



August 9, 2013

Dear Friends,

Here is the 22nd issue of our weekly gardening newsletter for Houston, the Gulf Coast and beyond. This a project of The Lazy Gardener, Brenda Beust Smith, John Ferguson and Mark Bowen (both John and Mark are with Nature's Way Resources). We also have a great supporting cast of contributing writers and technical specialists who will chime in and tweak away regularly. We would love to keep receiving your input on this newsletter comments suggestions questions. . . .Email your thoughts to: lazygardenerandfriends@gmail.com. Thanks so much for your interest.

Please or sign yourself up to receive this newsletter by clicking the "Join Our Mailing List" link just below.

Enjoy!

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SPCP's COMING FOR FIG TREE ABUSER! and ST. AUGUSTINE RETURNITH

BY BRENDA SMITH



I keep thinking someone's going to report me to the SPCP (Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Plants).

We have this fig tree that produces lots of figs. But, pre-ike, we spent a LOT of summertime at the beach. Squirrels ate all the figs.

I decided to underprune it - cut off all the lower branches and make it into a tree so I could plant flowers underneath. I was happy, the squirrels were happy and Husband was the only one cussing into the wind.

Then we started staying home all summer. At last, figs! If we could just thwart the squirrels. Husband covered the whole (now towering) fig TREE with netting. The only pain this caused the squirrels came from possible stitches in their sides as they rocked with laughter. They went over, under and through the netting. We got some for preserves. The squirrels got fatter.

If we're going to try for figs, I decided, no more 15 ft. high trees. I whacked it back to about 5 foot. It worked. The fig sent out tons of side branches all of which were full of figs this year. We're getting figs we can easily reach, the squirrels are getting lots of figs and the tree, well, bless its heart, it's apparently just yawning at my shenanigans with the clippers.

Fig trees make great choices for lazy gardeners. This fig tree is NEVER watered. It always looks so healthy and there are so many other plant that obviously need water in the summer.

No idea what variety it is. It was a gift from my friend Fran Gallo in Ohio. When she first sent it, 30+ years ago, a local horticulturist told me it was probably an open-eye variety (which they tend to grow up there). That open-eye, he said, is an invitation to insects and disease in our subtropical climate. We should plant closed-eye figs.

He warned me not to expect it to last very long. That was 30+ years ago.

ST. AUGUSTINE RETURNITH

Did you catch John Ferguson's report on the [Conversation with God about laws?](#)

If you didn't, break now and check it out:

As Pogo liked to say: "We have seen the enemy and he is us." The Chronicle was nice enough to publish an editorial I did a few years ago on this same topic: ["Time to Change Our Views on Big, Green Lawns."](#)

That said, our always-totally-ignored-except-for-mowing St. Augustine is really thriving right now.

Remember, it was just two summers two ago that so many were moaning over dead lawns.



This was our front lawn. Everyone was saying our St. A was dead, dead, dead gone. Never believed it for a moment.

Picture disclaimer: I stuck that sprinkler out there NOT to water the lawn, but for a picture to illustrate this was about the stupidest thing for a gardener to do.

- 1. Never water in the middle of the day and*
- 2. Least of all with an overhead sprinkler. You lose at least 1/2 your water to evaporation!*

As with "Schrödinger's cat," no way to know in the middle of such a "dead" period whether the St. A roots are actually still alive or not down under the soil. We optimistic lazy gardeners choose to believe it is.

In our yard, at least, we were right. Last summer, with almost no help from us, here's what the front yard looked like.



The point is, St. Augustine is super tough but it's also super smart. When it gets very hot and very dry, it goes dormant. Just as it does when it's very cold. It's pretty now because we've had so much water. But come August, if it gets very hot and very dry again, it might disappear.

I think the perfect solution is to have a mixed lawn of St. A and bermuda. Bermuda likes the heat, it likes the drought. But it's very hard to have a bermuda lawn. St. Augustine is so tough, that if there's even one single root anywhere in the lawn, when you water or it rains, the St. A will start growing. The more rain we have (as in our spring and fall monsoons) the faster it will grow. It will almost kill out all the bermuda, or at the least, send it into dormancy. When it gets hot and dry and the St. A decides to go dormant, the bermuda will grab its advantage and green up beautifully.

I realize lawn fanatics aren't going to like this idea. They would rather torture St. A into staying green all summer. It can be done, but at what cost? Definitely NOT lazy gardening.

Just keep whatever's there well mowed, it will all look nice, and you can see how one takes over when the other wants to nap!

LEARN MORE ABOUT PLANTS WHILE LENDING A HELPING HAND

Now that school's about to start again (if it hasn't already for some folks) our area gardens and nature centers are going to be looking for replacement volunteers. These are great places to learn about the plants that do best in your area. Generally they have orientation programs to get you started, you meet great fellow plant lovers, and you help to keep beautiful areas in your community even more beautiful. Call and ask!

In North Harris County, Mercer Arboretum & Botanic Gardens will hold its free new volunteer orientation Monday Aug. 12 or Wed., Aug. 21, 8:30am-noon, 22306 Aldine Westfield Road

Humble, TX. Reserve your place by calling 281-443-8731.

In South Harris County, Armand Bayou Nature Center, has volunteer information posted on its website <http://www.abncvols.org/> or call 281-474-2551.

To the southwest of Houston, Brazos Bend State Park's volunteer information is available at: www.brazosbend.org or 979-553-5123

We have so many other parks, gardens and nature centers that need volunteers. Be glad to publish information if you'll send it to me at lazygardener@sbcglobal.net

Questions aimed at me can be emailed to lazygardener@sbcglobal.net (altho I'll get any you send to this newsletter as well).

ARCHIVES OF BRENDA'S COLUMNS

(Link to archives: <http://archive.constantcontact.com/fs172/1112503958110/archive/1112822112421.html>)

"THE LAZY GARDENER'S GUIDE ON CD" - Specifically for Houston Area gardens - WHAT TO DO EACH MONTH - when to fertilize, prune, plant what where, best plants for sun, shade, butterflies, hummingbirds, etc. Based on Brenda's quirky 40+ year Houston Chronicle Lazy Gardener column. PDF format, print out only the month you need. \$20 total, checks payable to Brenda B. Smith. Mail to: Lazy Gardener's Guide on CD, 14011 Greenranch Dr., Houston, TX 77039-2103.

For correspondence that is specific to Brenda, feel free to email her directly at lazygardener@sbcglobal.net.

WEEKLY EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS CALENDAR

Aug. 10: Deadline for pre-order bulbs to be picked up at the 71st annual Bulb & Plant Mart, Oct. 4-5, at Holly Hall Retirement Community, 2000 Holly Hall St. Sponsored by the Garden Club of Houston, www.gchouston.org

August 12: Mercer Arboretum & Botanic Gardens New Volunteer Open House, 8:30 a.m.-noon, 22306 Aldine Westfield Road, Humble, TX 77338. Want to work in a beautiful garden while making new friends? Attend a volunteer orientation class. Free! Reserve your place by calling 281-443-8731.

August 12: 6:30 p.m., HUG (Houston Urban Gardeners) event, Diana Liga: What to Plant and Do Now. by Diana Liga at our new location: Houston's Multi-Service Center, 1475 W. Gray, Houston. www.houstonurbangardeners.com. Also: Cool Weather SEED SWAP at 5:45 PM prior to the HUG monthly meeting at our NEW location. Bring your cool weather seeds, like bok choy, cilantro, cauliflower, kale, broccoli, lettuces, snow peas, etc.

August 14: 12 - 2 p.m., Lawn Alternatives, Mercer Society Lunch Bunch, Where: Mercer Arboretum, 22306 Aldine Westfield Road Humble, Texas 77338-1071, free, presenter: Tom LeRoy, Retired Montgomery County

Extension Agent. Learn from the expert how to not only manage your lawn but find great alternatives to St. Augustine grass. www.themercersociety.org

August 15, 2013 - "Heat & Drought Tough Roses for Texas Gardens" by Gaye Hammond, Master Rosarian. Texas summers can wreak havoc on the garden. The Houston Rose Society, in cooperation with Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, has been collecting data on the effects of heat and drought on landscape roses. Gaye Hammond will share the preliminary results and identify the roses that gave superior landscape performance during recent periods of drought. Free program hosted by the Fort Bend County Master Gardeners at the Bud O'Shieles Community Center, 1330 Band Road in Rosenberg. Social at 6:30 pm; program from 7:00 - 8:00 pm. For more information call 281.633.7033 or visit www.fbmj.com. FBCMG is sponsored by Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service.

August 17: The Texas Master Naturalist Fall 2013 Training Session begins on August 17, 2013, and runs through October 30, 2013. Classes are on Tuesday evenings and field trips are on Saturdays. For more details, email training.officer@txgcmn.org, or you can visit the website of local chapters:

- [Heartwood](#) (Conroe area)
- [Coastal Prairie](#) (Rosenberg)
- Cradle of Texas (Brazoria County): training to start early 2014
- [Galveston Bay Area](#): training to start Spring 2014
- [Gulf Coast](#) (Houston)
- [Mid Coast](#) (Matagorda County & south):

August 17: Starting a Community/School Garden: Garden Design, Fruits & Vegetables #2 Class 2: Garden Design, Fruits & Vegetables. We will review and modify the garden design, set a schedule for ordering materials and set a build date. Sat, Aug 17. 9 - 11:15 am. \$24 members. \$36 nonmembers. Green Planet Sanctuary, 13424-B Briar Forest Drive, Houston, TX 77077. For more info: 713-880 5540 or www.urbanharvest.org

August 17 - Houston Urban Food Production Conference on small scale, local food production at 8:30am-4:30pm, United Way Building, 50 Waugh Drive. Also includes organic certification, fruit and nut, weed control, soil building, irrigation and poultry, goat, beekeeping and cut flower production, among other topics. Registration deadline: August 1 at \$35; \$50 day of event. Call Diana at 281-855-5614 to register for this program and for booth registration <https://www.facebook.com/HUFPC2013>

August 18: 1:30-3:30 p.m., Veggie Cooking Class at Wabash Antiques & Feed Store, free. A vegetable garden becomes successful when veggies land on your plate. There are simple ways to eat everything that is grown in your garden and even foragables that grow in your yard naturally. Think that you don't like beets? Think that you don't like chard? Maybe you just don't know how to prepare them. Joe Boswell will teach you several simple solutions for getting any edible to be tasty, whether you're a gourmet chef, a Mom-on-the-go, or an old time pioneer. For more information visit <http://www.wabashfeed.com/>

August 19: The Harris County Master Gardeners at Precinct 2 present a program for children - Garden Craft and a program for adults - Container Gardens, 9:30-10:30 a.m. Where: Genoa Friendship Garden, 1202 Genoa Red Bluff, Houston, TX 77034. <http://hcmga.tamu.edu>. 281 855 5600

August 21: Master Gardener Lecture Series. Mary Karish will be speaking on "How to Grow and Care for Citrus for the home garden. Mary is a Harris County Master Gardener, a Citrus Specialist and Master Composter. She is a freelance writer and the owner of The Three Sisters - Your Backyard Gardener. 10:00 a.m., Where: The Meeting Room at Clear Lake Park (on the lakeside), 5001 NASA Parkway, Seabrook, TX 77586. <http://hcmga.tamu.edu>. 281 855 5600.

August 23: 6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m. A Gulf Coast Fruit Study Group Event. We have our pear event and pear tasting with Dr. Ethan Natelson. George Mc Afee will do a hands on of multi-grafting and will have pictures of the many beautiful creations he has done. He and Ethan are both master Grafters. No fee. www.gcfsg.weebly.com/newsletter.

August 24: Irrigation For the Home Gardener (hands-on). A garden that conserves precious water resources is a rewarding investment. An irrigation system is a practical choice for most garden locations. Sat, Aug 24. 9 am - 12 pm. \$24 members. \$36 non-members. Private residence in Highland, TX. Location to be provided to enrolled students. For more info: 713-880-5540 or www.urbanharvest.org

August 24, 2013 Woodlands Home & Garden Show. Come check out the following gardening and green programs: 10:30-11:30 a.m: Drought Tolerant Landscape! Get your Lawn, Garden and Trees ready for the Fall Months by Randy Lemmon. 11:30-12:30 p.m: Build Healthy Soils the Organic Way! Save Money and Live Better! by John Ferguson. 12:30-1:30 p.m: Give your Home Extraordinary Air Quality and Energy Efficiency that's 100% Food, Water & Renewable Energy Capable! by LaVerne Williams. 1:30-2:30 p.m: Your Landscape, Your Way, Naturally with Beautiful Native Plants that Serve as the Foundation Elements of Your Landscape by Mark Bowen. www.woodlandsshow.com

August 24: 9-11:30 a.m., Long time Galveston County Master Gardener Luke Stripling will present "Successful Fall Vegetable Gardening," a program on growing fall and winter season vegetables in Galveston County, at Galveston County AgriLife Extension Office in Carbide Park, 4102 Main Street (FM 519), La Marque. Topics: soil preparation, drainage, the use of raised beds, the best seed planting dates, the best varieties, planting depth, fertilizer methods, water requirements, pest control and harvesting. For course reservations, call 281-534-3413, ext. 12 or email GALV3@wt.net.

August 28: 7:30 p.m., Houston Cactus & Succulents Society Membership Meeting, Program: The Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum by Mike Cracraft, Location: Metropolitan Multi-Service Center, 1475 W Gray St, Houston, <http://hcsstex.org/>

Aug. 31: "Orchids for Beginners" demonstration and workshop at Clown Alley Orchids, 3119 Lily St., Pasadena, TX; 281-991-6841; ClownAlley@sbcglobal.net. \$20 fee includes starter plant and all materials.

September 5 is the deadline for registering for Brazoria County Master Gardener Training. The session begins on September 12 through November 14, 2013 on every Thursday from 9:00 am to 3:30 p.m. The new fall class will be held at the Brazoria County Extension Office, 21017 CR 171, Angleton, TX 77515. Master Gardener Training program is 60 hours of classroom training that covers a wide range of gardening topics. Course cost is \$99. For more information contact the extension office at 979-864-1558 x110 or email <http://txmg.org/brazoria>.

Sept. 6 - Registration deadline for 12-week Texas Gulf Coast Gardener Program at Mercer Arboretum & Botanic Garden. Call 281-443-8731 or visit park at 223-6 Aldine-Westfield, Humble, to enroll. The two-tier program for both beginner and intermediate-level gardeners was developed with guidance from Dr. David Creech and Stephen F. Austin State University's Mast Arboretum staff in Nacogdoches. Classes, starting the third week in September, will meet Tuesdays (Tier 1) and Thursdays (Tier 2), 9am-3pm (fee: \$225).

September 7: Rainwater Harvesting and Cisterns. We will discuss very low-cost methods of absorbing water on your property, as well as more expensive methods such as rainwater cisterns. Sat, Sept 7. 9 - 11:15 am. \$24 members. \$36 non-members. Westbury Community Garden, 12601 Fonmeadow, 77035. For more info: 713-880-5540 or www.urbanharvest.org

September 7: WILDSCAPES WORKSHOP & Native Plant Sale, Landscaping with Native Plants to Attract Wildlife, 8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. At the Houston Zoo's Brown Education Center in Hermann Park www.npsot.org/houston

Sept 9: HUG (Houston Urban Gardeners) Event: Cool Geeky New Ways to Grow Food; Seeking presenters I often have people come up to me with some wonderful new equipment, inspiring doo-dads or new (or old) ways of

growing food that look very interesting. Our Sept. 9 meeting will focus on the theme of fun, new, geeky stuff and new/old methods of growing food. Even better if it's for growing in your apartment, balcony or vertically. We have 3 to five interested people involved so far. Is there something you heard about or saw that YOU want to share? Let me know at the next meeting or email me atlaurel@houstonurbangardeners.org.
<http://www.houstonurbangardeners.org/>

September 14: Nacogdoches/Arcadia: Naked Ladies and Oxbloods: SFA Gardens Arcadian Fall Bulb Bus Tour, September 14. Visit Texas Gardener columnist Greg Grant's Emanis House dogtrot in Shelby County's rural community of Arcadia. Depending on the weather, see red oxblood lilies (*Rhodophiala*), several different colors of spider lilies (*Lycoris*), or assorted rain lilies (*Cooperia*, *Zephyranthes*, and *Habranthus*). Unfortunately their display depends on the first fall rains so a grand naturalized bulb display isn't guaranteed. Visit Grant's old family home with an open breezeway running through it, along with his small cottage garden, chickens, and bluebird houses. Dress comfortably for potentially hot weather. The bus tour will be from 9 a.m. until noon. All participants will meet at the SFA Ag building, Stephen F. Austin State University, Nacogdoches, at 9 a.m. \$25 for Friends of SFA Gardens members, \$30 for non-members. For more information and reservations contact Elyce Rodwald at 936-468-1832 orerodewald@sfasu.edu. Other SFA Gardens events and information can be found at sfagardens.sfasu.edu

September 15: Organic Container Gardening. Don't have enough space to grow your favorite herbs and vegetables? Container Gardening may be your answer. Sun, Sept 15. 2:30 - 4:30 pm. \$36 non-members. Wabash Feed, 5701 Washington Ave, Houston, TX 77007. For more info: 713-880-5540 or www.urbanharvest.org

September 17: Planting the Fall Vegetable Garden (hands-on). What better way to gain expert knowledge than to see how it is done firsthand through our fall gardening course. Tue, Sept 17. 6:00 - 8:30 pm. \$24 members. \$36 non-members. Westbury Community Garden, 12601 Fonmeadow, 77035. For more info: 713-880-5540 or www.urbanharvest.org

September 17th: The Mercer Arboretum & Botanic Gardens kicks off the Texas Gulf Coast Gardener classes this fall! Starting with the first gardening series: Tier-1: Basic Gardening- runs Sept.17th-Dec. 10th, Designed for beginner to intermediate level gardeners. The curriculum will include topics such as site development, plant selection, propagation, mulching and composting, lawn care and many others. Meets on Tuesdays. For more information, call 281-443-8731 or emailmsociety@hcp4.net.

September 19th-December 12th: The Mercer Arboretum & Botanic Gardens is offering Tier-2: Landscape and Garden Plants. Topics focus on plants that can be successfully cultivated and utilized in the Texas Gulf Coast climate. Participants will learn about new and exciting plants to add to their collection while improving their horticultural skills. Meets on Thursdays. For more information or to register, call 281-443-8731 or email msociety@hcp4.net.

September 20: application deadline for The Fort Bend County Master Gardener Training class, a program offered by the Texas AgriLife Extension Service that begins on Wednesday, October 2, 2013. Classes are Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 9am - 3:30pm during the month of October. The cost of the class is \$200 (\$353 for couples). For more information visit www.fbmg.com (under Become a Master Gardener) or you can call 281-633-7033 or 281-342-3034.

September 29: Houston: Sustainable Living Through Permaculture 1: SLTP 1. The design principles of Permaculture (PC) are explained, observed and illustrated in a series of breakout sessions at a home and garden remodeled to reflect PC sustainability principles. Sunday, September 29. 2 - 6 p.m. \$50. NE Loop Residence. Location to be provided to enrolled students. For more information, call 713-880-5540 or visit www.urbanharvest.org.

Oct. 4-5: Bulb & Plant Mart at Holly Hall Retirement Community, 2000 Holly Hall St. 9:30 a.m.-5 p.m. Oct. 4; 9:30 a.m. - 3 p.m. Oct. 5. New this year: a Garden Garage Sale of garden treasures. Sponsored by the Garden Club of Houston. Details: www.gchouston.org

October 5: Nacogdoches: The SFA Gardens at Stephen F. Austin State University will host its annual Fabulous Fall Festival Plant Sale from 9 a.m. until 2 p.m. Saturday, October 5, at the SFA Pineywoods Native Plant Center, 2900 Raguette St. in historic Nacogdoches. A wide variety of hard-to-find, "Texas tough" plants will be available, including Texas natives, heirlooms, tropicals, perennials, shrubs, trees, and exclusive Greg Grant and SFA introductions. Most of the plants are extensively trialed in the gardens before being offered to the public and most are produced by the SFA Gardens staff

and volunteers. This popular event benefits the SFA Mast Arboretum, Pineywoods Native Plant Center, Ruby M. Mize Azalea Garden, Gayla Mize Garden, and educational programs hosted at the gardens. The educational programs at SFA Gardens reach more than 15,000 students ages 1 to 100 on a yearly basis. The public is encouraged to arrive early and bring a wagon. For more information, call (936) 468-4404, or visit www.sfagardens.sfasu.edu two weeks before the sale for a list of available plants.

October 5-6: Spring Branch African Violet Club, Annual Fall Sale, West Gray Multiservice Center
1475 West Gray Street, Houston, Saturday, 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. and Sunday, 10:00a.m. - 3:00p.m.,
Free Admission, Violets of all types such as standards, miniatures, semi-miniatures, and trailers will be available. Other Gesneriads such as Episcias and Streps and supplies such as potting soil, pots, and fertilizers will also be featured. Club members will be available to answer general questions on growing African Violets. For further information, contact Karla Ross, 281-748-8417, kjwross@yahoo.com.

Note: This is our fall sale and does NOT include a show.

Submit calendar items to lazygardenerandfriends@gmail.com. Events must be submitted by the sponsoring organization. Please note: "garden calendar request" in the subject line. We list calendar items up to two months ahead of time.

Need speakers for your group? Brenda's "Lazy Gardener's Speakers List" of area horticultural/environmental experts is available free for the asking. Email your request to: lazygardener@sbcglobal.net.

MULCH CORNER

INORGANIC MULCHES

BY JOHN FERGUSON



This class of mulches includes any material that was never alive. It includes rocks, gravels, plastic, stepping stones, bricks, pavers, crushed concrete, etc. In general these mulches are best used in special circumstances such as decorations, pathways or erosion control.

Inorganic mulches are falling out of favor with experienced landscapers and horticulturists due to the problems they create and the new research that has demonstrated the benefits of organic and living mulches (will be discussed in future articles). However, they have their uses in special circumstances and will perform well in special situations or certain very dry areas of the country (West Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, etc.) or in special situations like rock gardens.

In previous issues we talked about studying nature and observing what a plant likes in its natural habitat. If we go out West and look at our desert species, they all have a gravelly or rocky mulch around them as the wind blows away the smaller soil particles (silt and fine sand) leaving the larger material on top of the soil as a

mulch.

If one has a cactus or desert plant garden then the use of an inorganic mulch is appropriate and works best. Desert plants need the extra heat exposure and reflected sunlight created by rock or gravel mulches. Most desert plants grow on very poor soils, low microbial activity, and very dry conditions. Organic mulches increase fertility, moisture and microbial activity hence are not a good choice for these species of plants.

When using gravel or rocky mulches special care must be given to the soil under them. Rocks and gravel are much denser (heavier) than most of our natural or improved soils, hence the rocks sink into the soil over time which ruins the look of the bed. If the soil is too soft it will allow weed seeds to germinate and grow between the rocks. To prevent this a special desert/cactus soil needs to be used that can structurally support the weight of the mulch, provide the required drainage and aeration that desert plants need, and by default serve the purpose of being a poor growing medium for most common weeds.

These type of mulches may be igneous rocks (flint or chert) like the brown gravel, river or septic rock or bull rock, rainbow rock (quartz based), crushed limestone, or even lava rock (pumice).

GARDENERS FORUM

HOSTED BY MARK BOWEN



This week, we have a couple of items below from reader Bryan Treadway to share. Thanks Bryan, and keep up the great work!

Here is a pic of a few of my Tiger Melons. The Kids and I thought it would be cool to plant a few, not knowing that 4 plants would spread 15 feet in both directions out of the raised bed.

I also did not realize that they were dew melons, I figured they looked like small water melons.

They are not sweet in taste, but after reading about them, most put light sugar and lime juice on them.

They are only 1 pound, and get their name from the color they turn, hence the far left one.

They are heirloom so I have plenty of seeds if I choose to venture to try them again.



Also from Bryan:

By far my best bug control in the garden

I see why my grandmother would pay me a dollar for every one I would catch in the neighborhood and release in her garden.



If you have a gardening story you would like to share, please send it to us at lazygardenerandfriends@gmail.com.

For correspondence that is specific to Mark, please feel free to email him directly at markbowenhoutx@gmail.com.

PLANT OF THE WEEK

COURTESY OF TREESEARCH FARMS



Philippine Lily
Lillium formosanum

One of the few naturalizing lilies for the Houston area! Dark green grassy evergreen mounds that produce gorgeous white Easter Lily-type blooms in summer on 4' stalks. Light shade, sun. Moist, well drained soil.

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.

In addition to her position as Production Editor on the Garden Club of America's magazine and her freelance writing career, Brenda's latest venture is "THE LAZY GARDENER'S & FRIENDS HOUSTON GARDEN NEWSLETTER" with John Ferguson and Mark Bowen of Nature's Way Resources.

A native of New Orleans and graduate of St. Agnes Academy and the University of Houston, Brenda lives in Aldine and is married to the now retired Aldine High School Coach Bill Smith. They have one son, Blake.

Regarding this newsletter, Brenda is the lead writer, originator of it and the daily inspiration for it. We so appreciate the way she has made gardening such a fun way to celebrate life together for such a long time.

JOHN FERGUSON

John is a native Houstonian and has over 27 years of business experience. He owns Nature's Way Resources, a composting company that specializes in high quality compost, mulch, and soil mixes. He holds a MS degree in Physics and Geology and is a licensed Soil Scientist in Texas.

John has won many awards in horticulture and environmental issues. He represents the composting industry on the Houston-Galveston Area Council for solid waste. His personal garden has been featured in several horticultural books and "Better Homes and Gardens" magazine. His business has been recognized in the Wall Street Journal for the quality and value of their products. He is a member of the Physics Honor Society and many other professional societies. John is the co-author of the book *Organic Management for the Professional*.

For this newsletter, John contributes articles regularly and is responsible for publishing it.

MARK BOWEN

Mark is a native Houstonian, a horticulturist and organic specialist with a background in garden design, land restoration and organic project management. He is currently the general manager of Nature's Way Resources. Mark is also the co-author of the book *Habitat Gardening for Houston and Southeast Texas*, the author of the book *Naturalistic Landscaping for the Gulf Coast*, co-author of the *Bayou Planting Guide* and contributing landscape designer for the book *Landscaping Homes: Texas*.

With respect to this newsletter, Mark is a contributing writer, calendar coordinator and editor.

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.

 **The Arbor Gate**

<http://www.arbortgate.com/>



<http://wabashfeed.com/>


MicroLifeTM

<http://microlifefertilizer.com/>


NATURE'S WAYTM
RESOURCES
an organically based service company

<http://natureswayresources.com/>



Save 20%: Redeem this coupon for a big discount on Nature's Way Resources New "Tropical Mix" (<http://natureswayresources.com/products.htm>). Please note: this offer is for bulk material (by the cubic yard) purchases by retail customers only at Nature's Way Resources, located at 101 Sherbrook Circle, Conroe TX.

Offer Expires: 08/18/13

