

Like 0

Share

Share:

Tweet

-
-
-
-



April 28, 2018

Dear Friends,

Here is the 248th 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.

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!](#)



*L to r: children on Katy Prairie (by Carolyn Fannon); black swallowtail on native wildflowers (Chuck Duplant); golden-cheeked warbler (TPWD) and monarch butterfly - (TPWD) -
From <https://tpwd.texas.gov/about/recovering-americas-wildlife-act>*

HELP FOR GARDENERS HELPING WILDLIFE . . . 'CRAPE MURDER' REBUTTALS . . . HANG THOSE ORCHIDS!

*"No matter how few possessions you own or how little money you have,
loving wildlife and nature will make you rich beyond measure."*

-- Paul Oxtan, founder of the Wild Heart Wildlife Foundation

BY BRENDA BEUST SMITH

With so many gardeners adding habitat gardens these days to attract more pollinators and other beneficial (and delightful) jewels of nature, I wanted to pass along a Texas Parks & Wildlife overview of the Recovering America's Wildlife Act to make funding for such projects even more possible . . . provided this legislation is passed: tpwd.texas.gov/about/recovering-americas-wildlife-act.

Of particular interest to us gardeners would be:

- Urban habitat restoration/conservation projects benefiting pollinators, birds, and other [Texas Species of Greatest Conservation Need](#), such as urban gardens, pocket prairies, and habitats year round. TP&W's special task force notes migrant birds and pollinators use such spaces in our area, in particular, as critical "fuel-up" spots for rest, and much needed energy rest stops.
- Habitat protection/acquisition to benefit wildlife.
- Recreation and ecological education on importance of native plants to wildlife.

Of special local note - the new coordinator for this organization is Rachel Rommel, well known to many of us for her work at the Houston Zoo. Contact at r.rommel@txwildlifealliance.org.

WANT TO SHOW YOUR GARDENING COMMITMENT to helping protect and preserve native wildlife? In addition to joining the Texas Wildlife Alliance, consider applying for home habitat garden certification through:

- National Wildlife Federation - nwf.org/Garden-for-Wildlife/Certify
- North America Butterfly Assn - nababutterfly.com/butterfly-garden-certification-program/

To assist schools, organizations and public gardens in their habitat efforts, the Native Plant Society of Texas' "Bring Back the Monarch" Committee has awarded 28 garden grants in 2018. Details: npsot.org/wp/monarchs/?p=159

* * *



Smaller-growing tree crapes include, l to r, 'Acoma,' 'Zuni,' 'Velma's Royal Delight,' and 'Pink Velour.'

HEY, THEY'RE "MY" CRAPES! Our recent published pleas from noted horticulturists to stop committing "crape murder" reaped some politely terse reactions from homeowners who feel they should be able to do whatever they want with their own plants.

One confusion I've noticed is that our experts are talking about pruning naturally tall "tree" crape myrtles varieties into shrubs or very low-growing trees. There are exist shrub crape varieties hybridized for low multi-trunked lush shrubs as well as crapes hybridized into small trees that need no pruning. They're entirely different type plants.

But here are some of the letters and responses:

*** ROBERTA:** *"I am almost to the point of planting another crape myrtle for the sole purpose of pollarding it! The hysteria surrounding what some gardeners (private or business) choose to do in their garden with their trees is mind boggling."*

(Note: Pollarding is a method of pruning designed to keep trees and shrubs smaller than they would naturally grow.)

*** RON SMITH** *wants proof "crape murder" pruning weakens or promotes disease. He prefers his crapes take their natural shapes and finds his are no more or less healthy than those of neighbors who do "crape murder" pruning year after year.*

I asked our quoted experts to respond and here's what they replied:

- o **STEVE BENDER**, Southern Living's Grumpy Gardener (and one of my favorite columnists): I have never contended that crepe murder weakens the tree or makes it more prone to disease. My point is that big crepe myrtles are sculptural, multi-trunked trees that develop beautiful bark -- unless they are chopped back to ugly stumps every spring...why do landscape companies do it? Simple. They need the work. Homeowners see it and copy the crime. There would be a lot less crepe murder if people stopped planting tall-growing varieties like 'Natchez,' 'Biloxi,' and 'Basham's Party Pink' right up against the house and instead chose smaller ones that don't need pruning like 'Acoma,' 'Zuni,' 'Velma's Royal Delight,' and 'Pink Velour' (*pictured above*). Save tall ones for street or middle of yard.
- o **LEON MACHA** Certi-Pro Horticulture, Horticulturist - Arborist: *My problem with all the ill-advised pruning is that folks think it is needed to improve bloom performance. University level research long ago proved that wrong. It is wasted labor that results in a plant deformed from its natural architectural beauty. Thank goodness crapes are just enough of a 'blooming weed' to take the abuse and seldom look back. The pruning process is a copy-cat activity based completely on ignorance of fact.*

*** JIM VERBOON** objected to Linda Gay's using the terms "great suffering, destruction and distress" as if a crape myrtle has a nervous system and actually feels some pain.

- o **LINDA GAY**, former longtime director of Mercer Botanic Gardens: *As a horticulturist, I can inspect or observe a tree to determine if it is healthy (happy) or unhealthy (sad). Pruning creates wounds and if wounds never heal bacteria moves in and starts to eat away at the healthy tissue . . . when you prune shrubs at the same height (level) for years, the plants get woody on. It is best to choose plants that grow to the height you ultimately want to maintain in the area.*

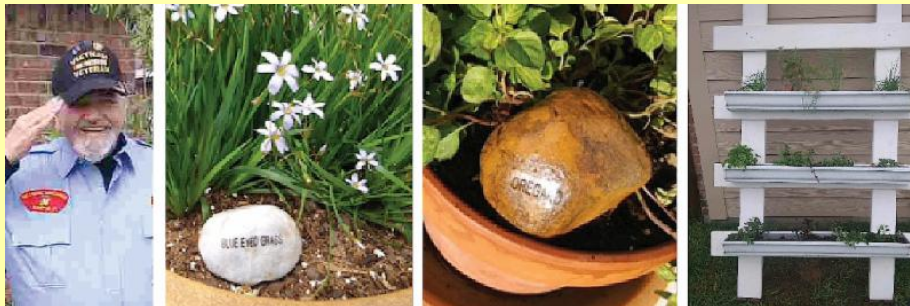
THESE READERS' full comments, along with our experts' full replies, will be posted on this newsletter's publisher, NATURE'S WAY RESOURCES' Facebook page: [facebook.com/NaturesWayResources](https://www.facebook.com/NaturesWayResources)

* * *



Photos from [facebook.com/PlantItForwardFarms/](https://www.facebook.com/PlantItForwardFarms/)

- **TIP O' TROWEL TO PLANT IT FORWARD.** An exciting in-depth *Orian Magazine* article details this very productive farm share program. Newly-arrived refugee farmers and their families are provided the education and opportunities to earn a living wage by farming sustainably on local urban farms in Houston. Organically-grown produce is available for sale to the public. <http://plant-it-forward.org> and <https://orionmagazine.org/article/waste-land-promised-land/>
- **TIP O' TROWEL TO BEN & WENDY HARRIS** for solving one of my garden dilemmas. I've moved many plants from our old house to my new house's "Lazy Gardener Laboratory" (lest anyone think I'll ever create a real "landscape" - not my goal!). Naturally they all died back and now I have no idea what I planted where. They're all just bare sticks in the ground at this point. But I have faith! These were all thriving survivors of my motto: If it dies due to my neglect, God doesn't want it in my garden.
 - o At a recent Aldine Retired Teachers luncheon, Wendy showed these pictures below. Labeled rocks are so much cuter and permanent than boring labels that tend to disappear anyway. Also loved her vertical herb planter Ben created from two vertical posts supporting painted horizontal house gutters, with holes drilled in bottoms for drainage.



Ben Harris' rocks cleverly identify, left & center, their blue-eyed grass and oregano. Right, painted gutters and 1x4 boards make a great vertical, easy-to-harvest herb garden.

- **TIP O' TROWEL TO MUNICIPAL HORTICULTURISTS WHO PLANTED THE SUPERB SMALL MAGNOLIAS** now blooming on so many Greater Houston Area streets. 'Little Gem' southern magnolia, for example (left below), grows only 15-20' tall with an 8-10' canopy spread. Like its gigantic cousin that grows 60-80' high and 30-40' wide, these smaller trees are incredibly hardy

in our area. Newer introductions of these more compact southern magnolias are available; all take full sun or part shade. But it's best to buy these from a nurseryman you trust. You don't want any surprises! And let you municipal powers-that-be know if you like them!



TWO OF MY OTHER FAVORITE SPRING-BLOOMING NATIVE TREES: I love catalpas (center above) that are still in bloom in Houston's north and east reaches. I totally missed looking upward at my beloved chinaberries (right above) earlier in spring. Both are tall trees so if you're not someone who looks up all the time (as I do), you probably don't see them. So sorry, guys! I'll do better next year.

* * *

Our recent Spotlight on orchids pointed out how much many these exotic flower love our summer heat and humidity. Today's Spotlight article delves a little deeper in exactly how to successfully grow orchids outside, thanks to Katherine Brown, Joyce McMillan and Albert Ong of the Galveston Bay Orchid Society. Their big free Show and Sale will be Sat.-Sun., May 12-13, 9am-4pm at South Shore Harbour Resort Hotel, Marina Plaza, 2500 South Shore Blvd. in League City. Details: galvestonbayorchidsociety.org

* * *

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 read past issues, go to natureswayresources.com

* * *



L to R: On Lattice, On Screen Frame, On Post, On Chain and Placed under Tree

ORCHIDS - MOVE 'EM OUTSIDE!

By Katherine Brown, Joyce McMillan and Albert Ong
Galveston Bay Orchid Society
galvestonbayorchidsociety.org

Many orchids can be grown outside as long as night temperatures are above 55. That includes oncidium, cattleya, dendrobium, vanda, and phalaenopsis. Outside they receive good air movement, bright light and that magic elixir, rainwater.

Move plants to brighter light over a period of several days to give them time to adjust to the change in light intensity. Be sure to check your plants throughout the season. As the sun shifts and becomes more intense plants may need to be moved slightly to avoid leaf burn.

Your yard has microclimates that would accommodate your orchid's needs:

- A covered patio works well for phalaenopsis.
- If early morning or late afternoon sun reaches the edges of the patio for a couple of hours that's a great location for cattleyas, oncidium and dendrobiums.
- Perhaps you have shade trees where phalaenopsis could grow under the denser shade near the trunk and cattleyas can hang where they receive dappled sunlight.
- Vandas and dendrobiums can be hung under a roof overhang where they receive early morning/late afternoon sun but are shaded from the intense midday rays by the overhang.

If you are a bit handy, try making a simple structure with a shade cloth cover and hang vandas and dendrobiums near the top with cattleyas and oncidium set below them and phalaenopsis at the lowest level and shaded by the other plants.

With the increased air flow and higher temperatures outdoors check your plants often and water when it doesn't rain. Vandas in baskets and all mounted plants need daily watering, 2-3 times daily when our temperatures hit 90 degrees. Fertilize plants weekly with a balanced fertilizer mixed at half strength.

Your orchids will thrive with this vacation outdoors and reward you with healthy growth and their lovely blooms.

* * *

*Need more orchid growing advice and great plants?
Experts such as Katherine, Joyce and Albert will be on hand at the big free,
SAT.-SUN., MAY 12-13*

**GALVESTON BAY ORCHID SOCIETY SHOW & SALE,
9am-4pm at the South Shore Harbour Resort Hotel, Marina Plaza,
2500 South Shore Blvd., League City. Free.
galvestonbayorchidsociety.org**

JOHN'S CORNER

NEWS FROM THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF SOIL AND PLANTS #42

Over 23,000 Americans are killed each year by antibiotic resistant bacteria created by feeding antibiotics to chickens and beef at factory farms. Yet people still purchase junk food at the fast food restaurants like McDonalds' that buy from these factory farms. If people would not buy it, they would not use and sell it.

We all know that junk food is bad for us. What about junk food for plants? Last week when David Montgomery was speaking at the OHBA event in Houston he gave me this link on junk food for plants:

<http://nautil.us/issue/34/adaptation/junk-food-is-bad-for-plants-too>

One of the reasons we garden is for health benefits. Misinformation continues to spread. Mega companies that own pharmaceutical companies are buying up websites like WebMD and Google based information sites so they can provide you with fake medical news that promote their products.

Many of us are familiar with the term "sick building syndrome". A gardening method called Vertical Gardens is becoming a very cost effective method of removing toxic chemicals from the air inside of buildings. These green walls (gardens) are also very good at creating indoor green space that reduces stress on workers whom get to see them.

There was a very interesting article in the Dr. Mercola newsletter a couple weeks ago titled "Can You Taste Pesticides in Your Food". In addition to the herbicide Round-Up in our bodies the CDC reports that the amount of organophosphate pesticides in our urine has increased to 75% of the American population and we wonder why we are so sick and have so many health problems. Fruits and vegetables are among the healthiest foods we can eat but they are often contaminated with pesticides, herbicides, and other toxic chemicals. Researchers at the University of Caen Normandy had wine tasters do a taste test for pesticides. In 85% of the cases the professional taste testers were able to recognize all the glasses of wines that had pesticides in them. Fifty seven percent (57%) of the taste testers could even identify the exact blend of pesticides.

A 40 year study published in the Agronomy Journal (March 2017) found that organic farming improved all aspects of the physical properties of the soil. They found that organic practices *increased cumulative water infiltration by 10 times* as compared to toxic chemical methods. Water stable soil aggregates increased by over 50%, bulk density of the soil was less, and the soil had more pore space.

Modern methods in gardening and agriculture use nature (biology) to correct problems we encounter in growing plants. This may be beneficial insects to microbes to treat and correct problems. One of the great educators of our region is Dr. Bob Randall whom sent me this link the other day. This is an interesting article on the growing use of predator birds in orchards to control unwanted guests:

http://www.ehn.org/back-to-basics-tackling-farm-pests-with-predator-birds-2546940909.html?utm_source=EHN&utm_campaign=4d254659c9-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2018_03_25&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_8573f35474-4d254659c9-99399949

An article in the march Acres USA magazine, is on the University of California Extension Service developing robotic weeders to eliminate the need and expense of hand weeders. The weeders use tiny blades that pop out and dig up the weeds without damaging the crops. These robotic weeders use pattern recognition software to tell the difference between a weed and the crop.

A report by the EWG (Environmental Working Group) has found that the drinking water for more that 170 million Americans (all 50 states) contains radioactive elements. Radium was the most common element found in the tap water. The levels were low, however we are exposed to other sources of radioactive elements and the combination add up to a much higher risk. Many of the dyed or ashen mulches use coal ash (which contains several radioactive elements) as the agent to make the mulch black, most artificial fertilizers use mined phosphorous that contains radioactive elements, etc. All these exposure levels add up to place one at an increased risk of cancer.

* * *

LAZY GARDENER & FRIENDS HOUSTON GARDEN NEWSLETTER CALENDAR EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

DON'T SEE YOUR ORGANIZATION EVENT LISTED? DID YOU SEND IT IN?

NO EVENTS ARE PICKED UP FROM OTHER NEWSLETTERS, MASS RELEASES, OTHER PUBLICATIONS, ETC.

**Events NOT submitted in EXACT written calendar format below may take 2+ weeks to be posted.
Adult gardening/plants events only -- If you don't see your submitted event, email us**

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., APRIL 28: OLEANDER FESTIVAL & GRAND OLEANDER SALE, 10am-4pm, Moody Mansion grounds, 2618 Broadway, Galveston. Free. Lydia Miller 409-770-4312 lmiller4511@att.net.

SAT., APR 28: PECKERWOOD GARDEN OPEN DAY, 10am-2pm tours, 20559 FM 359 Road, Hempstead. \$10. peckerwoodgarden.org, 979-826-3232; eventregistration@peckerwoodgarden.org

SAT. APR 28: GROWING CUCUMBERS, SUMMER SQUASH, CANTALOUPE & OTHER CUCURBITS by HERMAN AUER, 9-10:30 am; Galveston County Bayside Community Center, 4833 10th St., Bayside Park, Bacliff. Master Gardener event. Free. Register: galvcountymgs@gmail.com, 281-309-5065. aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston/index.html

SAT., APR. 28: GARDEN CONSERVANCY OPEN DAYS PROGRAM TOUR & PLANT SALE - HOUSTON, 10am-4pm, \$7 per garden; children 12 & under free; Begin at Itchy Acres, 405 Martin Street, Houston. <https://www.gardenconservancy.org/open-days/open-days-schedule/houston-tx-open-day-2>. 888-842-2442.

SAT.-SUN., APR. 28-29: THROUGH THE GARDEN GATE SPRING GARDEN TOUR by HERITAGE GARDENERS, 1-5pm, Mary Workman Center, 112 W. Spreading Oaks, Friendswood. \$15. heritagegardener.org.

THURS., MAY 3: DAYLILIES by EDDIE RAYE ANDREWS, 9-10 am; Waller County Extension Office, 846 6th St., Hempstead. Waller County Master Gardener event. Free. RSVP wallerimgardener2013@gmail.com, 979-826-7651

Sat., May 5: LONE STAR DAYLILY SOCIETY FLOWER SHOW 1pm-4pm and DAYLILY AND COMPANION PLANT SALE 10am-4pm, Epiphany Lutheran Church, 5515 Broadway St., Pearland, Free, www.lonestardaylilysociety.org, 713-882-9958

SAT. MAY 5: MONTGOMERY COUNTY MASTER GARDENER OPEN GARDENS DAY, 9-11am, AgriLife Extension Office, 9020 Airport Rd, Conroe. Free. 936-539-7824; mcmga.com

SAT. MAY 5: WHAT IS AN ORCHID by JOYCE MC MILLAN & CLYDE HOLT, 9-11 am; BENEFICIALS IN THE GARDEN with DR. WILLIAM M. JOHNSON, 1-3 pm, Galveston County AgriLife Extension Bldg, Carbide Park, 4102 Main (Hwy 519), La Marque. Galveston County Master Gardener events. Free. Register: galvcountymgs@gmail.com, 281-309-5065. aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston

TUES., MAY 8: PLUMERIAS!, 7:30pm, Cherie Flores Garden Pavillion, Hermann Park Conservancy, 1500 Hermann Dr. Plumeria Society of America. Free. theplumeriasociety.org

THURS., MAY 10: BATS IN OUR AREA & HOW THEY ARE BENEFICIAL by SUZZANNE JUREK, 10-11:30am, Genoa Friendship Gardens Educational Center Building, 1202 Genoa Red Bluff Rd. Harris County Master Gardener event. Free. 713-274-0950; hcmga.tamu.edu

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. houstonfederationgardencclubs.org

SAT., MAY 12: DAYLILY SHOW & SALE, 10am-3pm sale; 1-3pm show, Gethsemene Lutheran Church, 4040 Watonga. Free. Houston Hemerocallis Society & Houston Area Daylily Society event. ofts.com/hhs/

SAT., MAY 12: SQUARE FOOT GARDENING, 9:30am-11:30am, Houston Museum of Natural Science. \$30. Urban Harvest event. Register: 713-880-5540; urbanharvest.org/classes-calendar

SAT.-SUN., MAY 12-13, GALVESTON BAY ORCHID SOCIETY SHOW & SALE, 9am-4pm, South Shore Harbour Resort Hotel, Marina Plaza, 2500 South Shore Blvd., League City. Free. galvestonbayorchidsociety.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

TUES., MAY 15: INSECTS IN THE GARDEN, 6:30-8:30pm, Spring Branch Memorial Library, 930 Corbindale. Harris County Master Gardener event. Free. 713-274-0950; hcmga.tamu.edu

THURS., MAY 17: HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS GREEN THUMB SERIES: INSECTS IN THE GARDEN - 6:30-8:30pm, Freeman Branch Library, 16616 Diana Lane. Harris County Master Gardener event. Free. 713-274-0950; hcmga.tamu.edu

SAT., MAY 19: STARTING A COMMUNITY OR SCHOOL GARDEN WORKSHOP, 8:30am-2:30pm, University of St. Thomas. \$20. Urban Harvest event. Register: 713-880-5540; urbanharvest.org/classes-calendar

SAT. MAY 19: HOME ORCHARD TOURS, 9 am-noon; sites: aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston/index.html . Galveston County Master Gardener event. Free.

SAT. MAY 19: TURNING DIRT INTO SOIL by JIM GILLIAM, 1-3pm. AgriLife Extension Bldg, Carbide Park, 4102 Main (Hwy 519), La Marque. Galveston County Master Gardener event. Free. Register: galvcountrymgs@gmail.com , 281-309-5065. aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston/index.html

SAT., MAY 19: INSECTS IN THE GARDEN, 10:30am-12:30pm, Maud Smith Marks Library, 1815 Westgreen Blvd. Harris County Master Gardener event. Free. 713-274-0950; hcmga.tamu.edu

MON., MAY 21: HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS OPEN GARDEN DAY & SALE, 9-11am, Genoa Friendship Gardens Educational Center Building, 1202 Genoa Red Bluff Road. Free. 713-274-0950; hcmga.tamu.edu

SAT., JUNE 9: PLUMERIA SOCIETY OF AMERICA SHOW & SALE, 9:30am-3pm, Bay Area Community Center, 5002 Nasa Road One, Seabrook. Free. theplumeriasociety.org

SAT., JUNE 9: LOW VOLUME IRRIGATION (HMNS), 9:30-11:30am, Houston Museum of Natural Science. \$30. Urban Harvest event. Register: 713-880-5540; urbanharvest.org/classes-calendar

TUES., JULY 10: PLUMERIAS!, 7:30pm, Cherie Flores Garden Pavillion, Hermann Park Conservancy, 1500 Hermann Dr. Plumeria Society of America event. Free.

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

**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



COMPOST TOP DRESSING
LAWN, TREE, & BED FERTILIZATION

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



Organic Fertilizers
Core Aeration
Compost Top Dressing
YearRoundHouston.com

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





www.bartlett.com



Save 25% Coupon

ASIAN PEARS 25% OFF WHILE SUPPLIES LAST

101 SHERBROOK CIRCLE, CONROE TX
www.natureswayresources.com or 936-321-6990

Offer Expires: **WHILE SUPPLIES LAST**

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.



Confirm that you like this.

Click the "Like" button.