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MAY 5TH, 2017

Dear Friends,

Here is the 204TH 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. . . E mail your thoughts to: lazygardenerandfriends@gmail.com. Thanks so much for your interest.

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PLANTS AS ART? . . . CAPTIVATING CACTI . . . BEAR BRANCH'S MONARCH GARDEN

*"Botanical cohabitation - it's the new gardening renaissance."
-- Leslie Halleck, Halleck Horticultural, LLC*

By **BRENDA BEUST SMITH**

Is there anything more wonderful or inspiring than watching children experience the wonder of growing plants? Today's Spotlight is on the inspiring story of the Monarch Garden at Bear Branch Elementary School, a Montgomery County Master Gardener project.

Literally hundreds of habitat gardens are now integral parts of Greater Houston area elementary school curriculums (curricula?). Hopefully today's children will grow up with a love of, and concern for, the environment most of us city kids had to learn later in life. So encouraging this is such a big trend.

Another fascinating "attitude shift" was noted in a recent issue of [Texas A&M's Green Trends](#). Thanks to interior stylists' approach to "[Embracing plants as art](#)," more dramatic houseplants have become must-have "items du jour," according to national green industry consultant Leslie Halleck of [Halleck Horticultural, LLC](#).

Actually, all this is kinda fun if you're a "gardener of a certain age." As such, you'll remember when houseplants were hot stuff. We all tried our hand at rubber trees, zebra plants, terrariums, etc., -- anything that would live for at least a short while inside the house or office. Usually they died and we moved on.

They're back, baby! This trend is a little more sophisticated, probably due to changing times. Our residential outdoor "growing sites" are definitely getting smaller. At the same time, more couples are putting off starting families.

What hasn't changed, as Leslie points out, "People are always looking for 'sinks' for their emotions & basic instinctual drives." Pets fill that void somewhat. But let's face it, plants are less demanding than pets. And, as Leslie notes, it, "...doesn't hurt if your 'sink' can double as 'decor'!"

Growing in popularity are indoor plants that add a sculptural or artistic element in addition to providing us with a warm fuzzy ("look what I'm growing!"). So don't be surprised if your local independent nursery takes on more of an "arty" air. An increasing number of folks want fully-grown, ready-to-display, healthy specimens that look like they've been raised on site and to which they've already formed an emotional attachment. And . . . we're willing to pay for them.

"Botanical cohabitation," Leslie says. "...it's the new gardening renaissance."

A FUN P.S. As with most "art," beauty is in the eye of the beholder. Leslie points to *Pilea peperomioides* (Chinese money plant), as currently a high demand houseplant in Europe and Australia. Why? Apparently it looks like "art" to these folks.



Left, Pilea peperomioides. Right, our dollar weed

Frankly it looks to me a lot like our dollar grass, right above. Doesn't it? Dollar weed or dollargrass (*Hydrocotyle* spp.), also known as pennywort, is considered a lawn weed. I think it's cute and often wondered why we don't use it as a shade groundcover? I think it would be pretty in a confined, bordered area that includes scattered low containers of colorful shade-lovers like those pictured below. Maybe this "art" trend will change our perspective!



*Great for planting in shade in open bottom containers set into groundcovers:
l to r, hardy begonias, chocolate plants, indigo, leopard plant and pigeonberry.*

* * *

SPEAKING OF PLANTS AS ART . . . HARD TO BEAT CACTI & SUCCULENTS! It's hard to single out one cacti among the thousands of colors and shapes that inhabit our Earth. But if the Houston Cactus & Succulent Society's Daryl Rebrovich was forced to (*as I did impose on him!*), it would be the Epiphyllums (above). And one can be sure a wide variety of day- and night-blooming choices will be available at the big May 13-14 HCSC Spring Sale.



Above left, this spectacular white Epiphyllum opens at night and dies after the sun rises. Numerous folks who celebrate these blooms with parties. I know another gardener who actually took her night bloomer in a wagon to a formal ball with her, rather than miss a moment of this exciting natural thrill! The pinkish-purple Epiphyllum variety remains open both day (center) and night (right) for several days.



Other flowering hits at the sale will be the Adenium obesum or Desert rose, left. Right, three different Stapellia. In foreground is Huernia zebrina, often called the "Lifesaver flower" as there is a raised area that looks like a candy Lifesaver. People usually wish to touch this easy-grower!

**SAT.-SUN: May 13-14: HOUSTON CACTUS & SUCCULENT SOCIETY SPRING SALE, 9am-5pm,
Metropolitan Multi-Service Center, 1475 West Gray. Houston Cactus & Succulent Society event. Free. hcsstex.org**

* * *

If you'll permit me, I'd like to end with a personal thank you to Kingwood Garden Center staffers Karrie, Ireland and, especially, Austin. My son Blake, who many of you know is autistic & epileptic, had a rather traumatic (although thankfully not-medically-serious) seizure at the nursery this past week. These three came to our rescue immediately and handled everything with exceptional efficiency and kindness. So happy you're in our gardening world!

* * *

**Brenda's column in the LAZY GARDENER & FRIENDS HOUSTON GARDEN NEWSLETTER
Is based on her 40+ years as the Houston Chronicle's Lazy Gardener.**

* * *

Spotlighting . . . Montgomery County Master Gardeners *Lazy Gardener and Friends Newsletter*



**An amazing array of volunteers, staff and students contribute to this impressive garden.
Perhaps their story will help other schools to avoid inevitable pitfalls on the road to success!**

MONARCH WAYSTATION AT BEAR BRANCH ELEMENTARY
By MERRIE DECKER
Montgomery County Master Gardener

Bear Branch Elementary School, Magnolia ISD, sponsors two Junior Master Gardening (JMG) clubs on the campus with help and guidance from Montgomery County Master Gardeners:

- 4th and 5th graders meet Mondays at 7:30am to grow vegetables from seed in the greenhouse and work with nectar/host plants in their Butterflies and Blooms Garden.
- Kindergarten classes participate in monthly presentations, garden in the greenhouse and plant vegetables in raised beds.

Bear Branch's program began in 2004 thanks to then-Principal Susan Ward's enthusiastic passion for gardening and enriching students' lives through nature. With support of the PTO and Parent Communication Committee, a classroom-sized greenhouse and a garden all teachers could utilize became a reality.

On hand to help has been the Texas A&M Agrilife/Master Gardener Association's Junior Master Gardening Program, which engages children in hands-on experiences to develop a love of gardening and appreciation for the environment while cultivating the mind. (JMGkids.org). Support has come from many quarters:

- Garden sponsors/teachers Carla Allen and Sue Buchholz work with Master Gardener Merrie Decker to plan activities that teach various gardening aspects.
- Teachers and parents were trained by Montgomery County Master Gardeners and the project was incorporated into science, art, music and Language Arts curriculums at each grade level.
- Sara Simpson's Gifted and Talented students outfitted the campus for gardening as their Community Future Problem Solvers project (Emergency Green: Watch Us Grow!).
- Parent and community support, plus teacher and student-led fundraisers provided funding.
- Parents assembled the greenhouse, hooked up the sprinkler system, lowered tables to accommodate the youngest students and provided a slab, handicap access sidewalks, storage building, tools, soil/mulch, and a gigantic, custom-designed butterfly statue for the garden center.
- The Montgomery County Beautification Association, Home Depot, Boy Scouts and Girl Scout troops provided plants, trellises, benches and arbors while kindergarteners decorated stepping stones.



An eyesore site that collected debris evolved into a tranquil garden area used daily for contemplation, inspiration and education. It later became home to a wind chime memorial dedicated to beloved music educator Mrs. Tarver.

Carla Allen notes the Butterfly Garden "gives students a personal connection with protecting the environment." Monarchs will lay eggs only on the milkweed plant, a native resource now declining due to widespread use of herbicides and urban sprawl.

Principal Mrs. Holly Ray supports the gardens, allowing JMG members to share garden updates during morning announcements. As two JMG members explain:

- Haley, 4th grade: *"Helping butterflies is magical. Watching them grow on milkweed is one of the most spectacular things you'll ever see."*
- Melania, 5th grade *"It makes you feel really special to know you are a part of something so cool that helps butterflies as well as students' education."*

The school's now-certified Monarch Waystation Program is a member of [Monarch Watch](#), a non-profit, University of Kansas educational outreach designed to "Create, Conserve, and Protect Monarch Habitats."

- For more information on the Bear Branch Elementary School program, contact Caroline M. Cruz, County Extension Agent - Urban Youth Development, 936-539-7824; cmcruz@ag.tamu.edu.
- Additional coverage:
[Conroe Courier: "Master Gardener Kids Create Monarch Waystation"](#)

JOHN'S CORNER

MINERALS - The Elements and What They Do Part 22



30) Zinc (Zn) - Zinc is a blue-white metal that is brittle when cast, it tarnishes easily, and it chemically reacts with both acids and alkalis.

Zinc was first recognized as a separate element in 1764 and as an essential nutrient for plants, humans, and animals in 1869. However, statues made of zinc have been dated to the time of Christ. Most pennies used in currency today are made of zinc as the value of the copper in a penny would be worth more than the penny itself. Zinc is often associated with galvanizing steel to prevent rusting and in its use to protect ships propellers and hulls from corrosion. Zinc is found in hundreds of products like paint, rubber, plastic, other chemicals, batteries, automotive equipment, computers, and many household devices. Zinc is used in sunscreens in the form of zinc oxide (ZnO).

Zinc is listed in the Periodic table as a metal of Group 12, which includes mercury (Hg) and cadmium (Cd). Zinc occurs mainly in nature at its +2 electrical (oxidation state).

Zinc is found in igneous rocks at 70 ppm, shale at 95 ppm, limestone at 20 ppm, freshwater and seawater at 0.01 ppm. In soils, zinc is found at 50 ppm, in marine plants at 150 ppm and land plants 100 ppm. In marine animals, it can range from 6-1,500 ppm and land animals at 160 ppm. In some coals, zinc levels can reach 19,000 ppm. Zinc weathers easily hence is readily available in most natural soils. In the soil, zinc may occur in many forms from microbial bodies to over a dozen of

different chemical compounds. A couple common forms of zinc in rocks (minerals) are sphalerite, which is zinc sulfide (ZnS) and zinc carbonate (ZnCO_3).

Over 300 enzymes in humans require zinc to function properly and zinc is part of the RNA molecule. Zinc deficiency in humans is associated with numerous health effects and is the fifth leading cause of death in the developing world (800,000 people die annually from zinc deficiencies according to the World Health Organization).

Symptoms and diseases of zinc deficiency are pica (geophagia), loss of sense of smell and taste, infertility, failure of wounds and ulcers to heal, immune status failure, poor growth, high infant mortality, small and poorly functioning ovaries and testes, child remains in a pre-puberty state, anemia, hair loss, acrodermatitis enteropathica, frizzy hair, diarrhea, depression, paranoia, oral and perioral dermatitis, anorexia nervosa, prostate enlargement, severe body odor, anorexia and bullemlia.

Congenital birth defects associated with zinc deficiency: Down' syndrome, cleft palate, brain defects, small or absent eyes, micro- or agnathia, spina bifida, clubbed limbs, webbed toes and fingers, hiatal hernias, umbilical hernias, heart defects, lung defects, and urogenital.

Zinc is an important mineral for proper nervous system function and zinc has antioxidant properties and anti-inflammatory properties. A paper in the Journal Biological Trace Element Research found an association between higher zinc levels in people and reduced inflammation.

Zinc combined with the amino acid carnosine (zinc-carnosine) provides powerful actions against *Helicobacter pylori* infections that cause so many stomach and digestion problems (*H. pylori* is known to cause stomach cancer). Reported in the winter edition of Life Extension 2016, it has been found that zinc-carnosine heals ulcers (inhibits growth of *H. pylori*), repairs damaged mucus linings, and reduces inflammation.

Additionally, zinc is required for proper functioning of our digestive and immune systems. Excesses of copper and iron or high vegan diets reduce the availability of dietary zinc. Milling and processing of grains removes over 50% of what little zinc was in the grain. Heavy losses of zinc occur in sweat hence zinc deficiency in un-supplemented diets can occur in athletes and those whom work outside in hot summers.

Food sources for zinc are oysters, beef liver, nuts (cashews, almonds, pecans), and seeds.

Gardening and Landscaping Problems Associated with Zinc (Zn)

In soil, clays and organic matter help the soil hold onto zinc so it does not leach. As soil temperature increases zinc becomes easier to leach out of our soils. Another good reason to keep all our flowerbeds covered with several inches of quality mulch.

Zinc is considered a micronutrient and plant tissue contains 3-100 ppm depending on the species. Zinc is required for enzyme activity, carbohydrate, starch, and seed formation. Many plant enzymes systems require zinc to work properly. Adequate zinc helps plants withstand hot and dry conditions and helps plants be more resistant to bacterial and fungal diseases. Zinc is required for healthy plants, as it is involved with a plants immune system in many ways.

When zinc is supplied in an organic form, it increases its bioavailability to plants. Plants can absorb zinc in many forms from elemental, oxidized (Zn^{+2}) and chelated states.

A few functions or activities of zinc are: required by azotobacteria non-symbiotic nitrogen-fixing bacteria, acts in the formation of chlorophyll, aids in the prevention of chlorosis in some plants,

stimulates plant growth, aids in bud development, prevents the occurrence of mottled leaf in citrus, white bud in corn and other disorders. It aids in the formation of plant enzymes and hormones, and is important for the sweet taste in vegetables and fruits. Zinc is required for certain physiological processes such as enzyme and co-enzyme systems. These include alcohol dehydrogenase, superoxide dismutase, carbonic anhydrase, RNA polymerase. Zinc is also used as an enzyme activator.

Zinc availability increases in acidic soils and in soils with high organic matter. Soils that are well aerated also have more bio-available zinc.

Zinc deficiencies in soils and plants are common. However, a plants response to deficiencies vary widely hence the diagnosis is rather complex. It takes visual, plant tissue analysis, and soil testing together to properly diagnose the deficiency.

Deficiencies are most evident in younger leaves as chlorosis, necrosis, or mottling. It occurs mainly in high pH soils, sandy soils low in organic matter, and organic soils of peat and muck. Too much phosphorous fertilizer induces deficiency along with distorted or puckered leaf margins and short internodes. Onions are sensitive to zinc deficiency and shows as striping, bending and twisting of the tops.

Other deficiency symptoms are the terminal leaves are small, bud formation is poor, and leaves have dead areas, yellow interveinal in mottled regions. Rosetting of terminals is another deficiency symptom.

Many of the plant species we call weeds often grow to correct soils problems hence weed populations tend to increase in soils deficient in Zinc.

Application of water soluble phosphorous (P) from artificial fertilizers prevents the soil from holding adequate zinc which then leads to deficiencies in the plant. This often results in low levels of zinc in our food supply and the health problems mentioned above. This action then prevents microbes like *Rhizobium* from fixing nitrogen from the air to the soil. Excess calcium (Ca) in the soil can also lead to deficiencies. This is common in agricultural fields where the use of artificial fertilizers has acidified the soil, which then requires repeated liming with calcium products to increase the pH.

Too much nitrogen in the soil (think artificial fertilizers again) elevates certain amino acids and proteins in a plants root system disturbing the absorption and transport of zinc in and into plants.

Artificial fertilizers have destroyed soil structure in many of our agricultural areas resulting in poor drainage. Farmers have to install drain tiles to correct this problem. Soils with poor drainage decrease zinc availability (lack of zinc in our food supply) and conversely well-drained soils increase availability.

Another factor in zinc shortages in our food supply is caused by glyphosate (Round-Up) as it ties up and prevents the absorption of essential minerals, especially those with a +2 electrical state. This is a reason eating genetically modified foods (GMO's) which have extremely high levels of glyphosate on them causes many kinds of health problems like zinc deficiency and cancer.

In soils, levels of zinc above 500-ppm cause problems as it prevents the plant from the absorption of other critical elements.

Poultry manure may contain 495 ppm of zinc and repeated use of poultry manure fertilizers can lead to zinc toxicity issues. Human sewage sludge (Biosolids) can have 131 ppm to over 1,670 ppm of

zinc and repeated usage will cause problems as will fertilizers made from sewage sludge (ex. Milorganite, Hou-Actinite, etc.).

Rubber mulches from tires can cause severe zinc contamination of one's' soil as they contain up to 2% of their mass as zinc. When iron is exposed to excess zinc (Zn) it forms the mineral franklinite a zinc iron oxide (ZnFe_2O_4) which decreases the availability of both metals to plants. This has been proposed as one of the mechanisms as to why "rubber tire" mulch is so toxic to plants.

Sources: compost, native mulches, kelp meal, seaweed and its extracts, zinc sulfate, basalt sand

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LAZY GARDENER & FRIENDS HOUSTON GARDEN NEWSLETTER CALENDAR EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

PLEASE READ BEFORE SUBMITTING AN EVENT TO THIS CALENDAR.

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. Sorry, no children's programs.
Submit to: lazygardener@sbcglobal.net

**IF WE INSPIRE YOU TO ATTEND ANY OF THESE EVENTS, PLEASE TELL SPONSORS YOU HEARD ABOUT IT IN
THE LAZY GARDENER & FRIENDS HOUSTON GARDEN NEWSLETTER**

SAT. MAY 6: CUT FLOWER GARDEN by SONI HOLIDAY, 10am, Enchanted Forest, 10611 FM 2759, 281-937-9449; 2pm, Enchanted Gardens, 6420 FM 359, 281-341-1206, both Richmond. myenchanted.com

SAT. MAY 6: RAZZLE DAZZLE BASIL by ANN WHEELER & CHRIS CROWDER, 10am, The Arbor Gate, 15635 FM 2920, Tomball. Free. arborgate.com

SAT., MAY 6: WATER-WISE GARDENING, 9:30-11:30am, University of St. Thomas, Strake Hall, Rm 107, 3812 Yoakum Blvd. \$40. Urban Harvest event. 713-880-5540; urbanharvest.org

SAT., MAY 6: TOOL TIME HANDS-ON WORKSHOP by HENRY HARRISON, III, AND TIM JAHNKE, 9-11am. Galveston County Master Gardener Demonstration Garden, 4102 Main St, (Hwy 518), La Marque. Galveston County Master Gardener event. Pre-register: galvcountrymgs@gmail.com, 281-534-3413, aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston

SAT., MAY 6: FOODSCAPE REVOLUTION by BRIE ARTHUR, 6:30pm, Multiservice Center, 1475 West Gray. Free. Houston Urban Gardeners (HUG) event. houstonurbangardeners.org.

SUN., MAY 7: RAIN BARRELL & COMPOST BIN TRUCKLOAD SALE ORDER DEADLINE, Houston Green Building Resource Center event. rainbarrelprogram.org/Houston; steve.stelzer@houstontx.gov

TUES., MAY 9: GROWING PLUMERIAS, 7:30pm, Cherie Flores Garden Pavillion, 1500 Hermann Dr. Free. Plumeria Society of America event. theplumeriasociety.org; 281-438-3653

TUES., MAY 9: FOODSCAPING by BRIE ARTHUR, 7pm, & PECKERWOOD GARDEN TOUR, 5pm, 20559 FM 359 Road Hempstead, \$10 each. Register: peckerwoodgarden.org

FRI., MAY 9: "FOODSCAPING, PAIRING EDIBLES WITH TRADITIONAL ORNAMENTAL LANDSCAPES by BRIE ARTHUR, 7pm, 20559 FM 359 Road, Hempstead. \$10 lecture, \$10 Tour. Garden Conservancy event. Register: peckerwoodgarden.org, 979-826-3232; eventregistration@peckerwoodgarden.org

WED., MAY 10: WORM COMPOSTING, noon - 2pm, Mercer Botanic Garden, 22306 Aldine-Westfield, Humble. Free. Register: 713-274-4160.

THURS., MAY 11: INSECTS IN THE GARDEN, 6:30 pm, Barbara Bush Memorial Library, 6817 Cypresswood Drive Spring. Free Harris County Master Gardener event. hcmga.tamu.edu/Public/docs/2017-green-thumb.pdf 281-855-5600

THURS., MAY 11: THE FOODSCAPE REVOLUTION by BRIE ARTHUR, 7pm, Ina Brundrett Conservation Education Building, Pineywoods Native Plant Center, 2900 Raguet St, Nacogdoches. 936-468-4404 or sullivanfa@sfasu.edu

THURS., MAY 11: GROWING ROSES IS FOR EVERYONE by PAT SHANLEY, 7:30pm, Cherie Flores Garden Pavillon, 1500 Hermann Dr. Houston Rose Society event. Free. houstonrose.org

FRI., MAY 12: BLOOMING BONNETS LUNCHEON, 2:30-4:30pm, Mercer Botanic Garden, 22306 Aldine-Westfield, Humble. \$25. Register: 713-274-4160.

FRI., MAY 12: ATTWATER PRAIRIE CHICKEN NAT. WILDLIFE REFUGE: PRAIRIE OASIS OF SE TEXAS by TERRY ROSSIGNOL. 10 am. White Oak Conference Center, 7603 Antoine. Free. Houston Federation of Garden Clubs event. www.houstonfederationgardenclubs.org

SAT., MAY 13: MOTHER'S DAY MAKE & TAKE FLOWERS/MARKETS, 10am, Enchanted Forest, 10611 FM 2759, 281-937-9449; 2pm, Enchanted Gardens, 6420 FM 359, 281-341-1206, both Richmond. \$10+. myenchanted.com

SAT., MAY 13: ART IN THE GARDEN, 10am-3pm, Seminar & FELDER RUSHING, 10am, The Arbor Gate, 15635 FM 2920, Tomball. Free. arborgate.com

SAT., MAY 13: INSTALLING & MAINTAINING NATIVE LANDSCAPES, 8 am-4:30 pm, Kleb Woods Nature Center, 20303 Draper Rd, Tomball. \$57. Native Plant Society of Texas-Houston Chapter. Register: npsot.org/wp/nlcp; npsot.org/wp/houston/native-landscaping-certification.

SAT., MAY 13: 'DAYLILY DESIRE' HORTICULTURAL & DESIGN SHOW, 1-3pm, Gethsemane Lutheran Church, 4040 Watonga Ave. Free. Houston Area Daylily Society and Houston Hemerocallis Society event. ofts.com/hhs.

SAT., MAY 13; DAYLILIES & OTHER PLANTS SALE, 10:30 am-sell out, Gethsemane Lutheran Church, 4040 Watonga Ave., . Houston Area Daylily Society event. 713-864-0452.

SAT., MAY 13: BRAZOSPORT DAYLILY SOCIETY PLANT SALE & FLOWER SHOW, 1-4pm, St. Mark's Lutheran Church, 501 Willow Dr., Lake Jackson. Free. 281-413-4844

SAT., MAY 13: RAIN BARREL & COMPOST BIN TRUCKLOAD SALE. Green Building Resource Center. rainbarrelprogram.org/Houston.

SAT., MAY 13: PECKERWOOD GARDEN OPEN DAY, 10am-2pm tours, 20559 FM 359 Road, Hempstead. \$10. Garden Conservancy event. peckerwoodgarden.org, 979-826-3232; eventregistration@peckerwoodgarden.org

SAT., MAY 13: MINIATURE CONTAINER WORKSHOP, 10-11am, Buchanan's Native Plants, 611 E 11th. Pay for supplies use. 713-861-5702; buchanansplants.com/events

SAT.-SUN: May 13-14: HOUSTON CACTUS & SUCCULENT SOCIETY SPRING SALE, 9am-5pm, Metropolitan Multi-Service Center, 1475 West Gray. Houston Cactus & Succulent Society event. Free. hcsstex.org

SUN., MAY 14: DAYLILY OPEN GARDEN DAY, 8:30am-4pm, Crainers Daylily Farm, 5748 FM 2611, Brazoria. Free. emcrainger@aol.com; 979-239-7026; 979-239-8390

TUES., MAY 16: INSECTS IN THE GARDEN, 6:30pm, Spring Branch Memorial Library, 930 Corbindale. Free Harris County Master Gardener event. hcmga.tamu.edu/Public/docs/2017-green-thumb.pdf . 281-855-5600

TUE., MAY 16: SOUTH AFRICAN IMAGES by PHYLLIS & DICK McEUEEN, 7:30pm, West Gray Multi-Service Center, 1475 W Gray. Free. Bromeliad Society / Houston event. bromeliadsocietyhouston.org

THURS., MAY 18: INSECTS IN THE GARDEN, 6:30pm, Freeman Branch Library, 16616 Diana Lane . Free Harris County Master Gardener event. 281-855-5600; hcmga.tamu.edu/Public/docs/2017-green-thumb.pdf

FRI., MAY 19: NATIONAL TROPICAL BOTANICAL GARDEN PLANT CONSERVATION & RESEARCH by CHARLES R. 'CHIPPER' WICHMAN, JR., 20559 FM 359 Road, Hempstead. \$10. Garden Conservancy event. peckerwoodgarden.org, 979-826-3232; eventregistration@peckerwoodgarden.org

FRI.-SUN., MAY 19-21: BROMELIAD SOCIETY / HOUSTON SHOW & SALE, Show 2-5pm Sat.; 11am-4pm Sun., Sale noon-4pm Fri., 9am-4pm Sat. & 11am-3pm Sun., Mercer Botanic Gardens, 22306 Aldine Westfield Road, Humble. Free. bromeliadsocietyhouston.org

SAT., MAY 20: MINI SUCCULENT OR HERB GARDEN, 10am, Enchanted Forest, 10611 FM 2759, 281-937-9449; 2pm, Enchanted Gardens, 6420 FM 359, 281-341-1206, both Richmond. myenchanted.com

SAT., MAY 20: SPACE CITY HIBISCUS CHAPTER SHOW & SALE, 1-4pm, East Harris County Activity Center, 340 Spencer Hwy. Pasadena.

SAT., MAY 20: LONE STAR DAYLILY SOCIETY 23rd ANNUAL FLOWER SHOW & SALE. 10am-4pm Sale; 1-4pm Show. Epiphany Lutheran Church, 5515 W. Broadway, Pearland. Free. lonestardaylilysociety.org; peskine@comcast.net; 713-882-9958.

SAT., MAY 20: INSECTS IN THE GARDEN, 10am, Maud Smith Marks Library, 1815 Westgreen Blvd. Katy. Free Harris County Master Gardener event. hcmga.tamu.edu/Public/docs/2017-green-thumb.pdf ; 281-855-5600

SAT, MAY 20: HOME FRUIT GROWERS TOUR, 9am-noon. Start: Galveston County Master Gardener Demonstration Orchard & Garden, 4102 Main St. (Hwy 517), La Marque. Free. galvcountymgs@gmail.com, 281-534-3413, aggiehorticulture.tamu.edu/galveston

SUN., MAY 21: PAYNE'S IN THE GRASS DAYLILY FARM ANNUAL OPEN GARDEN & SALE. 9-5, 2130 O'Day Road, Pearland, Tx. 77581. Free. paynesinthegrassdaylilyfarm.com; 281-485-3821 or 713-419-6661

SUN., MAY 21: PSILOTUM NUDUM: Morphology & REPRODUCTION by JOAN HUDSON, 2pm, Judson Robinson Jr. Community Center, 2020 Hermann Dr. Free. Texas Gulf Coast Fern Society event. tgcfemsoc.org

SUN., MAY 21: DAYLILY OPEN GARDEN DAY, 8:30am-4pm, Crainers Daylily Farm, 5748 FM 2611, Brazoria. Free. emcrainger@aol.com; 979-239-7026; 979-239-8390

TUES., MAY 23, HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS OPEN GARDEN DAY & INSECTS SEMINAR, 9-11:30am, 3033 Bear Creek Dr. Free. Harris County Master Gardener event. Register: ogd.harrishort@gmail.com

WED., MAY 24: "JARDIN DE EXOTIQUE" by JOSIE WATTS and BRUCE MOFFET, 7:30pm., Metropolitan Multi-Services Center, 1475 West Gray, Free. hcsstx.org.

SAT., MAY 27: PECKERWOOD GARDEN FRIENDS OF PECKERWOOD DAY, 10am-2pm tours, 20559 FM 359 Road, Hempstead. \$10. Garden Conservancy event. peckerwoodgarden.org, 979-826-3232; eventregistration@peckerwoodgarden.org

THU., JUN 1: PEACH TREE PRUNING FOR HOME ORCHARD by GALVESTON COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS, 9-10 am. Demonstration Garden Orchard, Carbide Park, 4102 Main (Hwy 519), La Marque. GCMG event. Free. Pre-register: galvcountymgs@gmail.com, 281-534-3413, aggiehorticulture.tamu.edu/galveston/index.html

THURS., JUNE 1: STROLLER GARDEN STROLLS, 9-10am, Mercer Botanic Garden, 22306 Aldine-Westfield, Humble. Free. R

egister: 713-274-4160.

SAT., JUN 3: PLUMERIA (FABULOUS FRAGRANT FANGIPANI) by GALVESTON COUNTY MASTER GARDENER, 1-3 pm, AgriLife Extension Bldg., Carbide Park, 4102 Main (Hwy 519), La Marque. GCMG event. Free. Pre-register: galvcountrymgs@gmail.com, 281-534-3413, aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston/index.html

SAT. JUNE 3: TOMATO CONTEST, 10am, The Arbor Gate, 15635 FM 2920, Tomball. Free. Categories/guidelines: arborgate.com

THURS., JUNE 8: PROPOGATION & SEED SAVING, 6:30pm, Barbara Bush Memorial Library, 6817 Cypresswood Dr., Spring. Free. Harris County Master Gardener event. hcmga.tamu.edu/Public/docs/2017-green-thumb.pdf ; 281-855-5600

THURS., JUNE 8: IS REDBUD THE NEXT CRAPE MYRTLE by DENNIS WERNER, 7pm, Ina Brundrett Conservation Education Building, Pinewoods Native Plant Center, 2900 Raguet St, Nacogdoches. 936-468-4404 or sullivanfa@sfasu.edu

THURS., JUNE 8: SOIL COMPOSITION + FERTILIZER + WATER = BEAUTIFUL ROSES by DR. DAVID REED, 7:30pm, Cherie Flores Garden Pavillon, 1500 Hermann Dr. Houston Rose Society event. Free. houstonrose.org

SAT., JUNE 10: PLUMERIA SOCIETY OF AMERICA SHOW & SALE, 9:30am-3pm, Bay Area Community Center 5002 E Nasa Pkwy, Seabrook. Free. theplumeriasociety.org; 281-438-3653

WED., JUNE 14: CARNIVOROUS PLANTS, noon-2pm, Mercer Botanic Garden, 22306 Aldine-Westfield, Humble. Free. Register: 713-274-4160.

THURS., JUNE 15: PROPOGATION & SEED SAVING, 6:30pm, Freeman Branch Library, 16616 Diana Lane. Free. Harris County Master Gardener event. hcmga.tamu.edu/Public/docs/2017-green-thumb.pdf; 281-855-5600

SAT., JUNE 17: PROPOGATION & SEED SAVING, 10am, Maud Smith Marks Library, 1815 Westgreen Blvd. Katy. Free. Free. Harris County Master Gardener event. hcmga.tamu.edu/Public/docs/2017-green-thumb.pdf; 281-855-5600

TUES., JUNE 20: PROPOGATION & SEED SAVING, 6:30pm, Spring Branch Memorial Library, 930 Corbindale. Free Free. Harris County Master Gardener event. hcmga.tamu.edu/Public/docs/2017-green-thumb.pdf; 281-855-5600

WED-THURS., JUNE 21-22: CULTIVATING THE OUTDOOR CLASSROOM WORKSHOP, 8am-3pm, Gregory Lincoln Education Center, 1101 Taft St. \$50. Urban Harvest event. 713-880-5540; urbanharvest.org

TUES., JUNE 27, HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS OPEN GARDEN DAY & PROPOGATION & SEED SAVING SEMINAR, 9-11:30 am, 3033 Bear Creek Dr. Free. Harris County Master Gardener event. Register: ogd.harrishort@gmail.com

SAT., JULY 8: ALL ABOUT GINGERS, 10-11am, Buchanan's Native Plants, 611 E 11th. Free. 713-861-5702; buchanansplants.com/events

TUES., JULY 11: GROWING PLUMERIAS, 7:30pm, Cherie Flores Garden Pavillion, 1500 Hermann Dr. Free. Plumeria Society of America event. theplumeriasociety.org; 281-438-3653

THURS., JULY 13: A BRIGHT SPOT IN THE HEART OF TYLER by GREG GRANT, 7pm, Ina Brundrett Conservation Education Building, Pinewoods Native Plant Center, 2900 Raguet St, Nacogdoches. 936-468-4404 or sullivanfa@sfasu.edu

SAT., JULY 22: PLUMERIA SOCIETY OF AMERICA SHOW & SALE, 9:30am-3pm, Fort Bend County Fairgrounds, 4310 TX-36, Rosenberg. Free. theplumeriasociety.org; 281-438-3653

THURS., AUG. 10: THE GREATER ATLANTA POLLINATOR PARTNERSHIP: A MODEL OF URBAN POLLINATOR CONSERVATION by JENNY CRUSE SANDERS, 7pm, Ina Brundrett Conservation Education Building, Pinewoods Native Plant Center, 2900 Raguet St, Nacogdoches. 936-468-4404 or sullivanfa@sfasu.edu

THURS., SEPT. 14: FROM OVER THE TOP TO DOWN UNDER, ADVENTURES IN HORTICULTURE by GEORGE HULL, 7pm, Ina Brundrett Conservation Education Building, Pinewoods Native Plant Center, 2900 Raguet St, Nacogdoches. 936-468-4404 or sullivanfa@sfasu.edu

SAT., OCT. 7: HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENER FALL PLANT SALE, Bear Creek Garden, 3033 Bear Creek Dr. 281-855-5600

TUES., OCT. 10: GROWING PLUMERIAS, 7:30pm, Cherie Flores Garden Pavillion, 1500 Hermann Dr. Free. Plumeria Society of America event. theplumeriasociety.org; 281-438-3653

THURS., OCT. 12: MOORE FARMS BOTANICAL GARDEN: A GERMINATING SUCCESS by REBECCA TURK, 7pm, Ina Brundrett Conservation Education Building, Pinewoods Native Plant Center, 2900 Raguet St, Nacogdoches. 936-468-4404 or sullivanfa@sfasu.edu

THURS.-SAT., OCT. 12-14: 2017 BULB & PLANT MART. Garden Club of Houston event.

THURS., NOV. 9: MAGNOLIAS: QUEEN OF THE GARDEN by ANDREW BUNTING, 7pm, Ina Brundrett Conservation Education Building, Pinewoods Native Plant Center, 2900 Raguet St, Nacogdoches. 936-468-4404 or sullivanfa@sfasu.edu

THURS., DEC. 14: THE YEAR IN REVIEW by DAVID CREECH, 7pm, Ina Brundrett Conservation Education Building, Pinewoods Native Plant Center, 2900 Raguet St, Nacogdoches. 936-468-4404 or sullivanfa@sfasu.edu

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 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.



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