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JANUARY 23, 2018

Dear Friends,

Here is the 236th 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!

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## IS IT DEAD-DEAD? OR JUST DORMANT?

*Nature looks dead in winter because her life is gathered into her heart.  
She withers the plant down to the root that she may grow it up again fairer and stronger.  
She calls her family together within her inmost home to prepare them for being scattered abroad upon the face of the earth.*

*~Hugh Macmillan, "Rejuvenescence," The Ministry of Nature, 1871*

by **BRENDA BEUST SMITH**

From this point on, one the biggest question for gardeners will be: *"Is my plant dead-dead? Or will it come back?"*

Only time will tell. But in our Spotlight below, Galveston County Master Gardener Barbara Canetti gives some great tips on how to tell, and what you can do that might help.

My advice, don't give up! Once I thought I lost my Mexican orchid tree (Mexican bauhinia). Nearly broke my heart. I kept watching for those familiar hoof-shaped leaves. It took two years, but by golly, it came back!

If a plant doesn't return, even after a winter such as this one, that's a sign to me that I shouldn't have it in my yard. I don't believe in replanting things that can't take our weather, our insects and, most of all, my total neglect. If it can, definitely my kind of plant. I spent 50 years not-replanting things that died. And I ended up with a yard FULL of blooming plants. But it took patience. Lazy gardeners have plenty of patience!

But we're not all of 'lazy gardener' ilk. Dormant plants can be pretty unsightly. Follow Barbara's advice below on how to tell (hopefully) if there's any life left. Then, around the remaining stump, plant spring annuals. No one expects annuals to naturalize and come back anyway. This is the time when we can have those oft-dreamed-of lovely English border gardens. Most plants they use are annuals for us, and need to be planted in February anyway. They want some cold to set strong roots.

Around those hopefully-not-dead-dead stumps, plant delphiniums, dianthus, foxglove, geraniums, hollyhocks, larkspurs, marigolds, petunias, phlox, Shasta daisies, snapdragons, sweet peas or whatever your favorite nursery has in already-started pots. Seeds for these should go in as soon as this cold spell passes. They need cold to germinate properly. In this area, started plants are a safer bet, except for sweet peas which are hard to find already-started.



*Spring annuals to plant around those maybe-dead-maybe-not shrubs, I to r, dianthus, hollyhocks, Shasta daisies, larkspurs or sweet peas.*

If your plant hasn't come back from the stump by the time these fade in, say, May -- and you don't have the patience of lazy gardeners -- go ahead, dig it up and put in something new.

Personally I'd wait a full year or longer, but that's your call. And, depending on the weather, some of these might last long into the summer.

If you do decide to wait, fill in with summer annuals like cosmos, zinnias, and other summer bloomers. And check out our calendar at end for all the huge upcoming organizational plant sales. Great places to find plants best suited for your particular area!

\* \* \*

**FLOOD-/DROUGHT-SURVIVING TREES:** Tip o' the trowel to the [Garden Club of Houston](http://gchouston.org/education) for posting its booklet, *Tough Texas Trees for Houston* on its website: [gchouston.org/education](http://gchouston.org/education). A must-read for anyone planning to put in new trees this year.

**NOTE: Houston's Arbor Day is Sat., Jan. 20.** National Arbor Day is always the last Friday in April. But, as with bulbs, soil temperatures determine best planting times. By April, our soil is too warm for optimum root growth. Hope to have a list of Arbor Day activities and tree giveaways in next newsletter. Send yours to me: [lazygardener@sbcglobal.net](mailto:lazygardener@sbcglobal.net).

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**HOUSTON NATIVE FLORA & FAUNA** enthusiasts lost a treasured friend with the passing of [Houston Audubon Society's Flo Lain Hannah](http://HoustonAudubonSociety.org). Flo, a well-known native plant and endangered Gulf Coast prairie advocate, did so much to make us all more aware of the treasures we stand to lose if we're not more aware of what's going on.

\* \* \*

**MEA CULPA, WALLER COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS!** Tip o' trowel to reader Glen Harper who pointed out that I misidentified Texas Everbearing **FIG** as a peach. Pretty obvious it's a fig so it's doubly embarrassing. Not even the excuse that they look alike! (Learn more about the WCMG's many activities at <https://www.facebook.com/walkercountymastergardeners/>)



*Left, Texas Everbearing FIG (not peach!). Among the many choice plants at Galveston County*



***Master Gardeners' Feb. 17 sale will be, I to r, gloriosa climbing lily, red hot poker and stargazer lily.***

**IN OUR SPOTLIGHT ARTICLE BELOW**, Galveston County Master Gardener Barbara Canetti answers a question so many gardeners are asking these days: "Is this plant really dead? Or just dormant?" The thing is, altho Barbara's points do apply across the board, it's also true that sometimes some plants might survive in one part of the Greater Houston area, but have been killed dead-dead in others. Toss of the coin!

ALMOST EVERY [TEXAS COUNTY Master Gardener program](#) maintains a telephone Help Line so gardeners can call in on any weekday with specific questions. And Master Gardeners are always on hand at their many activities to diagnose problems, suggest plantings, recommend specific varieties for their areas, etc. Click on link above to find yours.

One such great opportunity to benefit from MGs training is the big Feb. 17 Galveston County Master Gardeners Spring Sale at the County Fairgrounds on Hwy 6 in Hitchcock. A free seminar at 8am will review plants available at the 9am-1pm sale following. Details: 281-309-5065 or [aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston/index.html](http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston/index.html)

The flowers pictured above are just a few of the huge inventory they will have available. Catalog link: [https://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston/annual\\_events/Plant\\_Sales/2018\\_Spring\\_Sale/index.htm](https://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston/annual_events/Plant_Sales/2018_Spring_Sale/index.htm)

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***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 past issues, go to [natureswayresources.com](http://natureswayresources.com)***

\* \* \*



***Left, familiar sight in Houston gardens. Center two: scratch test, look for green. Right: editor's Mexican bauhinia (orchid tree) returned after two years. "I never gave up on it!"***

## **IS IT DEAD-DEAD? OR JUST DORMANT?**

**by BARBARA CANETTI**  
[Galveston County Master Gardener](#)

Sometimes that sad, droopy, brown plant can surprise you. It may look dead, after the two super cold snaps in the Greater Houston area this season. But those plants may be more resilient than you think. Don't be too

quick to toss them away.

Plants and trees don't exhibit any obvious vital signs - heartbeats or pulses -- but there are subtle hints that could indicate a problem.

- **First, a visual inspection:** has the plant lost many leaves? Are the remaining leaves brown or yellowing? These could be signs of dying or they could be natural indications of dormancy.
- **Look further, and check the stems.** Are they good color- preferably green? Are they sturdy, rather than mushy or brittle? Is the stem firm yet pliable? Are there soft spots on the stem or branches? Do a scratch test: with a fingernail, scratch a small portion of the stem. If the innards are green, the plant is still viable. If it is white or brown, say good-bye to it.
- **If there are buds on the plant, note their condition.** If they are flaky, brittle or burned, remove them. The plant may be unsightly, but it may not be dead.
- **Next, examine the roots.** Are they still pliable and firm, or have they discolored and are fraying? Sometimes the damage to the roots is severe enough that they begin to rot. There would be a distinct, earthy smell if that happens. Leaves on the plant could be brown but the plant should be fine if it has a healthy root system.

If there is a possibility that the plant is still alive, it may just need some TLC. Cut away that portion of the stems that looked dead, trimming away a few inches at a time and moving closer and closer to the roots. Leave at least 2-inches of stem in the soil.

Remove any rot and apply fungicide if necessary. Also, check for any bug infestations or insects (aphids) and remove them.

If possible, re-pot the plant and place it in a protected area with indirect light. Water only if the soil is dry but don't let it dry out. Within a month, it will be evident if the plant will make it. New shoots and leaves will appear. Cut away any old growth that is not producing stems or leaves.

Remember, if the plant is dormant, it is resting. As the spring comes closer, it will start showing more signs of life. Old leaves will wilt and fade but the new leaves need to be strong and crisp.

And, as bad as the garden may look now -- everything brown and sorry-looking -- leave it alone for a few more weeks.

According to the Old Farmer's Almanac, the last frost date for the Houston area is Feb. 3. Wait until then before conducting any major garden cleanup.

\* \* \*

*Have more questions about freeze-damaged plants? Take them to the:*

**SAT., FEB. 17: GALVESTON COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS PLANT SALE, 9am-1pm; Educational Seminar, 8am, Fairgrounds, Hwy. 6, Hitchcock. Free. 281-309-5065.**  
**Details: 281-309-5065 or [aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston/index.html](http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston/index.html)**

## JOHN'S CORNER

### NEWS FROM THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF SOIL AND PLANTS #33

Two more studies from universities in the Middle East and published in peer reviewed medical journals, confirms the link between autism and mercury (Hg). These studies support the work done in Egypt and published in the Journal of Metabolic Brain Disease that linked autism to vaccines. Dr. Mercola has noted in his newsletter that these studies are not reported on American news media due

to the amount of advertizing by Big Pharma. As gardeners, we are exposed to mercury in two additional ways. First, mercury is found in the phosphate deposits (along with lead and cadmium in the deposits) that are mined, and used to make artificial fertilizers. Second, many mulch companies use coal ash (which is a source of mercury) to chemically burn the mulch black.

Another problem gardener's face is in using fertilizers made with chicken manure, or feathers. A 2012 study tested US and Chinese feather meal and found antibiotic residues in both as well as acetaminophen (Tylenol, for poultry fevers), diphenhydramine (Benadryl, used for poultry anxiety), and norgestimate (a sex hormone). When we use fertilizers that contain these ingredients, they become part of the soil that grows our food. Dr. Maya Shetreat-Kline, from the "Dirt Cure".

In addition to the reasons above to avoid fertilizers based on poultry manure and the problems associated with the high salt or sodium (Na), there are two other major issues have shown up. First, most of the soils in Texas and especially along the Gulf Coast are very high in phosphorus (P), which is causing problems in gardening, creating a chemical imbalance in the soil. Poultry manure is very high in phosphorus, which will only make the chemical imbalance in our soils worse. Secondly, mycorrhizal fungi are extremely important to a plants health and growth; if soils have a lot of phosphorus then the mycorrhizal fungi WILL NOT colonize plants roots and protect it from soil diseases or drought.

Several studies have found that as carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) levels rise, plants grow faster, however researchers have now found that the nutrient density of our food crops decrease. For example, over a billion people are zinc (Zn) deficient around the world and as carbon dioxide levels rise, this problem will get worse. They also found that protein levels in grain like wheat and rice dropped. Protein in pollen also dropped which is affecting our bee population. They also found that some species like poison ivy grew even faster than trees. Science News, December 23, 2017.

More studies continue to show that our relationship with a healthy soil is very beneficial. We know that getting our hands in the dirt can improve our mood. Cancer patients whom are exposed to healthy soil report improved quality of life and happier mood. Animal studies have found that the soil bacteria *Mycobacterium vaccae*, boosted serotonin levels as effective as any antidepressant drugs (and without bad side effects like suicide). In studies, using animals the animals learned more quickly and were more alert and better focused. Another reason to be an organic gardener!

"We are only as healthy as the soil our food is grown in!" and "You are what your food eats". Dr. Maya Shetreat-Kline, from the "Dirt Cure". When we eat conventional food, grown on mineral depleted soil full of toxic chemicals it is not good for us. Yet many people ask, "Why does this happen to me? Or why did God let this happen?" when they get sick from eating toxic nutrient depleted food. The reasons to grow one's own vegetables and fruits organically continue to increase.

A study from the University of California published in the journal Trends in Parasitology, show that mosquitoes have evolved a type of genetic shield to protect them against pesticides. Over 60 countries have reported mosquitoes developing resistance to pesticides. This is allowing the new super malaria strains to spread faster. As we have seen with weeds, diseases, and other insects, the more toxic chemicals we use our problems only get worse. More reasons to use organic methods. Studies have shown that broad leaf weeds thrive on available nitrates and potassium (K). Hence, the water-soluble artificial NPK chemical fertilizers encourage weed growth. The phosphorous (P) will also bind to calcium, which reduces the *available* calcium in the soil. This promotes conditions that encourages nature to germinate weeds like quack grass, crabgrass, dandelions, etc. that are calcium scavengers and bring calcium back to the surface.

There was a good article in Natural News titled; "Top 10 ways to get deathly sick that no medical doctor will be able to solve". Go to [www.naturalnews.com](http://www.naturalnews.com) for full article. These are:

- 1) Eat GMOs daily
- 2) Drink tap water daily

- 3) Take prescription medications daily
- 4) Get the flu shot every year
- 5) Consume artificial sweeteners
- 6) Use personal care products that contain parabens, phthalates, aluminum, and sodium laurel sulfate
- 7) Eat foods that are artificially colored and artificially flavored
- 8) Get every vaccine the CDC recommends
- 9) Drink Coke, Diet Coke, Pepsi, or Diet Pepsi daily
- 10) Eat canola oil regularly

\* \* \*

## 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)

**DO NOT CREATE LINKS IN YOUR SUBMISSION!!! WE WILL DO THAT.**

**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!***

TUE. JAN 23: GARDEN TOOL TALK, by HENRY HARRISON, III, AND TIM JAHNKE, 6:30-8:30pm; AgriLife Extension Bldg, Carbide Park, 4102 Main (Hwy 519), La Marque. Galveston County Master Gardener event. Free. Register: [galvcountymgs@gmail.com](mailto:galvcountymgs@gmail.com), 281-309-5065, [aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston/index.html](http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston/index.html)

TUES., JAN. 23: "THE DIRT CURE by MAYA KLEIN, M.D., 5:30-8pm, United Way-Greater Houston, 50 Waugh Dr. \$20. Organic Horticulture Benefits Alliance (OHBA) event. Register: [eventbrite.com/e/dr-maya-klein-md-tickets-39961950269](https://eventbrite.com/e/dr-maya-klein-md-tickets-39961950269); [ohbaonline.org](http://ohbaonline.org)

WED., JAN 24: YVES SAINT LAURENT GARDEN, MOROCCO by DICK & PHYLLIS MCEUEN, 7:30pm, Metropolitan Multi-Services Center, 1475 West Gray. Free. Houston Cactus & Succulent Society event: [hcsstx.org](http://hcsstx.org)

SAT., JAN. 27: HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENER FRUIT TREE SALE, 9am-1pm, Houston Farm & Ranch parking lot, 3033 Bear Creek Dr., Bear Creek Park.

SAT., JAN 27: PECKERWOOD GARDEN OPEN DAY, 10am-2pm tours, 20559 FM 359 Road, Hempstead. \$10. [peckerwoodgarden.org](http://peckerwoodgarden.org), 979-826-3232; [eventregistration@peckerwoodgarden.org](mailto:eventregistration@peckerwoodgarden.org)

SAT. JAN. 27: MONTGOMERY COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS FRUIT AND NUT TREE SALE, 8 am presentation, sale 9-noon, AgriLife Extension Office, 9020 Airport Rd, Conroe. 936-539-7824; [mcmga.com](http://mcmga.com)



SAT., JAN. 27: PRUNING 101, 10:15am, Cornelius Nursery, 2233 South Voss Road, 713-292-0898. [corneliusnurseries.com](http://corneliusnurseries.com)

SUN., JAN. 28: AVOID ST ARVATION: 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)

WED., JAN. 31: BROOKWOOD GIFT & GARDEN CENTER TOUR, 8am-4:30pm, Senior Adult Botanic Bus Trip, Mercer Botanic Gardens, 22306 Aldine-Westfield, Humble. \$1. Register: 713-274-4160

WED., JAN. 31: BOTANICAL SIDE OF BEVERAGES - KATZ COFFEE & KARBACH BREWING CO., 9:45am - 4:30pm, Senior Adult Botanic Bus Trip, Mercer Botanic Gardens, 22306 Aldine-Westfield, Humble. \$4. Register: 713-274-416

THURS., FEB. 1: HISTORY OF BAYOU BEND AND IMA HOGG by DINAH WEEMS, 10am, MUD Building, 805 Hidden Canyon Dr, Katy. Free. Nottingham Country Garden Club event. [ncgctx.org](http://ncgctx.org)

SAT. FEB 3: SIMPLY SUCCULENTS by PAULA SPLETTER, 9-11am; GROWING BACKYARD CITRUS with ROBERT MARSHALL, 1-3pm, Galveston County AgriLife Extension Bldg, Carbide Park, 4102 Main (Hwy 519), La Marque. Master Gardener event. Free. Register: [galvcountymgs@gmail.com](mailto:galvcountymgs@gmail.com). 281-309-5065, [aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston/index.html](http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston/index.html)

SAT., FEB. 3: BACKYARD & SMALL SCALE COMPOSTING by JOHN FERGUSON, 2:45-4pm, Texas Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association Conference - TOFGA 2018 Sheraton Hotel, Georgetown / 1101 Woodlawn Avenue, Georgetown, Evan Driscoll, 512-947-7836

SAT., FEB. 3: BERRY DELICIOUS! ENJOY FRUITS OF YOUR GARDEN, 10:15am, Cornelius Nursery Cornelius Nursery, 2233 South Voss Road, 713-292-0898. [corneliusnurseries.com](http://corneliusnurseries.com)

SAT., FEB. 3: SOIL PREPARATION by CINDY CHAMPION, 11am-noon, Wabash Feed and Garden, 4537 N. Shepherd. Free. Register: [wabashfeed.com/calendar/](http://wabashfeed.com/calendar/), 713-863-8322.

SAT., FEB. 4: NATURE EXPLORE EDUCATOR WORKSHOP, 9am-noon, a Mercer Botanic Gardens event at Big Stone Lodge , 709 Riley Fuzzel Rd, Spring. \$40. Register: [natureexplore.org/workshops/educator-workshops](http://natureexplore.org/workshops/educator-workshops)

THURS., FEB .8: BETTER PRUNING FOR BETTER BLOOMING by HRS CONSULTING ROSARIANS 7pm, Cherie Flores Garden Pavillon, 1500 Hermann Dr. Houston Rose Society event. Free. [houstonrose.org](http://houstonrose.org)

SAT. FEB 10: PLANTING FRUIT TREES, by HERMAN AUER, 9-10:30am; Galveston County AgriLife Extension Bldg, Carbide Park, 4102 Main (Hwy 519), La Marque. Master Gardener event. Free. Register: [galvcountymgs@gmail.com](mailto:galvcountymgs@gmail.com). 281-309-5065, [aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston/index.html](http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston/index.html)

SAT., FEB. 10: BUILD YOUR OWN TERRARIUMS, 10:15am, Cornelius Nursery, Cornelius Nursery, 2233 South Voss Road, 713-292-0898. [corneliusnurseries.com](http://corneliusnurseries.com)

SAT., FEB. 10: MEET & GREET SAN JACINTO COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS, 10am-1PM, Coldspring Community Center, E, 101 W Cedar Ave, Coldspring. <https://txmq.org/sjmq>

WED., FEB. 14: HISTORIC TEXAS TREES, noon-2pm, Mercer Botanic Gardens West Side Arboretum Pavilion, 22306 Aldine-Westfield, Humble. Free. Register: 713-274-4160.

SAT., FEB. 17: HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENER TOMATO, PEPPER & HERB SALE, location TBA. [hcmga.tamu.edu/public/pubSales.aspx](http://hcmga.tamu.edu/public/pubSales.aspx)

SAT., FEB. 17: GALVESTON COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS PLANT SALE, 9am-1pm; Educational Seminar, 8am, County Fairgrounds, Hwy. 6, Hitchcock. Free. 281-309-5065. [Flyer](#).

SAT., FEB. 17: ORGANICS IN SOIL FOR TURF BUILDING by GREG COOPER, 11am-noon, , Wabash Feed and Garden, 4537 N. Shepherd. Free. Register: [wabashfeed.com/calendar/](http://wabashfeed.com/calendar/), 713-863-8322

SAT., FEB. 24: NATURE EXPLORER EDUCATOR WORKSHOPS (2), 9am-noon and 1-4pm; Mercer Botanic Garden event at Big Stone Lodge 709 Riley Fuzzel Rd, Spring. \$40 each. Register: [natureexplore.org/workshops/educator-workshops](http://natureexplore.org/workshops/educator-workshops)

SAT., FEB. 24: HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENER PRECINCT 2 FRUIT TREE & TOMATO SALE, Pasadena Fairgrounds. [hcmga.tamu.edu/public/pubSales.aspx](http://hcmga.tamu.edu/public/pubSales.aspx)

SAT. FEB 24: HOW TO GROW NATIVE MILKWEED, by BARBARA KELLER-WILLY, 1-3 pm; Galveston County AgriLife Extension Bldg, Carbide Park, 4102 Main (Hwy 519), La Marque. Master Gardener event. Free. Register: [galvcountymgs@gmail.com](mailto:galvcountymgs@gmail.com). 281-309-5065, [aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston/index.html](http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston/index.html)

SAT.-SUN., FEB. 24-25: COUSHATTA CAMELLIA SOCIETY ANNUAL SHOW & PLANT SALE, 1-4pm, First Christian Church, 3500 W. Loop 336N, Conroe. [coushattacamelliassociety.com](http://coushattacamelliassociety.com); 713-865-6482.



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 by JOHN FERGUSON, 9am-noon, John Ferguson, 9 a.m. to noon, Mercer Botanic Gardens, 22306 Aldine Westfield Road, Humble. Texas Gulf Coast Gardener program Contact Jennifer L. Garrison, Ph: 713-274-4160

WED., FEB. 28: SOIL, YOUR ULTIMATE WATER RESERVOIR-TAPPING THE POTENTIAL by JOHN FERGUSON, 7pm, HARC offices, 8801 Gosling Rd. Woodlands Green, A Walk In The Woods Lecture Series. Paul Nelson

THURS., MAR. 8: HOW TO GROW (OR KILL) ORCHIDS IN THREE EASY STEPS by ELIZABETH FISHER, 10 am, MUD Building, 805 Hidden Canyon Dr, Katy. Free, Nottingham Country Garden Club event. [ncgctx.org](http://ncgctx.org)

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)

SAT., MAR. 10: VEGETABLE & HERB PLANT SALE, 9am-noon, Fort Bend County AgriLife Extension Office, 1402 Band Rd, Rosenberg. Fort Bend Master Gardener event. [fbmg.org](http://fbmg.org); 281-341-7068; [FortBendmg@ag.tamu.edu](mailto:FortBendmg@ag.tamu.edu)

TUES. MAR. 13: INTRODUCTION TO THE SOIL FOOD WEB, by JOHN FERGUSON, 10:30 am, Meadowbrook Garden Club, Bonnie Calkins, 281-650-0726

WED., MAR. 21: SNAKE IDENTIFICATION, noon-2pm, Mercer Botanic Gardens West Side Arboretum Pavilion, 22306 Aldine-Westfield, Humble. Free. Register: 713-274-4160

SAT., MAR. 24: HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENER PEPPER, PERENNIAL & VEGETABLE SALE. Pasadena Fairgrounds. [hcmga.tamu.edu/public/pubSales.aspx](http://hcmga.tamu.edu/public/pubSales.aspx)

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)

WED., MAR. 28: NATURE'S WAY RESOURCES HORTICULTURAL TOUR, 10:15am-4:30pm, Senior Adult Botanic Bus Trip, Mercer Botanic Gardens, 22306 Aldine-Westfield. \$1. Register: 713-274-4160

SAT.-SUN., MAR. 3-4: SPRING BRANCH AFRICAN VIOLET CLUB 39th ANNUAL SHOW & SPRING SALE, Sat.:1-5pm show, 9am-5pm sale; Sun. show & sale 10am-3pm., Judson Robinson Jr. Community Center, 2020 Hermann Dr. Free. 281-748-8417, [kjwross@yahoo.com](mailto:kjwross@yahoo.com)

FRI., APR. 6: SOILS by JOHN FERGUSON, Liberty Garden Club, Ellen Gossett, (409) 350-1109

SAT., APRIL 7.: WHITE OAK GARDEN SPRING PLANT SALE, 10am-2pm (or sell-out); SALE PREVIEW by HEIDI SHEESLEY, 9am, White Oak Conference Center, 7603 Antoine Dr. Free. [nnmd.org](http://nnmd.org)

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)

SAT., APR. 21: HOUSTON ROSE SOCIETY ANNUAL SPRING SHOW, Noon-4pm, Memorial City Mall, 303 Memorial City Way. Houston Rose Society event. Free. [houstonrose.org](http://houstonrose.org)

WED., APR. 25: PECKERWOOD GARDENS TOUR, 8:15am - 4:30pm, Senior Adult Botanic Bus Trip, Mercer Botanic Gardens, 22306 Aldine-Westfield. \$1. Register: 713-274-4160

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 . . .**

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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)

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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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