

LAZY GARDENER AND FRIENDS NEWSLETTER

HOUSTON GARDEN
NEWSLETTER



Sep-29-2023 | Issue 507

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Nature's Way Resources owner John Ferguson, "The Lazy Gardener" Brenda Beust Smith and Pablo Hernandez welcome your feedback and are so grateful to the many horticulturists who contribute their expertise

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Fall is ideal for rose blooms. Cooler temperatures signal 'second spring,' stimulate bush growth and intensify bloom colors. Many people do not prepare roses for this second spring, so miss the most spectacular, longest-lasting bloom period.

Apologies to Jerry Parsons Ph.D.,
Texas A&M Horticulture Specialist,
for paraphrasing "[Roses in the Fall](#)"!

Click link to read Dr. Parsons' actual article!



Pictured above: one of the historic famous rose garden sections of Baxter & Patsy Williams in Pasadena.

CELEBRATING & IDENTIFYING ROSES & OTHER SURVIVORS

BY Brenda Beust Smith

TEMPERATURES are predicted (hopefully) to eventually move into what -- in normal years -- is one of our most beautiful seasons, especially for roses. Time will tell how Fall 2023 will stack up. Coming out of this summer's challenges, no wonder readers worry. Eg, **BECKY** described her roses as "*stick plants*" with "*dinky little blooms*."

To see what **GAYE HAMMOND**, Past President, Houston Rose Society (nation's largest chapter)

advises Becky to do, see **Spotlight Article** below.
First, however, here's how to see how your Fall 2023 roses match up to pros' blooms at the [2023 American Rose Society's South Central District's Fall Rose Show and Convention](#)



Non-HRS members who register for the Rose Society convention can enter roses in open categories (only), including one for the general public called "What's My Name?" Members will try to identify your rose.

(Scroll down for Gaye's sick rose diagnosis & prognosis for Becky)

* * *



TOUGH PLANTS FOR TOUGH SPOTS. Two possible choices (above) rarely bothered by heat, drought, excessive shade and/or poor drainage — common landscaping headaches across Greater Houston area — will be available at San Jacinto County Master Gardener's Sat., Oct. 7 [Plant Sale in Shepherd](#).

Left, American Beauty Berry (*Callicarpa americana*) has moved from forest edge to semi-shady garden spots. Beautiful purple berries follow small whitish-pink flowers (favorites of blue jays, mockingbirds, and young raccoons).

Right, Button Bush (*Cephalanthus occidentalis*). Pollinators love the pin cushion-like flowers followed by honey balls. Also good for wet, low-lying areas where the extensive root system slows erosion along ponds and bulkheads. Wading birds and ducks love the fall seeds.

Both these plants and other great choices will be available at the . . .

San Jacinto County Master Gardener's Sat., Oct. 7 Plant Sale
9am-1pm, Shepherd Community Center, 10251 TX-150, Shepherd
<https://txmg.org/sjmg/projects/plant-sale-10-7-23/>

* * *

Potpourri

- **FUN WITH CACTUS** Had to smile at **LILIANA CRACRAFT**'s dead -- or alive? -- award winning cactus from the recent Houston Cactus & Succulent Society Show. Her entry into the Dead Cactus Society category (labeled "***I don't know if I'm dead or alive***") won Liliana a year's membership in HCSS!

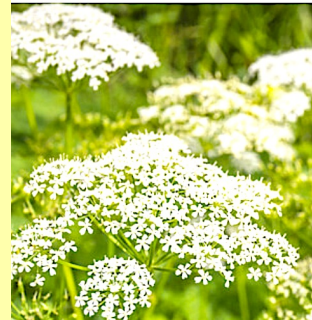


- **Remember when bougainvilleas were plants no one grew outside in Houston?** Even when they reigned supreme in Galveston and along the coast. Most folks still confine them to baskets or planters protected in winter. But not everyone!



Patty McFall's 15-year-old, still-happily-spreading bougainvillea received little more than rainwater this summer. Since this Brazil/Peru native blooms only on new growth, Patty is delighted with these flowers. She normally only prunes off deadwood branches after winter freezes which have yet to kill this tough lady!

- **FRIDAY THE 13TH COMETH!** In October in fact. If you want to keep bad luck away, might want to check your bouquets. In England of old, it was considered bad luck to bring clover, bluebells, lilies or yarrow inside. And heaven help you if you bring in Queen Anne's lace (pictured & also known as the break-your-mother's heart flower).



Holly was never hung around a mirror. It was used at Christmas, but had to be out of the house before 12th Night. If children brought dandelions inside, it was said they'd wet the bed.

Why? Ancients used dandelions as a diuretic. These days, they're prized as important nectar sources for bees and butterflies early in spring when other flowers aren't yet blooming.



- **EXPERTS DO SEEM TO THINK FALL IS REALLY COMING!**



Above, [HOUSTON BONSAI SOCIETY](#)'s **PAUL CESAK** has moved his beautiful collection from its shade-protected summer outdoor site back into sunshine. Bonsai is, after all, the ancient art of growing certain trees and shrubs in small shallow containers and -- through careful and precise training and pruning -- creating the appearance of an older, mature tree.

Not a task to be taken lightly or without incredible patience. So when Paul decrees it's time to return his treasures to their "au natural" outdoor situation, it's a MAJOR decision. As you see, the sun is shining on them again! Interested? Drop by the **SAT., OCT. 7: HOUSTON BONSAI SOCIETY FALL SHOW**, 9am-4pm, Mercer Botanic Garden, 22306 Aldine-Westfield. Free. Already into bonsai but not a member? Register/membership info: houstonbonsaisociety.com

Below, **ROSE WHISPERER GAYE HAMMOND's** diagnosis of Becky's post-summer-rose symptoms and more great fall advice!

* * *

Brenda Beust Smith's column is based on her 40+ years as *Houston Chronicle's Lazy Gardener* Email: lazygardenerbrenda@gmail.com

-- Note: This column's gardening advice focuses **ONLY** on the Greater Houston area. Personal reports **MUST** include your area.

* BRENDA'S "LAZY GARDENER GUIDE" is no longer sold. However, free pdf copies upon request at lazygardenerbrenda@gmail.com

* * *



ROSES MAY BE TRYING TO TELL YOU SOMETHING — LISTEN!

by **GAYE HAMMOND**

HOUSTON ROSE SOCIETY

Past President

(pictured — Gaye's rose garden)

Tons of crunchy brown leaves in trees but

none on roses? You're are doing a good job battling brutal weather conditions! At 95 degrees, roses shut themselves down to preserve whatever moisture / food stores they have. This is why::



- You don't see a lot of new growth
- Some flowers on some roses get dinky or go from having 50 petals to 5
- Some varieties even have flowers that change color in really hot weather
- Some leaves show some spotty sunburn but given it has been up to 110 that is not surprising. Leave these leaves on the plant as it is the leaves that make the food for the plant. Eventually, they will fall off when new leaves are ready to take their place.

In addition, when nighttime temperatures are 80 or above, the bushes do not get the ability to recover from day-time heat stress – which can be a double whammy.

As temperatures come down, roses will gradually get back to normal. To prepare for a fall flush of blooms, we do not “prune” like one would do in February. Fall is the time to “groom” bushes – remove dead wood and any spindly growth that is not big enough to hold up a flower. Now would also be the time to fertilize or add nutrient-rich soil amendments,

EDITOR'S NOTE: Lots of experts to have more questions answered!

- **THURS., OCT 12: THE ANNE BELOVICH COLLECTION - THE SKY'S THE LIMIT!** by **ANITA CLEVINGER & CLAUDE GRAVES**, Virtual. 7-9pm, Houston Rose Society/Houston event. Free. <https://meet.goto.com/479378477>
- **FRI.-SAT., OCT. 27-28: 2023 AMERICANN ROSE SOCIETY SOUTH CENTRAL DISTRICT FALL ROSE SHOW AND CONVENTION**, Bellaire Civic Center, 7008 S. Rice Ave., Bellaire, houstonrose.org/scd23ind.htm

NATURE'S WAY RESOURCES

Fall Garden Festival

DRINKS - SCAVENGER HUNT
FOOD - LIVE MUSIC - VENDORS
DOOR PRIZES

Q&A FEATURING

SKIP RICHTER

Gardenline
with Skip Richter

101 SHERBROOK CIR.
CONROE, TX 77385

OPEN GATE
8 AM

SEPTEMBER 30 | FREE ENTRY



ENJOY THE BEST OF FALL

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Q&A WITH SKIP RICHTER
RENOWNED HORTICULTURIST & GARDENING EXPERT

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ADULT BEVERAGES

KIDS' SCAVENGER HUNT
FUN FOR THE LITTLE GARDENERS

MORNING DEMONSTRATION CLASS AT 9 AM
TOPIC: CREATING ENCHANTING FAIRY GARDENS
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SEPTEMBER 30 | FREE ENTRY



John's Corner



NEWS FROM THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF SOIL AND PLANTS # 257

Subject: microbes and minerals rare earth elements scandium V-D yttrium

Every day we are learning more and more about the importance of microbes in our soil to enable us to have healthy plants. For example, many soils have limited iron (Fe) availability which then limits plants growth. Sometimes this occurs due to low levels of iron in the soil or sometimes the iron is locked up chemically in mineral forms the plant cannot absorb, hence it is unavailable.

Researchers at the Max Planck Institute for Plant Breeding Research have discovered that plants release signaling chemicals from their roots that direct certain species of bacteria to mobilize iron so the plants can absorb it. The bacteria break apart the chemical bonds releasing the iron. Cell Host & Microbe, 2020

We regularly hear about the benefits of re-mineralizing our soils. For example, there is a group of elements known as REE (Rare Earth Elements). These are a set of 17 elements (15 of which are lanthanides plus scandium and yttrium). A series of studies from China have shown that these elements when present in the soil, accelerated plant cell growth and enhanced production of plant secondary metabolites (often these secondary metabolites are the anti-cancer compounds) as well flavonoids and phenols that are used to counter some diseases and oxidative stress in humans.

Other studies have shown that cerium (Ce), lanthanum (La) and praseodymium (Pr) showed positive effects on plant growth and stimulated the production of secondary plant metabolites. Other studies have shown that REE's increased root production even at low concentrations. HortScience (2020)

We never see scandium listed on a bag of fertilizer. However, from our study of the elements a couple years ago, this element is essential for good human health as scandium occurs at higher concentrations in our heart and bones. Scandium has been found in association with the amino acid proline.

It is well known that Vitamin-D is essential for good health and helping our immune system fight diseases like covid. However, other studies have shown that the vitamin-D molecule has to have scandium to work effectively. If one does not have scandium, then V-D cannot function effectively. Other work has discovered that the human body needs adequate boron to utilize scandium.

Scandium has been found in 3% of the plants tested, with vegetables having 5 ppb (parts per billion) and grasses 70 ppb while "tea" leaves can have 140 ppb.

Scandium is used as a seed germinating agent when applied as scandium sulfate ($\text{Sc}_2(\text{SO}_4)_3$) in a dilute solution to corn, peas, wheat, and other plants. It increases the number of seeds successfully germinating.

Scandium content is higher in old leaves and roots as compared to younger leaves and some herbs have scandium at levels up to 2 ppm.

The article on REE above also mention Yttrium (Y). This element also enhances normal cell growth and doubles the lifespan of laboratory animals. In rodent studies, 14% of the ingested Yttrium can be detected in the newborn mice. Yttrium has been detected in nucleic acids, and even human breast milk contains 4 ppm of Yttrium.

A deficiency of yttrium has been linked to several metabolic diseases like Lou Gehrig's, Alzheimer's, multiple sclerosis, and Parkinson's diseases. In the absence of certain required trace elements, DNA will make use of

substitutes. One doctor has found that if there is an Yttrium deficiency, which is used at junction of a gene and DNA molecule, without Yttrium, the body uses aluminum which is a different size atom that results in misalignment of the gene and a genetic mutation due to nutrition occurs.

Most plants have about 0.6 ppm of yttrium. However, many *edible plants* may have 20-100 ppm with cabbage at the higher end of the range.

The seeds of woody plants can have 700 ppm of yttrium. Nuts are seeds, and are some of the healthiest foods we can eat. Is this a coincidence, or did God know what he was doing.

As you can see from the above it is important to Re-mineralize our soils if we want healthy, plants, pets, and people.

This is an example of why I always recommend a quality organic fertilizer like Microlife™ along with Re-mineralizer to provide additional trace and micronutrients.

LAZY GARDENER & FRIENDS HOUSTON GARDEN NEWSLETTER CALENDAR EVENTS

CALENDAR SUBMISSION RULES PLEASE READ!

- Use **ONLY** this (3-line max) format & style for notice
DAY, DATE: TITLE by NAME (if talk), time, address, Fee/free.
Sponsoring group (if not in title). website/phone (NO MORE!)
- Only events submitted specifically for LG&F calendar are used
- Actual gardening/plant events only. No harvesting, cooking, etc.
- No events picked up from flyers / NO PDFS! TYPE IN EMAIL
- Submit: lazygardenerbrenda@gmail.com. Check published entry!
- All events on-site and in Houston unless otherwise noted

SAT., SEPT. 30: 'ALONG THE WILDFLOWER TRAIL' 12th ANNUAL LEAGUE CITY GARDEN CLUB WALK, 10-4, League City. \$15, leaguecitygardenclub.org, leaguecitygardenclub@gmail.com

SAT., SEPT. 30: NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY PINE & PRAIRIES CHAPTER FALL PLANT SALE, 9am-12pm. 6464 Creekside Forest Drive, The Woodlands. Woodlands Landscaping Solutions. npsot.org/event/fall-plant-sale/

SAT., OCT. 7: HOUSTON BONSAI SOCIETY FALL SHOW, 9am-4pm, Mercer Botanic Garden, 22306 Aldine-Westfield. houstonbonsaisociety.com

SAT, OCT 7: MONTGOMERY COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS FALL PLANT SALE, 9am-Noon, 9020 Airport Road, Conroe. 935-539-7824 MCMGA.com.

SAT, OCT 7: ETHNIC VEGGIES WORKSHOP, 9-10am, 1210 Genoa Red Bluff Rd, \$15. Harris County Master Gardeners. Register: <https://bit.ly/45BAWVd>

SAT., OCT. 7: FORT BEND COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS FALL VEGETABLE & HERB PLANT SALE, 9am-noon (or sell-out) Bud O'Shieles Community Center, 1330 Band Rd, Rosenberg. fbmg.org; 281-341-7068.

SAT., OCT 7: SFA GARDENS FALL PLANT SALE, 9am -2pm, Stephen F Austin St University's Pineywoods Native Plant Center, 2900 Raguet St., Nacogdoches. sfasu.edu/academics/colleges/forestry-agriculture/research. 936-468-4404.

SAT., OCT. 7: MEMBER PROPAGATED PLANT SALE & EXPO, 9am-1pm, Shepherd Community Center, 10251 TX-150, Shepherd. San Jacinto County Master Gardener event. Free. sjmg/calendar-of-events/plant-sale-10-7-23/

MON, OCT 9: TREE AND TREE CARE, 10-11:30am (virtual). Free. Harris County Master Gardeners with Harris County Community College. Register for link: hccs.edu/community-learning-workshops

THURS., OCT. 12: ANNE BELOWICH ROSE COLLECTION by ANITA CLEVINGER & CLAUDE GRAVES (virtual) 7-9pm, Houston Rose Society event. Free. [Register](#)

THURS-SAT. OCT. 12-14: THE GARDEN CLUB OF HOUSTON BULB & PLANT MART, 5-7pm Thurs., 9am-3pm Fri., 9am-1pm Sat., The Church of St. John the Divine, 2450 River Oaks Blvd. Free. gchouston.org

SAT.-SUN., OCT. 14-15: 2023 SOUTHWEST BROMELIAD GUILD SHOW & SALE, Show — 2-5pm Sat. & 11am-3pm Sun., Sale — 9am-5pm Sat. & 11am-3pm Sun., Holiday Inn, 18530 State Hwy 249. Free. bromeliadsocietyhouston.org

SAT. OCT 14: SEED STARTING by SHARON STINSON, 10-11:30am. UH Teaching Garden. Urban Harvest event. urbanharvest.org/stec_event/seed-starting/

MON, OCT. 16: GENOA FRIENDSHIP OPEN GARDEN DAY, 8:30-11am, 1210 Genoa Red Bluff Road. Free. Harris County Master Gardeners. hcmga.tamu.edu/open-garden-days-precinct-2-satellite

TUES, OCT. 17: TREES AND TREE CARE (virtual), 11am-noon. Free. Harris County Master Gardeners with Harris County Public Library. Watch on Facebook at facebook.com/harriscountyppl/events

TUES., OCT. 17: REMARKABLE PLANTS: NATIVES AND SNEAKY INTERLOPERS by MATT TURNER, Ph.D., 10am, St. Basil's Hall, 702 Burney Rd, Sugar Land. Free. sugarlandgardenclub.org.

FRI.-SAT. OCT. 20-21: CLEAR LAKE NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY FALL SALE, Fri. 4-6pm; Sat. 8-10am, UH Clear Lake 2700 Bay Area Blvd.

SAT., OCT. 21: THE WOODLANDS GARDEN CLUB ANNUAL FALL PLANT SALE, 9 am, The Woodlands Farmer's Market, 7 Switchbud Pl., The Woodlands. Free. thewoodlandsgardenclub.org

SAT., OCT. 21: 2nd ANNUAL FALL FESTIVAL & PLANT SALE, 9am-1pm, Galveston County Master Gardener Discovery Garden, Carbide Park, 4102 Main Street (FM 512), La Marque. txmg.org/galveston, 281-534-3413

SAT, OCT 21: HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS FALL PLANT SALE, 9am- 1pm, 1210 Genoa Red Bluff Rd. Houston. Pre-orders open online Oct 1-19. Pickup at sale. hcmga.tamu.edu/shop/ "

SAT., OCT. 21: FALLING FOR HERBS by **MARILYN O'CONNOR**, 10-11am, Beauty's Community Garden, 3201 Airline Dr. Free but reservations required

TUES. OCT. 24: NATIVE PLANTS OF SOUTHEAST TEXAS by **MARK MORGENSTERN**, 6-7:30pm. Urban Harvest event. urbanharvest.org/stec_event/native-plants-of-southeast-texas/

TUES., OCT. 24: HOW TO START & MAINTAIN AN ORGANIC GARDEN by **WALLER COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS** (20-hour course), 7-9pm. Register: Community Education Catalog - Home & Garden; or 281-396-6365.

WED., OCT. 25: CACTI OF THE BIG BEND NATIONAL PARK, by **JOSEPH RODD**, at 7pm. Metropolitan Multi-Service Center, 1475 West Gray. Houston Cactus & Succulent Society, hcsstex.org

THURS. OCT. 26: GROWING RARE FRUIT by **RANDALL MOSMAN**, 6-7:30pm. Urban Harvest event. urbanharvest.org/stec_event/growing-rare-fruit/

SAT., OCT. 28: LANDSCAPE DESIGN, 9-11am, \$5. Montgomery County Texas AgriLife Extension 9020 Airport Rd., Conroe. 935-539-7824. MCMGA.com

SAT., OCT. 21: PLANT SALE FUNDRAISER, 9am-1pm, Tapestry UU Church of Houston, 17115 Rustington Rd, Spring. fb.me/e/3RhCuEBHS

WED., NOV 15: PUERTO VALLARTA BOTANICAL GARDEN, by **JOSIE WATTS** and **BRUCE MOFFET**, 7pm. Metropolitan Multi-Service Center, 1475 West Gray. Houston Cactus & Succulent Society hcsstex.org

SATURDAY, NOV. 11: CELEBRATING CONSERVATION with **DOUG TALLAMY**, 3-7 p.m., 1 Botanic Lane, \$55. Houston Botanic Garden. hbg.org/events

FRI., NOV 17: LANDSCAPE SUCCESS - WINTER PROTECTION (virtual) by **FORT BEND MASTER GARDENERS**, 2-3:30pm, Register: [Meeting Registration - Zoom](#)

If your event didn't get in right away, one possible reason is you didn't submit it in our EXACT - NEVER CHANGING format.

These usually take longer to be re-formatted. Your choice!

SEE TOP OF CALENDAR FOR DETAILS.

*** * ***



If we inspire you to attend any of these,
please let them know you heard about it in . . .
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About Us

BRENDA BEUST SMITH

WE KNOW HER BEST AS THE LAZY GARDENER . . .

but Brenda Beust Smith is also:

- * a national award-winning general feature 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 -- started in the early '70s as a fun side-project to reporting -- it became ranked as the longest-running, continuously-published local newspaper column in the Greater Houston area. The name, she says, is not just fun, it's true.

Brenda's gradual sideways step from general reporting into also doing gardening reporting led first to an 18-year series of when-to-do-what ***Lazy Gardener Calendars***, then to her ***Lazy Gardener's Guide*** book which morphed into her ***Lazy Gardener's Guide on CD***, which she now emails free upon request.

Brenda became a Harris County Master Gardener and, over the years, served on the boards of many Greater Houston area horticulture organizations. She hosted local radio and TV shows, most notably a 10+-year "Lazy Gardener" specialty shows on HoustonPBS (Ch. 8) and her call-in "EcoGardening" show on KPFT-FM.

For over three decades, Brenda served as Assistant Production Manager of the **GARDEN CLUB OF AMERICA'S "BULLETIN"** magazine. Although still an active broad-based freelance writer, Brenda's main focus now is ***THE LAZY GARDENER & FRIENDS HOUSTON GARDEN NEWSLETTER*** with John Ferguson and Pablo Hernandez of Nature's Way Resources.

A native of New Orleans and graduate of St. Agnes Academy and the University of Houston, Brenda lives in Humble, TX, and is married to the 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.

About her column, Brenda says: "I don't consider myself a 'garden writer.' I started out 50+ years ago as a very lazy "gardening reporter." I still feel that way today. I hope my columns inspire/help newcomers, but I do not write to them. I write to very experienced gardeners who want to expand their horizons.

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.

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 and quality control.

Pablo helps this newsletter happen from a technical support standpoint.



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