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## Gardening Newsletter

*February 1, 2019*

*Dear Friends,*

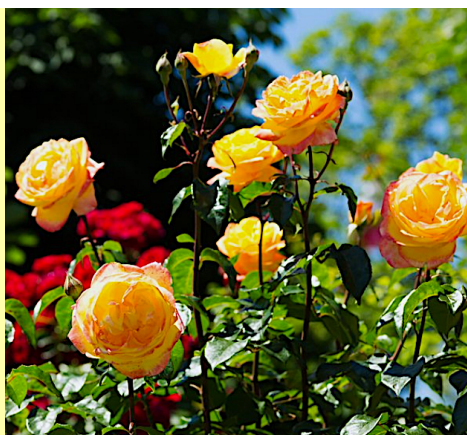
*Here is the 280th issue of our weekly gardening newsletter for Houston, the Gulf Coast and beyond. We really appreciate all of our readers hanging in there with us, sharing stories and inspiring us in so many ways.*

*Thanks so much!*

*This newsletter is a project of The Lazy Gardener, Brenda Beust Smith & John Ferguson. (John is 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. . . .Email your thoughts to: [lazygardenerandfriends@gmail.com](mailto:lazygardenerandfriends@gmail.com). Thanks so much for your interest.*

*Please sign yourself up to receive this newsletter by clicking this link "[Join Our Mailing List](#)". We will never sell or share our mailing list to protect the privacy of our subscribers.*

*Enjoy!*



## SILVER LININGS IN THE GARDEN ... VALENTINE'S DAY MEANS PRUNE ROSES!

*"The force that through the green fuse drives the flower  
Drives my green age" -- Dylan Thomas, 1934*

By **BRENDA BEUST SMITH**

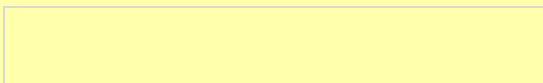
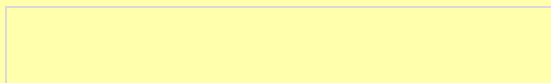
**ONE SILVER LINING** in having to start over with a new garden is being able to put in plants one always wanted but, for various reasons, never could have.

I always longed for a weeping yaupon like the one that, for decades, graced Mercer Botanic Garden's Visitor Center (above left). Now I have the perfect spot. To my delight, Joshua Kornegay of Joshua's Native Plants sweetened the purchase by pointing out how ideal these are for lazy gardeners.

Cousins to native tree and shrub yaupons, our native weeping yaupons are medium-speed growers (10'-15'), tolerate dappled shade-to-blistering sun and easily handle floods, droughts and all our soils. They're even pretty broad minded about drainage conditions. As you can see in the picture above, they produce magnificent cascades of early winter red berries. They don't mind brutal or moderate pruning, or -- "attention, lazy gardeners" -- just being left alone.

I also asked Linda Gay, former Mercer Botanic Garden Director, if the magnificent weeping yaupon pictured above took a lot of work to keep it so pretty. Her reply: " *Easy plant . . . didn't need much pruning. Only trimmed the bottom of the skirt once or twice a year!* " I can handle that!

**DO AS I SAY, NOT AS I DO.** When I finally conceded I couldn't transplant my 15'-20' vitex tree, left below, that towered over our 8' wooden fence, I bought (I thought) and planted a new one. After a year+ growing in our new yard, it's obvious this will never be a magnificent tree. Apparently I unknowingly bought one of the new vitex dwarf shrubs now on the market. Hopefully one day it will look like the one at right below. My bad.





**READ LABELS!** No matter how much you think you know about plants, read labels! New versions (especially dwarfs) of old favorites abound these days. Even better, get to know your local nurseryman and ask his advice. He wants and needs your repeat business, which he won't get if you're not happy with your purchases!

### **HAPPY VALENTINE'S (PRUNE ROSES) DAY!**

This is our prime rose pruning period. As always, [Houston Rose Society](#) (largest rose society in nation!) is holding its big annual, free "PRUNING FOR BLOOM TIME" workshop, this year on Valentines Day, Thurs., Feb. 14, 7pm, Cherie Flores Garden Pavilion, 1500 Hermann Dr.



Rose pruning isn't absolutely necessary for all roses here (antiques & shrubs may only need occasional clipping to keep them friendly). But even many of these, and especially many hybrid roses, do benefit from pruning at this time to produce at maximum potential.

If you do prune, do it right, or risk problems down the line. In our Spotlight Article below, Rosarian Extraordinaire Baxter Williams lists the "FOUR MOST SERIOUS MISTAKES" even experienced rose growers might make when pruning roses

Before we get to the Big 4, however, Baxter also points out in his many talks:

- Do use bypass clippers (not anvil shears, or loppers -- can damage stems)
- Do seal canes with white glue (Elmer's, etc), not black tree pruning paint which can burn bark -- only on very large diameter stems.
- Do cut away older canes leaving new ones that grew last year (smooth green bark)
- Do not cut more than 1/4 inch above a node (or leaf) as this can trigger dieback that might compromise the plant.

**PHILLY GROUNDHOG VS "BIG AL" -- *Who you gonna listen to?*** Sat., Feb. 2 is Groundhog Day. With northern temps what they are, no one expects





Punxsutawney Phil (left) to predict an early spring! In truth, his accuracy rate is under 50%.



Big Al (left) at Gator Country Adventure Park has a decades-long, 100% successful Spring-predicting record. Texas' largest gator (13+' & 1000+ lbs) has genetics on his side. He CAN'T eat until Spring is close enough. Since this is important for gardeners, owners/alligator rescuers Gary Saurage & Arlie Hammonds said they'll report whether or not Big Al eats his Groundhog Day meal. A favorite? KFC!

**PLEASE READ & HEED** John's notes below on leaves & pine needles, which we all have in abundance these days. One of the great mysteries of life is why gardeners would get rid of all this incredibly great mulch & fertilizer source. Then go out & buy far less beneficial soil/mulch to use! Just boggles my mind!

• • •

NOW . . . Can you guess the ***Top Four Rose Pruning Mistakes*** ? See below!

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**BE SURE YOU CHECK BELOW FOR "HAVE YOU TRIED . . . " and the "LG&F CALENDAR"**

Favor? Check to make sure submitted events are published.

Cybergremlins abound. If it's not in, let me know!

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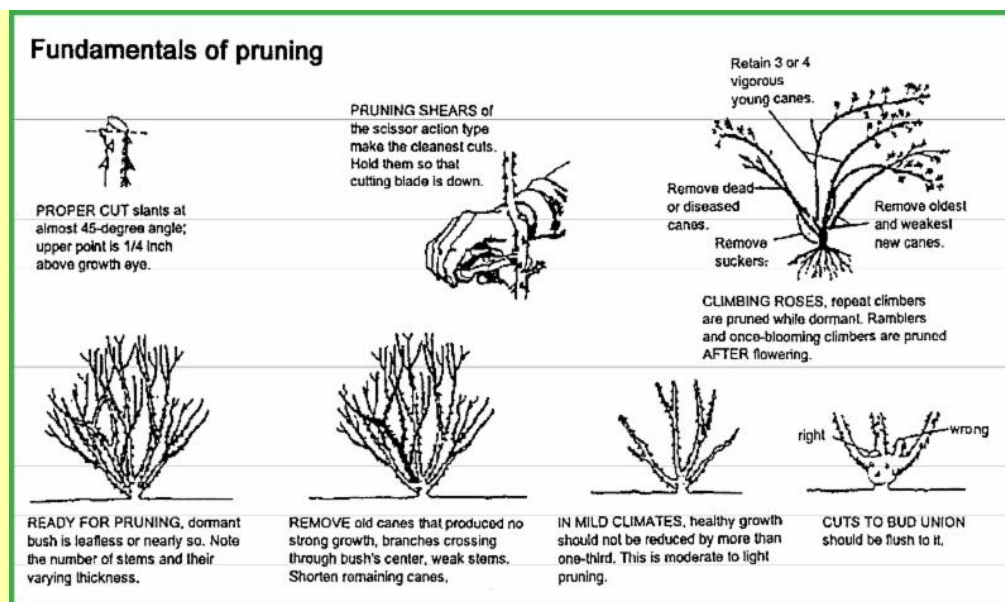
**Brenda's column in the LAZY GARDENER & FRIENDS HOUSTON GARDEN NEWSLETTER is based on her 40+ years as the Houston Chronicle's Lazy Gardener.**

**Download PDF copies at [www.natureswayresources.com](http://www.natureswayresources.com)**

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*If you were a member of the [Houston Rose Society](http://houstonrose.org) , you'd already have this handy chart. But it's still available online: [houstonrose.org/nwsl0209.pdf](http://houstonrose.org/nwsl0209.pdf)*

## AVOID THESE PRUNING MISTAKES!

by Baxter Williams,

American Rose Society Master Rosarian

The following comments are based on Hybrid Tea roses and other large-flowered plants, and assumes that the reader wishes to grow long-stemmed varieties.

- 1. WRONG EQUIPMENT — DO NOT USE** anvil shears, or loppers. Both of these types of pruners damage the cut stems in such a way that bacterial infections can come. The flat edges on the blades crush the outer bark. **Instead**, use bypass types --- the types where the blades pass one another like scissors, and hold them so that the thicker blade touches the stem part that is trimmed away.
- 2. WRONG STEM DIAMETER** -- When all of the stems are cut to their existing diameters, there will be a lot of undersized stems in the coming growing season; and flowers, while more numerous, will also be undersized. Pencil lead-sized stems produce small blooms. **Instead**, cut away all stems that are smaller than a pencil in diameter. Whatever stem size you cut is the size that will grow from that cut.
- 3. WRONG ANGLE CUT** -- When the angle of the cut is too severe, say 60-degrees, the new growth will be compromised. Some say that the angle should be 45-degrees to allow all moisture to drain away and not rot the stem. But the angle of the cut is really not important (and could be totally horizontal), unless it is radical. **Instead**, cut the stem one-eighth of an inch above a leaf axil or stem node. I like to cut to nodes that point upward (vertical) so that the new stem is aimed at the sun; stems cut so that new growth is toward the outside cause flowers to curl upward to follow the sun, rather than to grow straight. Note: while air circulation can

be helpful, a little restriction to wind flow is of negligible effect --- the wind will find its way through the bush, even if a few leaves are in the way.

4. **FAIL TO PROTECT PLANTS FROM DISEASE AFTER CUTTING.** Last year's foliage left on the bush invites fungus diseases. It is weaker, and will easily succumb to blackspot and mildew. Likewise, blind shoots will also do so, and harbor unwanted insect pests. **Instead**, remove old leaves, and apply fungus preventives. Healthy plants will give you many more good rose flowers!

- *You can reach Baxter directly at [bxtwms@att.net](mailto:bxtwms@att.net) or . . .*
- *Drop by the big THURS, FEB. 14: PRUNING FOR BLOOM TIME by CONSULTING ROSARIANS, 7pm, Cherie Flores Garden Pavilion, 1500 Hermann Dr., Free. Houston Rose Society event. [houstonrose.org](http://houstonrose.org)*

\* \* \*

**BE SURE YOU CHECK BELOW FOR THE "HAVE YOU TRIED . . ." COLUMN FOR GREAT PLANT IDEAS and the "LG&F CALENDAR" FOR MORE UPCOMING GARDENING EVENTS!**

Favor? Check to make sure submitted events are published.  
Cybergremlins abound. If it's not in, let me know!

\* \* \*

**Brenda's column in the LAZY GARDENER & FRIENDS HOUSTON GARDEN NEWSLETTER is based on her 40+ years as the Houston Chronicle's Lazy Gardener. Download PDF copies at [www.natureswayresources.com](http://www.natureswayresources.com)**

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## NEWS FROM THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF SOIL AND PLANTS # 73

A study from the University of Maine has found that adding blackberry leaf litter in stormwater catch basins creates an "ecological trap," enticing mosquito females to lay eggs in an area unsuitable for larval survival.

Researchers have found more evidence of the link between Parkinson's disease and pesticides. Using **very low doses** of the pesticide paraquat and common proteins found in food called lectins, it created symptoms of Parkinson's disease in animal studies. Journal of Parkinson Disease 2018.

We are learning more every day about the importance of minerals in the soil from the health of microbes and plants to animals and humans. The majority of soils around Houston and along the gulf coast tend to very deficient in

minerals. Luckily, in Texas we have sources for all 79 minerals (elements) found in the human body. A mixture of greensand, granite sand and basalt sand will provide all that is needed. Not only is it a more complete mix of minerals, it costs a lot less, it is also sustainable, and does not contribute to global warming by shipping in minerals in from thousands of miles away.

This time of year, we often hear "What can I do with all my leaves and how can I get rid of them?" If one looks at a forest there is no disease, no weeds, few if any fire ants, and lots of life and plant growth. So, what does a forest do differently? They mulch the forest floor with leaves every year. Hence, I look at leaves as a gift from God and count my good luck to get them. Leaves are attractive, light, and full of plant nutrients. So how can we use leaves in our garden?

1) Leaves make an excellent mulch. They keep the soil warmer, protect our plants from freezes and protect our plants from damage due to driving rain in our winter storms. Leaves from pine trees can work as is, and look very attractive in the garden and tend to lay flat for easy use. However, leaves from broadleaf trees can blow around a lot (they will eventually pack down and work fine). To get around this problem, many gardeners will mow their lawns and bag the shredded leaves and then use them as mulch. Once chopped up by the mower blade that settle in nicely and rarely blow.

2) Leaves make an excellent feedstock for making compost. Compost made from leaves is very valuable as it is rich in humus and nutrients which benefits all plants.

3) Leaves are excellent food for earthworms whom grow fat and numerous under the decomposing leaves. Earthworms are often called a gardener's best friend. For more information on the benefits of earthworms see: [earthworms.pdf](#)

4) Leaves on the lawn can be good or bad. A few leaves help protect the grass runners and roots. A lot of leaves will mat down and smother the lawn preventing sunlight and oxygen from reaching the grass and they need to be removed (or mowed with a mulching blade so they are chopped up and will filter down between the grass blades and serve as a mulch).

5) As leaves break down, they encourage the growth of many species of beneficial fungi that builds soil structure and in turn the fungi are food for other organisms in the soil food web.

6) Lastly leaves build soil quality and feed the microbes that prevent diseases. They can be surfaced applied or mixed into any garden bed where they quickly break down enriching the soil.

Researcher at the Spanish Foundation for Science and Technology have found an association between esophageal cancer in people living in areas where soils have lead in them. Lung cancers are higher in areas that have excess copper in them. Brain tumors are more common with soils that have arsenic in



them. Bladder cancer is associated with soils with high cadmium levels. *Journal of Environmental Geochemistry and Health*, 2017; 40 (1): 283.

Note: Arsenic has been used in many pesticide formulations for decades, it was also used as a component of defoliants that was used in cotton fields. It was used as a growth enhancer for poultry, hence old agricultural fields fertilized with poultry manure are often high in arsenic as well as old cotton fields. Due to the degraded nature and contamination of these soils they are full of weeds and the weed seeds. Several companies in our area use the topsoil from these old wore out, nutrient depleted and contaminated agricultural fields in their soil mixes to keep the cost down.

Soil health like animal and human health is a complex subject that we are still learning about. If one uses modern methods based on soil biology that are often called organic methods, it becomes very easy, as nature will do the work for us. It is simple: feed the soil (organic fertilizers, good compost, aged native mulch, minerals, etc.) and then the soil will feed the plants and the soil life (from bacteria to earthworms) will do all the rest.

For those interested, soil health is a combination of many factors: soil biology, organic carbon content (humus), water stables aggregation (peds), pH, texture, penetrations resistance (compaction), cation exchange capacity, anion exchange capacity, electrical conductivity, major nutrients (nitrogen, phosphorous, potassium), minor nutrients (like calcium, iron, copper, magnesium, etc.), trace nutrients (boron, selenium, etc.), and micro nutrients (over 70 more), mineralization or carbon or nitrogen, base saturation, bulk density, water holding capacity, permeability, gas exchange, and a few more. When a gardener uses the modern organic methods Nature will take care of all this for us, free of charge.

The dangers of Round-Up have been discussed many times in this newsletter. There are now over 1,400 lawsuits against Monsanto for the cancer and other health problems it causes when exposed. However, the most common source of exposure for most people is on the food we eat. "A recent [New York Times article](#) on the fight to save the traditional Mexican tortilla reminded us to remind you:

Let's keep up the pressure on Maseca, the company selling pesticide-contaminated GMO tortillas, in Mexico, the U.S. and beyond. **Maseca, the leading global brand of Mexican corn flours, [plainly states](#) on its website:**

"MASECA is made of 100% natural corn and is vital for the good diet, its high nutritional value and is synonym of health and energy."

**And yet, our tests showed that samples of both white and yellow Maseca brand flours contain traces of [Monsanto's Roundup](#) weedkiller. Tests also show that most of the flours are made with GMO corn.**

That's bad news for U.S. consumers. It's even worse news for consumers in Mexico, who might rightly assume that the Mexican brand of corn flour they use to make tortillas wouldn't be made from GMO corn—because open-field

growing of GMO corn is prohibited in Mexico.” Organic Consumers Association  
01/10/19

The only way to protect one's self and families is to buy organic or buy from local farmers markets whom you can trust. Best of all, is grow your food yourself.

Note: The better nurseries/garden centers in our area have started removing Round up from their shelves and no longer sell it.

## Have You Tried . . .



### GULF COAST PENSTEMON

*(Penstemon tenuis)*

This early Spring blooming native produces little bell-laden stalks. Great for moist beds or borders; reseeds freely. Great companion plant for yellow columbine ( *Aquilegia chrysantha* ). A great cut flowers, also known as Brazos penstemon and beardtongues. Loves full sun, but can take partial shade. Both are low-water use plants, requiring supplemental irrigation only during the driest, hottest times. 1-1.5' stalks with a spread up to 18 inches.

*Nature's Way Resources carries Gulf Coast Penstemon. Contact independent nurseries in your area to see if they do. Or, check out local nurserymen through this site:*  
<https://npsot.org/wp/resources/finding-natives>

\* \* \*

## LAZY GARDENER & FRIENDS HOUSTON GARDEN NEWSLETTER

### CALENDAR EVENTS

*Events are in Houston unless otherwise noted. No events are picked up from newsletter, etc.*

*Events must be submitted in exact format below to [lazygardener@sbcglobal.net](mailto:lazygardener@sbcglobal.net)*

FRI., FEB 1: HOUSTON ORGANIC BIOLOGICAL CONFERENCE with MIKE SERANT, BRAD PHILLIPS & JOHN FERGUSON (for garden center/landscape professionals), 8am-3pm, United Way, 50 Waugh Dr. \$10. MicroLife All Organic Biological Fertilizers event. 713-957-0909; [mserant@sanjacsupply.com](mailto:mserant@sanjacsupply.com) . [Register](#) .

SAT., FEB. 2: DESIGNING OUR GREEN HOMES & COMMUNITIES THROUGH PERMACULTURE, 1st of 7 classes, 9:30am-1:30pm. University of Houston Central Campus, Charles F. McElhinney Hall, 3623 Cullen Blvd. \$305. Urban Harvest event. Register: 713-880-5540; [urbanharvest.org/classes-calendar](http://urbanharvest.org/classes-calendar)

SAT., FEB. 2: GROWING CAMELLIAS IN HOUSTON CLASS by JIM MAAS & PAT CORDRAY, 10am, Maas Nursery, 5511 Todville Rd., Seabrook. \$40. 281-474-2488, [maasnursery.com](http://maasnursery.com)

SAT, FEB. 2: ROSE PRUNING & PROPAGATION by GAYE HAMMOND & WALLER COUNTY MASTER, 9-11am, Waller County Community Center, 21274 FM1098 Loop, Prairie View. Free. REGISTER: 979-826-7651, x3068; [wallermgardener2013@gmail.com](mailto:wallermgardener2013@gmail.com). [txmg.org/wallermg](http://txmg.org/wallermg)

MON, FEB 4: PET FRIENDLY GARDENING by TRICIA BRADBURY, 10am, First Baptist Church, 412 Oxford St., Bldg 400, Tomball. Free. Tomball Garden Club event. [tomballgardenclub@gmail.com](mailto:tomballgardenclub@gmail.com)

WED., FEB. 6: PLANNING A NEW GARDEN, 7-8pm, Messiah Lutheran Church, 11522 Telge Rd., Cypress. First of 3 classes (also Feb. 13 & 20). Free. Register: [messiahlc.org/Sign-up-Forms](http://messiahlc.org/Sign-up-Forms)

WED., Feb. 6: GROWING ORCHIDS by LAURIE SKOV, 9-11 am, Clear Lake United Methodist Church Fellowship Hall, 16335 El Camino Real. Free. Gardeners by the Bay event. [gbtb.org](http://gbtb.org)

THURS., FEB. 7: TEXAS SUPERSTAR PLANTS by Suma Mudan, 10am, MUD Building 81, 805 Hidden Canyon Dr., Katy. Free. [ncgctx.org](http://ncgctx.org)

THURS., FEB. 7: SPRING VEGETABLE GARDENING, 6:30-8:30pm, Barbara Bush Library, 6817 Cypresswood Dr., Spring. Free. Harris County Master Gardener event. 713-274-0950; [hcmga.tamu.edu](http://hcmga.tamu.edu)

THURS., FEB. 7: SPRING VEGETABLE GARDENING, 6:30-8:30pm, Barbara Bush Library, 6817 Cypresswood Dr., Spring. Free. Harris County Master Gardener event. 713-274-0950; [hcmga.tamu.edu](http://hcmga.tamu.edu)

FRI: FEB. 8: PLANT SALE and speaker CORRIE TEN-HAVE, 10am, First Christian Church, 1601 Sunset Blvd. Free. [houstonfederationgardenclubs.org](http://houstonfederationgardenclubs.org)

SAT, FEB. 9: 13TH ANNUAL CITRUS & FRUIT TREE SALE with BRAZORIA COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS, 8am-11am, Brazoria County Fairgrounds, 901 S. Downing St., Angleton. Free. [txmg.org/brazoria/](http://txmg.org/brazoria/)

SAT., FEB. 9: SPRING VEGETABLE GARDENING CLASS I by JIM MAAS, PAT CORDRAY & PAUL NESRSTA, 10am, Maas Nursery, 5511 Todville Rd., Seabrook. \$40. 281-474-2488, [maasnursery.com](http://maasnursery.com)

MON., FEB. 11: COMPOSTING by HAL OPPERMAN, 6:30-9pm, Good Shepherd Episcopal Church, 2929 Woodland Hills, Kingwood. Free. [lakehoustongardeners.org](http://lakehoustongardeners.org)

TUES., FEB.12: LANDSCAPING WITH NATIVE PLANTS TO SAVE WATER BY MARK BOWEN, HORTICULTURIST, 9 am, Shenandoah Municipal Complex, 29955 I-45 North, Shenandoah. Free. The Woodlands Garden Club event. [thewoodlandsgardenclub.org](http://thewoodlandsgardenclub.org)

WED., FEB. 13: SOIL PREPARATION & COMPOSTING, 7-8pm, Messiah Lutheran Church, 11522 Telge Rd., Cypress. Free. Register: [messiahlc.org/Sign-up-Forms](http://messiahlc.org/Sign-up-Forms)

THURS, FEB. 14: PRUNING FOR BLOOM TIME by CONSULTING ROSARIANS, 7pm, Cherie Flores Garden Pavilion, 1500 Hermann Dr., Free. Houston Rose Society event. [houstonrose.org](http://houstonrose.org)



THURS., FEB 14: HEALTHY SOILS, 10:00-11:30am, Genoa Friendship Gardens, 1202 Genoa Red Bluff Rd, Pasadena. Free. Plant sale. Harris County Master Gardener event. 713-274-0950; [hcmga.tamu.edu](http://hcmga.tamu.edu)

SAT. FEB 16: GALVESTON COUNTY MASTER GARDENER SPRING PLANT SALE; 8-8:50am Sale Plant Seminar; 9am-1pm - plant sale, Fair Grounds, Jack Brooks Park - Rodeo Arena, Hwy 6 @ Jack Brooks Rd, Hitchcock. Free. aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston

SAT., FEB. 16: STARTING A COMMUNITY OR SCHOOL GARDEN WORKSHOP, at., Feb. 16: Urban Harvest's Starting a Community or School Garden Workshop. 8:30am-2:30pm. University of Houston Downtown, One Main St., Houston, TX 77002. \$20. Urban Harvest event. Register: 713-880-5540 or [www.urbanharvest.org/classes-calendar](http://www.urbanharvest.org/classes-calendar)

SAT., FEB. 16: ANTIQUE ROSES CLASS by Jim Maas & Mike Shoup, 10am, Maas Nursery, 5511 Todville Rd., Seabrook. \$20. 281-474-2488, [maasnursery.com](http://maasnursery.com)

SAT., FEB. 16: SPRING VEGETABLE GARDENING, 10:30am-12:30pm, Maud Smith Marks Library, 1815 Westgreen Blvd., Katy. Free. Harris County Master Gardener event. 713-274-0950; [hcmga.tamu.edu](http://hcmga.tamu.edu)

SAT., FEB. 16: COME GET SCOOP ON HEALTHY SOIL by GREG COOPER, 11am-noon, WABASH FEED, 4537 N. Shepherd. Free. <https://bit.ly/2RFMRjl>, 713-863-8322, [wabashfeed.com](http://wabashfeed.com)

SUN., FEB 17: FERN AND LYCOPHYTE DIVERSITY THROUGHOUT FLORIDA by aDAM BLACK, 2pm, Judson Robinson Jr. Community Center, 2020 Hermann Dr. Free. Texas Gulf Coast Fern Society event. [tgcfernsociety.org](http://tgcfernsociety.org)

TUES., FEB. 19: UPDATE ON MERCER ARBORETUM, PHOENIX ARISES by JEFF HEILER, 7:00pm, West Gray Multi-Service Center, 1475 W Gray. Free. Bromeliad Society / Houston event. [bromeliadsocietyhouston.org](http://bromeliadsocietyhouston.org)

TUES., FEB. 19: SPRING VEGETABLE GARDENING, 6:30-8:30pm, Spring Branch Memorial Library, 930 Corbindale, Houston. Free. Harris County Master Gardener event. 713-274-0950; [hcmga.tamu.edu](http://hcmga.tamu.edu)

WED., FEB. 20: PLANT SELECTION & STRATEGY, 7-8pm, Messiah Lutheran Church, 11522 Telge Rd., Cypress. Free. Register: [messiahlc.org/Sign-up-Forms](http://messiahlc.org/Sign-up-Forms)

THURS., FEB. 21: SPRING VEGETABLE GARDENING, 6:30-8:30pm, Freeman Branch Library, 16616 Diana Ln, Houston. Free. Harris County Master Gardener event. 713-274-0950; [hcmga.tamu.edu](http://hcmga.tamu.edu)

THURS., FEB 21: HOW TO START & MAINTAIN AN ORGANIC GARDEN, 7-9pm, Taylor High School, Rm. 1150, 20700 Kingsland Blvd, Katy. \$70. Register (#1003A): [katyisd.org/dept/ce](http://katyisd.org/dept/ce). 281-396-6365

FRI., FEB. 22: THE HOLISTIC GARDEN by DR. JOSEPH NOVAK, 10-11:30am, Anderson-Clarke Center, Rice University. Free. Register: [glasscock-info.rice.edu/garden](http://glasscock-info.rice.edu/garden)

SAT., FEB. 23: HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS FRUIT TREE & TOMATO PLANT SALE, 9am-1pm (or sellout), Campbell Hall, Pasadena Fairgrounds, 7600 Red Bluff Rd., Pasadena. Free. 713-274-0950; [hcmga.tamu.edu](http://hcmga.tamu.edu)

SAT., FEB. 23: HANGING BASKETS CLASS by JIM MAAS & PAT CORDRAY, 10am, Maas Nursery, 5511 Todville Rd., Seabrook. \$25. 281-474-2488, [maasnursery.com](http://maasnursery.com)

WED., FEB. 27: IN THE GARDEN SPRING VEGETABLE PLANTING, 6-7:30pm, McGovern Centennial Family Gardens, 1500 Hermann Dr. \$20. Urban Harvest

event. Register: 713-880-5540; [urbanharvest.org/classes-calendar](http://urbanharvest.org/classes-calendar)

SAT., MAR. 2: VEGETABLE & HERB SALE with presentations by JUDY BARNETT & WALLER COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS, 9am-Noon, Extension Office, 846 6th St., Hempstead. Free. [txmg.org/wallermg/events](http://txmg.org/wallermg/events)

SAT., MAR. 2: SPRING BRANCH AFRICAN VIOLET CLUB ANNUAL PLANT SALE & WORKSHOP, Sale: 10am-4pm. Workshop: 1pm. Free. Judson Robinson Jr. Community Center, 2020 Hermann Park Dr. 281-682-1073; [cseverson57@comcast.net](mailto:cseverson57@comcast.net).

SAT., MAR. 2: MINIATURE FAIRY GARDEN CLASS by JIM MAAS, PAT CORDRAY & BRENDA HESSE, 10am, Maas Nursery, 5511 Todville Rd., Seabrook. \$40. 281-474-2488, [maasnursery.com](http://maasnursery.com)

WED., MAR. 6: 7th ANNUAL GULF COAST HERB FAIR, LECTURE, WORKSHOP, 9am-2pm, Moody Gardens Visitor's Center, Galveston. Free. Luncheon/hyperlufa lecture \$35/\$45. Friends of Moody Gardens event. Register: 281-796-0398, [pelicanway88@att.net](mailto:pelicanway88@att.net)

THURS., MAR. 7: BUTTERFLY SURVIVAL STRATEGIES by DON DUBOIS, 10am, MUD Building 81, 805 Hidden Canyon Dr., Katy. Free. Nottingham Country Garden Club event.

FRI: MAR. 8: NATIVE PLANTS ARE BEAUTIFUL TOO! by Linda Gay, 10am, First Christian Church, 1601 Sunset Blvd. Free. [houstonfederationgardenclubs.org](http://houstonfederationgardenclubs.org)

SAT., MAR. 9: HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS PLANT SALE: TOMATO/PEPPER, HERBS, VEGETABLES, ROSES & PERENNIALS, 9am-1pm (or sellout), 19110 Longenbaugh, Cypress. Free. 713-274-0950; [hcmga.tamu.edu](http://hcmga.tamu.edu)

SAT., MAR. 9: SPRING VEGETABLE GARDENING CLASS II by Jim Maas, Pat Cordray & Paul Nesrsta, 10am, Maas Nursery, 5511 Todville Rd., Seabrook. \$40. 281-474-2488, [maasnursery.com](http://maasnursery.com)

TUES., March 12: GROWING PLUMERIAS, 7:00-9:00pm, Cherie Flores Garden Pavilion, 1500 Hermann Drive. Plumeria Society of America event. Free. [www.theplumeriasociety.org](http://www.theplumeriasociety.org)

FRI.-SAT., MAR. 15-16: MARCH MART PLANT SALE, Fri., 10am-4pm; Sat., 8am-4pm. Mercer Botanic Garden, 22306 Aldine-Westfield, Humble. Free. 713-274-4160.

SAT., MAR. 23: ORANGE COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS ANNUAL BLOOMIN' CRAZY PLANT SALE, 8am-1pm, Cormier Park, 8235 FM 1442, Orangefield, Free, 409 882-7010, <https://txmg.org/orange>

SUN., MAR. 24: RESTORING NATURE THROUGH PERMACULTURE (4 classes). First: 10am-3pm, Shlenker School, 5600 N. Braeswood. \$190. Urban Harvest event. Register: 713-880-5540; [urbanharvest.org/classes-calendar](http://urbanharvest.org/classes-calendar)

SAT., MAR. 30: HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS PLANT SALE: PEPPERS PERENNIALS & PLANTS, 9am-1pm (or sellout), Campbell Hall, Pasadena Fairgrounds, 7600 Red Bluff Rd., Pasadena. Free. 713-274-0950; [hcmga.tamu.edu](http://hcmga.tamu.edu)

SAT., MAR. 30: BASIC ORGANIC VEGETABLE GARDENING, 9:30am-noon, Houston Museum of Natural Science, Moran Conference Room, 5555 Hermann Park DR. \$30. Urban Harvest event. Register: 713-880-5540; [urbanharvest.org/classes-calendar](http://urbanharvest.org/classes-calendar)

SAT., MAR. 30: TAKING CARE OF ROSES CLASS JIM MAAS & LOTHAR BEHNKE, 10am, Maas Nursery, 5511 Todville Rd., Seabrook. \$25. 281-474-2488, [maasnursery.com](http://maasnursery.com)

SAT., APR. 6: HERB GARDENING CLASS by JIM MAAS & PAT CORDRAY, 10am, Maas Nursery, 5511 Todville Rd., Seabrook. \$40. 281-474-2488, maasnursery.com

SAT., APRIL 6.: 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

THURS.-SUN., APR. 11-14: BONSAI ON THE BAYOU – AMERICAN BONSAI SOCIETY 2019 NATIONAL CONVENTION, Marriott Houston Westchase, 2900 Briarpark Dr. Houston Bonsai Society/The Lone Star Bonsai Federation hosts. houstonbonsaisociety.com

FRI: APR. 11: PLANT SALE and REFUGEES FROM THE ANIMAL KINGDOM by MARGARET PICKELL. 10am, First Christian Church, 1601 Sunset Blvd. Free. houstonfederationgardenclubs.org

SAT., APR. 13: EDIBLE LANDSCAPES, 9:30-11:30am, Houston Museum of Natural Science, Moran Conference Room, 5555 Hermann Park Dr. \$30. Urban Harvest event. Register: 713-880-5540; urbanharvest.org/classes-calendar

SAT., APR. 13: WILD THYMES HERB CLASS by JIM MAAS & MELDA SIEBE, 10am, Maas Nursery, 5511 Todville Rd., Seabrook. \$25. 281-474-2488, maasnursery.com

SAT., APR. 20: HANGING BASKETS CLASS by JIM MAAS & PAT CORDRAY, 10am, Maas Nursery, 5511 Todville Rd., Seabrook. \$25. 281-474-2488, maasnursery.com

WED., APR. 24: SUMMER VEGETABLE PLANTING, 6-7pm, McGovern Centennial Family Gardens, 1500 Hermann Dr. \$20. Urban Harvest event. Register: 713-880-5540; urbanharvest.org/classes-calendar

SAT., APR. 27: PLANTING IN GLASS CLASS by JIM MAAS & PAT CORDRAY, 10am, Maas Nursery, 5511 Todville Rd., Seabrook. \$35. 281-474-2488, maasnursery.com

SAT., MAY 4: GARDENING FOR BUTTERFLIES & BEES CLASS by JIM MAAS & PAT CORDRAY, 10am, Maas Nursery, 5511 Todville Rd., Seabrook. \$40. 281-474-2488, maasnursery.com

TUES., MAY 7: GROWING PLUMERIAS, 7-9pm, Cherie Flores Garden Pavilion, 1500 Hermann Drive. Free. Plumeria Society of America event. theplumeriasociety.org

SAT., MAY 11: SQUARE FOOT GARDENING, 9:30-11:30am. Houston Museum of Natural Science, Moran Conference Room, 5555 Hermann Park Dr. \$30. Urban Harvest event. Register: 713-880-5540; urbanharvest.org/classes-calendar

SAT., JUNE 8: PLUMERIA SOCIETY OF AMERICA SHOW & SALE, 9:30am-3:00 pm, Bay Area Community Center, 5002 E Nasa Parkway, Seabrook. Free. theplumeriasociety.org

TUES., July 9: GROWING PLUMERIAS, 7-9pm, Cherie Flores Garden Pavilion, 1500 Hermann Drive. Free. Plumeria Society of America event. theplumeriasociety.org

SAT., JULY 20: PLUMERIA SOCIETY OF AMERICA SHOW & SALE, 9:30am-3:00 pm, Bay Area Community Center, 5002 E Nasa Parkway, Seabrook. Free. theplumeriasociety.org

TUES., Oct. 8: GROWING PLUMERIAS, 7-9pm, Cherie Flores Garden Pavilion, 1500 Hermann Drive. Free. Plumeria Society of America event. theplumeriasociety.org

SAT. DEC. 14, 2019: CHAPPELL HILL GARDEN CLUB CHRISTMAS HOME TOUR, 10am-5pm., Chappell Hill. \$20 advance/\$25 tour day. 713-562-6191; 979-337-1200



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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 Pablo Hernandez of Nature's Way Resources.

A native of New Orleans and graduate of St. Agnes Academy and the University of Houston, Brenda lives in 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.

### **PABLO HERNANDEZ**

Pablo Hernandez is the special projects coordinator for Nature's Way Resources. His realm of responsibilities include: serving as a webmaster, IT support, technical problem solving/troubleshooting, metrics management and quality control.

Pablo helps this newsletter happen from a technical support standpoint.



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