



Share:



- 
- 
- 
- 



OCTOBER 20, 2017

Dear Friends,

Here is the 226th 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](mailto:lazygardenerandfriends@gmail.com). Thanks so much for your interest.

Please or sign yourself up to receive this newsletter by clicking the "Join Our Mailing List" link just below. We will never sell or share our mailing list to protect the privacy of our subscribers.

Enjoy!

[JOIN OUR MAILING LIST!](#)



## READERS RESPOND WITH WINTER BLOOMERS NICE WAYS TO GET RID OF UNWELCOME GUESTS

By **BRENDA BEUST SMITH**

**Last week** Deany Meinke, who lives in Southwest Houston, asked for some low-growing, shade tolerant, winter color replacement ideas for her front yard planting of caladiums. As pretty as these are, they usually don't survive (in any significant numbers) even our erratic winters.

One difference in winter, of course, is many trees lose leaves. So shady spots in summer might not be shady in January & February.

\* **LINDA GAY**, retired Mercer Botanic Garden Director and popular garden club speake, likes:

- **Snowflakes** (*Leucojum aestivale*), delightful bulb with beautiful dark green foliage and spring flowers.
- **Violas** (violet family) are great color come in white and blue and white. Many colors to choose.
- **Columbine**, especially Benary's ['Spring Magic'](#) series
- **Cyclamen** are also a great winter shade color!

\* **CHERI JANTZEN** in Spring Branch also endorses cyclamens, as well as

- Encore Autumn Ember azaleas in her east-facing flowerbeds. They bloom nearly year-round.



*Above, l to r, snowflakes, violas and 'Spring Magic' columbines  
Below, l to r, cyclamens for garden or container and 'Autumn Ember' Encore azaleas*



Personal note here, cyclamen are strictly cold-weather bloomers. They tend to be a little more expensive, but will produce some of the longest lasting, most eye-catching color you can use here in winter. Mercer plants huge beds of them and they do just fine. They're also long-lasting, beautiful and so hardy in containers on patios or by front doors.

**MORE EDIBLES FOR ORNAMENTAL GARDENS . . .**

It's not often I report on flowers photographed in far-away lands (like Chicago). We live in such a unique subtropical pocket, often I don't have the background to tell you if they will do well here. That was my first reaction when Frederick M. sent in the picture above left asking what this is at left below. One of my go-to gurus, retired Mercer Botanic Garden Director Linda Gay, ID'd it as milo or sorghum.

Given the growing interest in growing edibles among ornamentals, I thought this one was worth mentioning. And, she says, it DOES do well here. They carry it at The Arbor Gate. Frederick photographed this at Chicago's Shedd Aquarium. Definitely a far-away land.



*L to r, milo, cassia, bougainvillea loopers and mole*

Another October delight worth planting is this yellow-blooming cassia, photographed in Dena & Daniel Beaux's yard in Crystal Beach. Give this Texas native a full sun, well-drained spot and it will prove totally maintenance free, drought-tolerant and hurricane flood-hardy!

## LOVE NEW-TO-ME GARDENING CHALLENGES!

Dana does have a new-to-me problem with her lavender bougainvillea, to the left of her cassia in the picture second from left. Her Crystal Beach landscape's bougainvillea, normally a massive bloomer, is now covered with what she called leaf-roller caterpillars.

What she probably has are bougainvillea loopers (1-inch-long yellow, green or brown caterpillars). These feed in the evening, leaving ragged leaf edges and may strip the plant of its leaves.

As anyone who reads this column knows, I don't ever recommend chemicals -- as much from laziness as fear of environmental harm. Hand-removing the caterpillars is the best way to manage an infestation.

A prettier solution is to put a bird bath and/or feeder near the plant. Birds love to eat caterpillars. For more serious help, google "bougainvillea loopers."

\* \* \*

After almost ½ a century reporting on area horticultural frustrations, very rare I get two "new-to-me" challenges in the same week! So Margaret Nikel email was a special delight to me, if not to her. She wrote:

*"I have something tunneling. Don't see mounds but walking in yard will definitely find soft tracks. I just collapse them by walking but they come back rapidly. I have a very small yard but every new planting seems to be disturbed.."*

Never had this problem, so turned to an expert gardening friend/popular club speaker Gundrun Opperman, who knew right away: moles -- a huge problem, she reports, in the Kingwood/Humble area, where both women live. That's why I've never seen them. I garden in Houston's more extensive gumbo soil areas.

Moles don't like thick clay soil (and you thought gumbo soil is such a pain!) . They prefer organically-rich sandy soil. Earthworms are "caviar" to moles (although they will eat grubs too - a plus on their side). Another plus, they keep the soil well aerated which helps to keep the soil-enriching micro-organisms active. Gudrun noted a school playground where they garden is riddled with mole tunnels. Frustrating but not intolerable.

A mole won't destroy a whole yard just as squirrels, equally as frustrating, won't kill all your trees and plants just because they damage one or two. And they're equally as difficult to safely shoo away. The 'net is full of websites offering so-called solutions. Most, experts seem to agree, are a waste of money.



Natural enemies include coyotes, foxes, some dogs, owls along with rat, hog nose and king snakes. Don't suppose many homeowners want to encourage snakes or coyotes, but you can buy owl houses. Personally I bet they're about as effective as bat houses. Nice ecological statements, but that's about all.

Might be able to pay kids to find and smash their tunnels. This might frustrate them enough to move to your neighbor's yard. Anyone have any other non-poisonous, effective answers to moles?

\* \* \*

*Brenda's column in the LAZY GARDENER & FRIENDS HOUSTON GARDEN NEWSLETTER  
Is based on her 40+ years as the Houston Chronicle's Lazy Gardener. To sign up for this free,  
weekly Greater Houston area gardening report or to read past issues, go to [www.natureswayresources .com](http://www.natureswayresources.com).*

## JOHN'S CORNER

## NEWS FROM THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF SOIL AND PLANTS

I hope everyone enjoyed the series on the elements (minerals) and how they affect all areas of our lives, from soils, microbes, and plants to animals and human health. Our modern food supply is extremely deficient in minerals that we need to be healthy; hence, more and more gardeners are growing their own fruits and vegetables.

A new study has found that 72% of early deaths are a result our dietary choices that cause cardiovascular events, type 2 diabetes, and cancer (Institute of Health Metrics and Evaluation). Researchers at Cornell University have found that adding a couple pounds of good compost to a bucket of water (no chlorine or other toxic chemicals) and let it sit for a few days to make a form of compost tea more correctly called compost leachate. The solution was filtered to remove the compost, and then the liquid was sprayed onto plants infected with pithium (pythium) root rot, where the tea suppressed the disease. Note: Good quality compost has repeatedly been shown effective against several dozen fungal and bacterial diseases. Cheap low quality compost does not work and can even stunt or kill the plants.

A study published in the Soil Science Society of America Journal found that Eastern Red Cedar (*Juniperus virginiana*) grows faster and stronger when colonized with arbuscular mycorrhizal fungi. The benefits that this partnership provides are why the Eastern Red Cedar has become invasive in many areas.

Scientists at the University of Birmingham have discovered a group of cells that act as a "brain" for plant embryos. These cells assess environmental information or conditions (moisture, temperature, light, microbial, etc.) and dictate when a seed will germinate.

I am often asked about global warming and how much carbon is captured or released by the soil. A recent article in the Journal of The National Academy of Sciences found that the microbes in soil life add between 44 and 77 Billion tons of carbon to the atmosphere each year (more than all the fossil fuels combined) through their respiration. As air and soil temperature warms, respiration tends to increase. Note: By changing how we farm and garden, and use the modern methods based on soil biology (organic), carbon is stored in the soil instead of being released to the air.

The Northeast Organic Farming Association has updated their publication "Organic Soil-Fertility and Weed Management". The focus is using weeds as diagnostic tools in farming and gardening. Certain weed species tell one a lot about soil conditions, for example, pig weed and lambs-quarters indicate a cultivated (poor soil structure) but rich soil. While horsetail (*Equisetum arvense*) likes soggy soil, which implies one has poor drainage.

A study in the Journal Neurobiology has found that children are harmed (lower attention control, reduced processing and motor skills) if they live nearby where organophosphates pesticides were applied.

We have known for years that plants communicate by airborne chemical signals and over fungal networks. It has been discovered that plants can also transfer defense signals over parasitic plants like "dodder", these defense signals can happen rapidly, and they can be transferred to different species of plants.

A paper in Phytotherapy Research has found that avocados contain many nutrients that promote health by helping our lipid profiles. They help with cholesterol, triglycerides, phospholipids, and in many other functions.

Research at the University of Rhode Island has found that maple syrup contains a complex carbohydrate, which is a type of fiber called "inulin". This chemical acts as a prebiotic and works to encourage beneficial bacteria in our guts.

Researchers at Cornell University have found another mechanism as to how biochar helps plants. Microorganisms need electrons (electrical energy) for everything they do. This energy moves through the soil via the carbon in the soil. Biochar promotes electrons (energy) moving through the soil efficiently. This spurs connectivity and growth of microorganisms and our plants.

A major health problem around the world is deficiencies of iron (Fe) and zinc (Zn) in the food supply. Researchers applied iron and zinc by foliar methods to newer and older varieties and found that older varieties of wheat which then had up to 78% more nutrients than the modern varieties. Journal of Agricultural and Food Chemistry.

Studies continue to come out that show organic foods are healthier for us. One of the reasons is the health benefiting phytochemicals that are in them. Researchers found that flavonoid levels and antioxidant levels in organic onions are much higher than conventional. Journal of Agricultural and Food Chemistry.

Along the same lines, a study published in the Food Research International Journal found that red onions contain powerful antioxidants that effectively kill cancer cells. Another study by Cornell University also found that Western yellow onions could kill colon cancer cells. They found that shallots and western yellow had many times more phenolic content than white onions.

Plants use sunlight to tell time. The protein *zeitlupe* forms and breaks in reaction to sunlight at varying rates. This tells the plant when to bloom, when to store energy, when to grow, when to flower, etc. Southern Methodist University.

Researchers at the University of Gothenburg and University of Jyväskylä have identified another group of proteins called "phytochromes" that are light sensitive. They consist of thousands of atoms and function as tiny machines. They are found in the leaves of all plants and in many species of bacteria and fungi.

Over 30% of the "junk DNA" in our bodies and the resulting micro-RNA play a crucial role in regulating the 25,000 genes in our bodies come from microbes (bacteria and fungi) on our food. When we wash our food or use food grown with fungicides we lose this critical source of good microbes that works to keep us healthy.

A new study has found that capsaicin the active ingredient found in hot and spicy peppers inhibits the growth of breast cancer cells (Journal Breast Cancer: Targets and Therapy). This is another reason to load up on salsa and jalapenos.

Research at Maryland's Department of Agriculture compared organic and conventional production of peaches and apples. They found significantly higher: active and total fungal biomass, flagellate and actinobacteria populations, and plant nutrients (phosphorus and copper) in plant tissues and organic matter (phosphorous and sulfur) in soils observed in organic compared to conventional practices, irrespective of crops or varieties.

The University of Georgia found in a three-year study converting a field to organic growing methods that by the end of the study period, onion, broccoli and lettuce had yields comparable to or greater than conventional methods.

Soils that have not been tilled, are found to have higher microbial biomass and enzymatic activity. These fields also hold more moisture, preserve organic matter, and provide a better habitat for beneficial microbes.

Healthy vigorous plants can adequately defend itself against attacks by insects or disease. Dr. Philip Callahan discovered that healthy vigorous plants emit wavelengths of energy that do not attract damaging insect species. However, unhealthy plants or plants under stress emit different wavelengths that do attract certain insect pests. Bugs that we call pests were created to eat these low energy sick unhealthy plants. Note: Refractometers can be used to measure the sugar content of a plants sap measured in degrees Brix, that will indicate the strength and health of a plant.

Researchers at Penn State University have found that the adjuvant Sylgard 309 (organosilicate) negatively hurts the health of honeybee's larva by increasing their susceptibility to the pathogen "Black Queen Cell Virus". This adjuvant has been found in pollen.

We have known for decades how important the vitamin B-12 is for human and animal health. Researchers at the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory have found that only a few species of microbes can produce this vitamin but almost all of the microbes require it. Microbes that produce B-12 wield great power in the soil microbial world. It helps shape microbial communities that in turn affect energy and food production. B-12 interacts with 41 different proteins in bacteria. It also changes the instructions it sends to genes depending if it is light or dark.

Research at Friedrich Schiller University has found that eating nuts have positive effect on health as they activate the body's own defenses for detoxifying reactive oxygen species that are known to cause cancer. Macadamia, hazelnuts, walnuts, almonds, and pistachios when digested, the digestion products induced cancer cell death.

The USGS and the University of Vermont have found 51 different drugs in wastewater from sewage treatment plants. This wastewater is then dumped into our streams and then used for our public water supply. As a result, pharmaceuticals are found in eighty percent of the surface waters tested. Many of these chemicals harm the microbes in the soil and our plants. This is another reason to invest in soil improvement so one does not have to use municipal water. The study did not include arsenic, cadmium, mercury, and many other toxic chemicals disposed of in our sanitary sewers.

Fresh citrus grown in our backyards organically not only tastes better but also has higher levels of vitamin-C. Numerous studies have now shown that those people, whom had higher levels of vitamin-C live longer, have fewer heart attacks as compared to those with lower levels. Mega doses of vitamin-C have been shown to be effective against many forms of cancer.

A study in the New Phytologist Journal has found that arbuscular mycorrhizal (AM) fungi obtain fats (lipids) which are the building blocks of cell membranes from their host plant. Plant cells that have AM fungi in them ramp up their lipid production by 3,000 %. Without this fat, the fungi cannot reproduce. Hence, it is no surprise this is why AM fungi work so hard to protect a plants roots.

Members of the cycad family can recognize its close relatives and plants that are not relatives. When the neighbor was a relative the plant reduced its competitive behavior, and if it was not a neighbor then the competitive behavior increased. This mechanism may explain why some plants grow quickly, and others poorly. *Journal of Tropical Conservation Science*.

The decline of wild bee populations continues across the world. Studies continue to link this decline to the use of neonicotinoid poisons. These are often applied to seeds before planting.

Research reported at the annual meeting of the American Headache Society in 2016 found that most headaches are related to nutritional deficiencies especially in younger people. The *Diabetes Research and Clinical Practice Journal* found that zinc supplements improved the ability of prediabetic men and women to handle glucose. Another study found that combining selenium with CoQ10 can drastically reduce cardiovascular mortality.

As was discussed in the mineral series over the last few months, our food supply is deficient in many minerals (elements). If the food is sprayed with glyphosate the body cannot absorb what few minerals are present. GMO foods have many times higher levels of glyphosate and is one of many reasons glyphosate (Round-Up) has have been banned in dozens of countries.

A study by the University of Otago has found that bacteria boost their own immune system by talking (communicating) with each other, they collectively defend themselves against viral threats through a property known as "quorum sensing".

Researchers at the University of Delaware have found that a mixture of good bacteria will prevent rice from absorbing arsenic from the soil and protect the rice plant against the damaging fungal disease called "rice blast". By using these organic methods to protect the rice plant from the fungus, would produce enough rice that would have been lost to this disease, to feed 60 million people.

***BELOW IS the most extensive gardening calendar ever  
produced for the Greater Houston Area! It is brought to you  
by these fine horticulture retailers . . .***



<http://microlifefertilizer.com/>



[www.fslandscaping.net](http://www.fslandscaping.net)



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



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

**WOULD YOU LIKE YOUR BUSINESS TO JOIN THESE PROUD  
sponsors now reaching our area's most enthusiastic gardeners?**

**Contact LG&F's publisher**

**NATURE'S WAY RESOURCES**

**936-273-1200 / [natureswayresources.com](http://natureswayresources.com)**

***PLEASE PATRONIZE OUR SPONSORS!***



\* \* \*

# LAZY GARDENER & FRIENDS HOUSTON GARDEN NEWSLETTER

## CALENDAR EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

**PLEASE READ BEFORE SUBMITTING AN EVENT TO THIS CALENDAR.**

**NO EVENTS ARE PICKED UP FROM NEWSLETTERS! SUBMIT WITH REQUEST FOR CALENDAR PUBLICATION**

Events **NOT** submitted in **EXACT** written calendar format below may take 2+ weeks to be posted.  
After that point, if your event does not appear, please email us. Adult gardening/plants events only

**Submit to: [lazygardener@sbcglobal.net](mailto: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., OCT 21: IN SEARCH OF THE RARER OAKS OF TEXAS by ADAM BLACK, 7pm (tour 5pm), Peckerwood Garden, 20559 FM 359 Road, Hempstead. \$10 lecture, \$10 Tour. Must register: [eventregistration@peckerwoodgarden.org](mailto:eventregistration@peckerwoodgarden.org). [peckerwoodgarden.org](http://peckerwoodgarden.org), 979-826-3232

SAT., OCT. 21: BEACH BLOOMERS GARDEN CLUB PLANT SALE, 10am-2pm, at Noble Carl Park Pavilion, 1750 Jane Long Highway (Hwy. 87), Crystal Beach. [angelbus80@hotmail.com](mailto:angelbus80@hotmail.com); 409-363-2107

SAT. OCT 21: A PASSION FOR PLUMERIA by LORETTA OSTEEN, 1-3 pm; AgriLife Extension Bldg, Carbide Park, 4102 Main (Hwy 519), La Marque. Galveston County Master Gardener event. Free. Register: [galvcountrymgs@gmail.com](mailto:galvcountrymgs@gmail.com) , 281-534-3413, [aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston](http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston)

WED., OCT. 25: "PAC HYPODIUMS I HAVE KNOWN" by RICHARD STAMPER, 7:30 p.m., Metropolitan Multi-Services Center, 1475 West Gray. Houston Cactus & Succulent Society event. Free. [hcsstx.org](http://hcsstx.org) .

SAT., OCT. 28: REBUILD THE HEALTH OF YOUR LAWN & GARDEN AFTER HARVEY by JOHN FERGUSON, 11:30am, Woodlands Fall Home & Garden Show, The Woodlands Waterway Marriott Hotel & Convention Center, 1601 Lake Robbins Drive.

SAT., OCT. 28: PECKERWOOD OPEN GARDEN DAY & TOURS, 10am-5:30pm, FOODSCAPING GARDEN TO TABLE by BRIE ARTHUR, 6:30pm, 20559 FM 359 Road, Hempstead. Register: [peckerwoodgarden.org](http://peckerwoodgarden.org)

SUN., OCT. 29: REBUILDING THE HEALTH OF YOUR LAWN AND GARDEN AFTER HARVEY by JOHN FERGUSON, 11:30am, Woodlands Fall Home and Garden Show, The Woodlands Waterway Marriott Hotel & Convention Center, 1601 Lake Robbins Drive.

SAT., NOV 4: HEAT TOLERANT CONIFERS OF PECKERWOOD GARDEN, 10am, 20559 FM 359 Road, Hempstead. \$15. Must register: [eventregistration@peckerwoodgarden.org](mailto:eventregistration@peckerwoodgarden.org). [peckerwoodgarden.org](http://peckerwoodgarden.org), 979-826-3232

SAT., NOV. 4: OPEN GARDENS DAY. AgriLife Extension Office, 9020 Airport Rd, Conroe. 9-1 a.m. Free. 936-539-7824; [mcmga.com](http://mcmga.com)

SAT., NOV. 4: THE WOODLANDS GARDEN CLUB PLANT AND CRAFT SALE, 10am-2pm, 2017 Woodlands Wildflower Festival, Hughes Landing, The Woodlands. [thewoodlandsgardenclub.org](http://thewoodlandsgardenclub.org)

SAT., NOV. 4: 45th ANNUAL HERB FAIR, 9am-2pm, Judson Robinson Community Center, 2020 Hermann Dr. South Texas Unit/The Herb Society of America event. [herbsociety-stu.org/](http://herbsociety-stu.org/)

THURS, NOV. 9: DESIGNING YOUR LANDSCAPE WITH ROSES by GAYE HAMMOND, 7:30pm, Cherie Flores Garden Pavillion, 1500 Hermann Dr. Free. Houston Rose Society event. [houstonrose.org](http://houstonrose.org)

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

THURS., NOV. 9: CITRUS TREES by MARY KHAZEN KARISH , 10 am , MUD Building, 805 Hidden Canyon Dr, Katy. Free, Nottingham Country Garden Club event. [ncgctx.org](http://ncgctx.org)

FRI., NOV.10: "I DON'T WANT TO GIVE UP MY GARDEN! - GARDENING FOR THE CHALLENGED LIFESTYLE by DR. JOE NOVAK. 10am, White Oak Convention Center, 7603 Antoine. Free. Houston Federation of Garden Clubs event. [houstonfederationgardenclubs.org](http://houstonfederationgardenclubs.org).

TUES., NOV 14: USING YOUR WINTER GARDEN FOR HOLIDAYS BY BETTY LAHIRI, 9am, Shenandoah Municipal Complex, 29955 I-45N, Shenandoah. Free. The Woodlands Garden Club monthly meeting. [thewoodlandsgardenclub.org](http://thewoodlandsgardenclub.org)



SAT. NOV 18: SOIL HEALTH & EVALUATION by JIM GILLIAM, 1-2:30 pm; Galveston County AgriLife Extension Bldg, Carbide Park, 4102 Main (Hwy 519), La Marque. Galveston County Master Gardener event. Free, but reservations requested: [galvcountrymgs@gmail.com](mailto:galvcountrymgs@gmail.com) , 281-534-3413, for additional details visit [www.aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston](http://www.aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston)

SA T., NOV. 18: PECAN CELEBRATION, 10am-noon Houston Arboretum & Nature Center, 4501 Woodway. \$35. Register: 713-681-8433, [houstonarboretum.org](http://houstonarboretum.org)

MON., Nov 20: HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENER PREC. 2 OPEN GARDEN DAY, 8:30-11am, Genoa Friendship Garden, 1202 Genoa Red Bluff Rd, Houston 77034. Free. Master Gardeners will answer gardening questions. [hcmga.tamu.edu](http://hcmga.tamu.edu)

WED., NOV. 29: SOIL FOOD WEB - HOW AND WHY ORGANIC METHODS WORK TO SAVE TIME & MONEY by DANIEL MILLIKIN, 6pm, McGovern Centennial Gardens, Hermann Park Conservancy, 1700 Hermann Drive. 713-360-1469

FRI., DEC. 8: 'HOLLY JOLLY' LUNCHEON GALA. SPEAKER: BILL MCKINLEY. 9 am, White Oak Convention Center, 7603 Antoine. Tickets \$30. Houston Federation of Garden clubs event. [houstonfederationgardenclubs.org](http://houstonfederationgardenclubs.org).

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

FRI., JAN. 12: A CAMELIA COLLECTION - RESTORING IMA HOGG'S CAMELIA COLLECTION AT BAYOU BEND by BART BRECHTER. 10 am. White Oak Convention Center, 7603 Antoine, Free. Houston Federation of Garden Clubs event. [houstonfederationgardenclubs.org](http://houstonfederationgardenclubs.org).

SUN., JAN. 28: AVOID STARVATION: DEVELOPING THE RIGHT FEEDING PROGRAM FOR PLANTS AND FACTORS THAT MAKE FERTILIZERS INEFFECTIVE by GAYE HAMMOND, 2-3pm. Klein United Methodist Church, Christian Life Center, 5920 FM 2920, Spring. Free. Cypress Creek Daylily Club event. [cypresscreekdaylilyclub.simplesite.com](http://cypresscreekdaylilyclub.simplesite.com)

SUN., FEB. 25: DAYLILY BLOOM DESCRIPTION by JEANNIE MALLICK, 2pm-3pm. Klein United Methodist Church, Christian Life Center, Room #C112, 5920 FM 2920, Spring, TX 77388. Free. Cypress Creek Daylily Club event. [www.cypresscreekdaylilyclub.simplesite.com](http://www.cypresscreekdaylilyclub.simplesite.com)

MON., FEB. 26: SOIL FOOD WEB & COMPOST AND MULCHES, 9am-noon, Mercer Botanic Gardens, 22306 Aldine Westfield Road, Humble. Texas Gulf Coast Gardener program. Register: Jennifer L. Garrison, 713-274-4160

FRI., MAR.9: THOSE ADDORABLE HUMMERS by SUE HEATH. 10 am. White Oak Convention Center., 7603 Antoine. Free. Houston Federation of Garden Clubs event. [houstonfederationgardenclubs.org](http://houstonfederationgardenclubs.org)

SUN., MAR. 25: STEWARDSHIP OF THE SOIL by JOHN FERGUSON, 6pm, Sunday Evening Conversations on Creation Webinar, Lisa Brenskelle, [brenskelle@aol.com](mailto:brenskelle@aol.com)

SUN., MAR. 25: HIBISCUS CARE by MARTI GRAVES, 2pm-3pm. Klein United Methodist Church, Christian Life Center, Room #C112, 5920 FM 2920, Spring, TX 77388. Free. Cypress Creek Daylily Club event. [www.cypresscreekdaylilyclub.simplesite.com](http://www.cypresscreekdaylilyclub.simplesite.com)

FRI., APRIL 13: THE WORLD OF SEED by ANGELA CHANDLER. 10am., White Oak Convention Center, 7603 Antoine, Free. Houston Federation of Garden Clubs event. [houstonfederationgardenclubs.org](http://houstonfederationgardenclubs.org).

MON., MAY 14: INTRODUCTION TO THE SOIL FOOD WEB by JOHN FERGUSON, 6:30pm, University of Houston at Clear Lake, Forest Room on East of Bayou Building. Native Plant Society of Texas at Clear Lake Martha Richeson, 713-962-7747

FRI. MAY 11: HONEY BEES - JAMES AND CHARI OF BLUEBONNET BEEKEEPERS. 10am. White Oak Convention Center, 7603 Antoine. Free. Houston Federation of Garden Clubs event. [houstonfederationgardenclubs.org](http://houstonfederationgardenclubs.org).

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

**THE LAZY GARDENER & FRIENDS NEWSLETTER!**  
**& please patronize our Newsletter & Calendar sponsors below!**

**PLEASE READ BEFORE  
 SUBMITTING AN EVENT FOR 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](mailto: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

## THIS NEWSLETTER IS MADE POSSIBLE BY THE FOLLOWING SPONSORS



## 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.



**Save 50%** END OF SEASON CLEARANCE SALE AT NATURE'S WAY RESOURCES

MOST PLANTS 50% OFF (WITH A FEW EXCEPTIONS)

101 SHERBROOK CIRCLE, CONROE TX  
[www.natureswayresources.com](http://www.natureswayresources.com) or 936-321-6990

Offer Expires: WHILE SUPPLIES LAST

**Confirm that you like this.**

Click the "Like" button.