are cleared to the ground and ready for spring growth. What used to take hours now takes only a few minutes.

---

**101 Sherbrook Circle • Conroe, Tx 77385-7750  
(936) 321-6990 Metro • (936) 273-1200 Conroe**



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

Now that the dead material has been removed it is time to make sure all my beds are mulched. Mulching is one of the most important gardening practices one can do and is also the one most often neglected or done incorrectly.

I live in southwest Houston with the black clay (Beaumont-Lake Charles clay). It is fertile but difficult to work in, hard as a rock in summer and slippery and sticky when wet, swells and shrinks tearing up roots.

Canada's department of forestry has funded research on every continent studying how to improve clay soils for decades. They found that a native mulch (*properly made*) improves clay soils better, faster, and cheaper than any other technology.

I have been using aged Native Mulch from Nature's Way Resources for many years. Over time the clay has broken down into a rich beautiful fertile loam that can grow anything. My yard was featured in Better Homes and Garden's back in the Spring 2000 issue. The soil was so rich that I was able to go over 14 years without needing to water my lawn or garden. I will miss this soil when I move to my retirement home in a few weeks where I will have to start over.

On my website there are numerous articles on mulches that can be found at <https://www.natureswayresources.com/mulchcorner.html>

One can also search the Newsletter archive for additional articles on Native Mulch.

---

101 Sherbrook Circle • Conroe, Tx 77385-7750  
(936) 321-6990 Metro • (936) 273-1200 Conroe