



LAZY GARDENER & FRIENDS

Houston Garden Newsletter



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Nature's Way Resources owner John Ferguson, "The Lazy Gardener" Brenda Beust Smith and Pablo Hernandez welcome your feedback and are so grateful to the many horticulturists who contribute their expertise.

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CORONAVIRUS CANCELLATIONS

If your event in our calendar below is cancelled, please let us know as soon as possible at lazygardener@sbcglobal.net



SURPRISES AMONG 'WOW NOW!' SUBMISSIONS!

"The flower is the stem's cry of beauty to the universe"

---Vassilis Comporozos

by **BRENDA BEUST SMITH**

A PLUMERIA VINE? Long before we started highlighting **WOW NOW!** flowers to help distract from current stresses, **Dale Phillips** wrote asking if I'd ever heard of a frangipani vine?

Frangipani, I thought, as in another name

for plumeria? Never!

Dale's "*Chonemorpha Frangipani Vine*" is a plumeria cousin, said to be hardy in Zone 9b-11. His problem: no flowers. He wrote: "*being 83 now I'm not happy waiting for blooms!*" After a few years, that wait is over!

Dale's beautiful display at right is actually several potted frangipani vines grouped together on a single background frame. Although Dale has them potted (usual recommendation), these woody vines aren't protected in winter or bothered by insects. He now has 7 plants, including original ones purchased from [Joseph Nursery](#) in Pearland. They're planted in plumeria potting soil mix from [Maas Nursery](#) in Seabrook



Another surprise **WOW NOW!** came from Yvette with [Beauty's Garden](#) in Independent Heights: a [Moringa tree](#) blossom (left above)! Moringa is often called the "Miracle Tree" (for its many beneficial uses). Read [Urban Harvest's report](#) so yours will be as successful as Beauty's Garden. Yvette also submitted their spectacular squash blossoms (right). Community gardens are great places to see which vegetables also produce gorgeous flowers. Beauty's Garden shares bounty at the [Acres Homes Farmers Market](#). Next chance to buy: June 29.

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BETH GALIANO'S MANY FANS will be delighted to see that while she's not as active as before with [Mercer Botanic Garden's magnificent Ginger Garden](#), Beth's still every bit "Houston's Ginger Lady." At 90, Beth's still going strong, proudly notes husband August (*Gus to us fellow Chronicle co-workers!*), carrying on not only her love of gingers but decades long volunteering with their city-block-size community garden, whose produce is donated to their church food pantry.

Beth notes her "[Alpinia \(Shell Gingers\)](#) have already bloomed. Soon to flower are Curcuma (Hidden Ginger,) (see [Rita Moseley's below](#)), [Hedychium \(Butterfly\)](#) and the big [Costus Speciosus \(Crepe Ginger\)](#). I linked these so you can see what these mostly shade-lovers look like. Here are Beth's currently-blooming pride &

joys along with her own notes:



Costus Barbatus - *"Its showy bloom lasts a lo-o-o-ng time."*

*Photos by Beth &
August Galiano*



Kaemferia 'Silver Spot,'
K. 'Rotunda' and
K. Pulchra 'Roscoe' in
a deeply shaded bed.



Great groundcover of
Kaemferia Pulchra
(Mansonii 'Peacock
Ginger') in partially
shaded flower bed.

SPEAKING OF GINGERS, MERCER BOTANIC GARDENS' Online Father's Day Plant Sale will feature over 120 of these garden delights, which can be ordered online only from 8am, Sat., June 3, to 8pm, Sun., June 24. Among gingers will be the ultra-rare globe 'Perfect White' and 'Perfect Purple.' Also available: ferns, annuals, perennials, roses, Gulf Coast natives, trees and shrubs. Plants will remain in stock at themercersociety.square.site. (If you use this link to join The Mercer Society, you can start shopping now!)

* * *



RITA MOSLEY's long-blooming fuchsia *Curcuma* (Hidden Ginger) flowers, left & center, bloom in spring before foliage appears. At right, for sheer elegance, it's hard to beat **ARLEEN HARBIN's** white night blooming cereus

TWO SPOTLIGHT NATIVES

Left, **LILIANA CRACRAFT's**
Right, Texas Olive Tree
(*Anacahuita*), (**For more,**
see Have You Tried!
below!)



ARMAND BAYOU NATURE CENTER'S Texas

Coneflower (*Rudbeckia texana*). ABNC is extending hours through Aug. 14 Wed.-Fri. 9am-7pm



Also shared by **Liliana**, a longtime [Houston Cactus & Succulent Society](#) stalwart, are these WOW NOW! bloomers, l to r, *Echinocereus*



pectinatus, *Gymnocalycium ferrari* and, with its beautiful crown of flowers, is *Mammillaria hahniana*



JERE NOERAGER, my long-time Houston Zoo and Mercer Botanic Garden "guru," always surprises -- this time with two tricky-name ones with eye-grabbing blooms. At far left, Gloriosa Lily (*Gloriosa rothschildiana*), one of our most exotic vines, is not a true lily at all! Jere's vine now stretches 15+ feet (much bigger than usual). Gloriosa Lily is surprisingly hardy here for such an exotic looker. Above right, Jere's Needle Flower Tree (*Posoqueria longiflora*) is actually a shrub, not a tree. He found it at Home Depot. Needle Flower Tree is less hardy than Gloriosa Lily but doing well. Both are on the South side of his house.

NOTE: STILL HAPPY TO RECEIVE "WOW NOW!" photos of flowers/varieties not already shown. Email to lazygardenerbrenda@gmail.com. Be sure to include name of plant, your part of town and notes other gardeners might find interesting! Other submissions can be seen at natureswayresources.com/NLindex2020.pdf

UPDATES

- **NATIONAL POLLINATOR WEEK** will be June 22-28. [The Pollinator Partnership](#) has lots of celebration ideas, especially for children.
- **LOCALLY-FOCUSED VIRTUAL NATURE/GARDENING EVENTS** are starting to abound, among them:
 - **Armand Bayou Nature Center's** "[Nature as Normal](#)" blog

- **"Houston and Nature,"** by Niven Saleh, (environmentalist
- **Children's Environmental Literacy Foundation** Houston's "Houston Family Nature Challenge" celfeducation.org.
- **Urban Harvest's** online "Low Volume Irrigation" class urbanharvest.org
- **Harris County Master Gardener ONLINE Fruit Tree Sale.** Purchase online: hcmga.tamu.edu/shop/ . Pick up:
 - June 13 & 20, 9am-1pm, Genoa Friendship Garden, 1202 Genoa Red Bluff Road, 77034. 2)
 - June 20, 9am-1pm, Better Homes & Gardens Gary Green Real Estate, 1705 West Gray.
- **Harris County Master Gardener Virtual (online) lecture series schedule:** hcmga.tamu.edu. Or, [Register Here](#).
- **Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Agents & Specialists Virtual (online) Lecture Series schedule:** hcmga.tamu.edu. Or, [Register Here](#)

Join the **Citizens Environmental Coalition** for it's comprehensive emailed list of everything affecting our ecology: cechouston.org

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"LAZY GARDENER SPEAKER LIST" & "PUBLICITY BOOK LET"
are free — email request to: lazygardenerbrenda@gmail.com

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

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A few Gift Ideas for Fathers Day!

BOOK REVIEW

"GMO MYTHS and TRUTHS – A Citizen's guide to the evidence on the safety and efficacy of genetically modified crops and foods", by Claire Robinson, MPhil, Michael Antoniou, PhD and John Fagan, PhD, Earth Open Source Publishing and distributed by Chelsea Green Publishing, 2018, ISBN 978-0-9934367-2-7

I found this book to be thoroughly researched and in agreement with the hundreds of papers I have read on

GMO issues. This book is for all the people whom want a reliable, unbiased, comprehensive and easy to read account on plant genetic engineering and its unpredictable consequences.

The three authors are among the most knowledgeable scientists in the field of nutrition, genetics and genetic engineering in the world. This is a revised edition updated with the newest science on the dangers of GMO foods and products as well as the dangers of the new GM techniques.

As the cover states this is, “a citizens guide to the evidence on the safety and efficacy of genetically modified crops and foods”. This book is by genetic engineers and experts whom have not sold themselves to corporate agribusiness business.

“It is often claimed that the case against genetically modified (GM) crops and foods is based on emotion, not science, and that to oppose GM crop and food technology is to be anti-science. It is also claimed that GM crops offer higher yields and better nutrition, that they are safe for health and the environment, that they reduce agrochemical use, and that they are needed to feed the world’s growing population. This book, co-authored by two genetic engineers and a writer/researcher, exposes these claims as false, using scientific and other documented evidence”.

“GMO Myths and Truths summarizes the facts on the safety and efficacy of genetically modified (GM) crops and foods in terms that are accessible to the non-scientist but still relevant to scientists, policymakers and educators. The evidence presented points to many hazards, risks, and limitations of genetic engineering technology. These include harms found in animal feeding and ecological studies, which in turn indicate risks to health and the environment posed by GM crops and foods”.

“The book shows that conventional breeding continues to outstrip GM in developing crops that deliver high yields, better nutrition, and tolerance to extreme weather conditions and poor soils. *In agreement with over 400 international experts who co-authored a UN and World Bank-sponsored report on the future of farming, the authors conclude that modern agroecology, rather than GM, is the best path for feeding the world’s current and future populations in a safe and sustainable way*”.

“The evidence presented points to many hazards, risks, and limitations of genetic engineering technology. These include harm found in animal feeding and ecological studies, which in turn indicate risks to health and the environment posed by GM crops and foods.

“Deconstructs the false and misleading claims that are frequently made about the safety and efficacy of GM crops and foods”
– David Schubert, PhD

GMO MYTHS AND TRUTHS

Updated with New Information on Genome Editing



A citizen's guide to the evidence on the safety and efficacy of genetically modified crops and foods

Claire Robinson, MPhil · Michael Antoniou, PhD · John Fagan, PhD

This updated 4th edition includes a new chapter on genome-editing techniques, which are being promoted as crucial to the future of food and agriculture. It explains why these techniques are genetic modification procedures, why genome-edited foods and crops pose similar risks to health and the environment as old-style transgenic GM methods, and why consumers should insist that these products are strictly regulated and labelled.

The new edition is also updated with new research pointing to the health dangers of the pesticides associated with GM crops”.

An example of the health risk is the current pandemic from the corona virus. For the human immune system to fight viruses the elements zinc, selenium, magnesium, manganese, and iron are required in sufficient amounts.

Note: From our discussion of the dangers of the herbicide Round-Up and its active ingredient glyphosate a few years ago, “Glyphosate was originally patented as a demineralizer to clean pipes (US Patent # 3,160,632). As a result, it ties up the nutrients we need for good health and prevents them from being absorbed by our bodies”. This is especially true for the elements above required to fight viruses. Today we have less of these vital elements in our food than 50 years ago and the little we have is not available to our bodies when we eat foods with Round-Up on them (almost anything not certified as organic), and GMO foods often have several times higher levels of this dangerous chemical.

A researcher at the university MIT has also found a correlation between GMO soy and corn used to make biofuels. In areas of the US where these biofuels are required (ships, trucks, etc.), are also the hotspots where the most cases and the most deaths due to covid-19 occurred.

Many researchers have started to notice that populations with the highest level of Covid-19 infections eat the most GMO foods.

About Claire Robinson

Claire Robinson, MPhil is editor at GMWatch, a public news and information service on genetically modified (GM) foods and crops and their associated pesticides.

About John Fagan

Dr John Fagan is a leading authority on sustainability in the food and agricultural system, biosafety, and food safety and authenticity. He is a successful entrepreneur in the field of biotechnology, having founded, built and sold Global ID Group, a company that pioneered the development of innovative molecular biological tools to verify and advance food purity, safety, and sustainability. Dr Fagan is CEO and chief scientist of Health Research Institute, a non-profit research and service institution dedicated to understanding the links between food quality, diet, and health. HRI Labs applies cutting-edge analytical methods to understand the relationships between agricultural practices and the levels of micronutrients and synthetic residues present in crops. He is executive director, Earth Open Source Institute, a non-profit advancing environmental sustainability and social responsibility of the food and agricultural system, where he conducts research and manages agricultural development projects.

About Michael Antoniou

Michael Antoniou, PhD is a Reader in Molecular Genetics and Head of the Gene

Expression and Therapy Group, Department of Medical and Molecular Genetics, King's College London School of Medicine, UK. He has 34 years' experience of using genetic engineering technology, including genome-editing tools, in the investigation of gene organization and control, with over 100 peer-reviewed publications. He holds inventor status on gene expression biotechnology patents. His discoveries in gene control mechanisms are being used for research as well as the development of diagnostic and therapeutic products for genetic disorders. Dr Antoniou has taken an active interest in the safety of GM crops and their associated pesticides. In recent years he has published papers demonstrating the non-equivalence of glyphosate-tolerant GM corn and non-GM corn and severe kidney and liver toxicity from chronic exposure to an ultra-low dose of Roundup.

* * *

HAVE YOU TRIED . . .

TEXAS OLIVE TREE

(Cordia boissieri)

MONTHS of fabulous fragrant blooms reminiscent of roses, jasmine or gardenia (depends on whom you ask!) start in late winter, then bloom off and on all summer through fall. Fragrance often stronger a little farther from plant. 25' x 20', full sun, drought-tolerant. Long-lived but slow growing. Larger plants will bloom sooner than smaller ones. Sorry, olives aren't really edible, Native to South Texas, it is also known as Mexican Olive (Anacahuíta) and can easily live 100+ years. Not even closely related botanically to edible olives but is a member of the Borage Family.



Texas Olive Tree is carried by Nature's Way Resources ([Map](#)).

Any questions and orders for the plant nursery can be directed to Carol at nwrnursery@gmail.com.

Or . . . contact our sponsor, Montgomery Pines Nursery in Willis, our other sponsors below or your neighborhood nurseryman for possible sources.

LAZY GARDENER & FRIENDS HOUSTON GARDEN NEWSLETTER CALENDAR EVENTS

ADULT GARDEN PLANT EVENTS ONLY

ALWAYS CHECK TO MAKE SURE YOUR EVENT IS IN! HOWEVER . . .

PLEASE READ BEFORE SUBMITTING EVENTS!

- Events NOT submitted in the EXACT format below may take 2 weeks or longer to be reformatted/retyped and added to calendar.
- Events in this EXACT format (below) are copied/pasted immediately in upcoming calendar. Pdfs or flyers need re-typing - only delay publication.
- Submit to: lazygardenerbrenda@gmail.com. Put group name in email subject.

**CHECK UPDATED CALENDAR BEFORE ATTENDING ANY PREVIOUSLY-
SCHEDULED EVENT & THOSE LISTED IN CASE OF LAST MINUTE CANCELLATION.**

SAT., JUN. 13: 14" METAL HANGING BASKET by JIM MAAS, & PAT CORDRAY, 10am, Maas Nursery, 5511 Todville Rd., Seabrook. \$35. 281-474-2488; maasnursery.com

SAT., JUN. 13 – SUN., JUN. 14: THE MERCER SOCIETY - VIRTUAL SPECIALTY PLANT SALE, begins 8am Saturday and ends 8pm Sunday, Online Only. 713-274-4160. themerchersociety.square.site

WED., JUN. 17: FAMILY NIGHT – MICRO-MERCER, 4pm-6:30pm, Mercer Botanic Gardens, 22306 Aldine-Westfield, Humble. Free. Register: 713-274-4160. hcp4.net/parks/mercer

THURS., JUN. 18: TREE MEASUREMENTS by Laura Medick, 9:30am-11am, Mercer Botanic Gardens, 22306 Aldine-Westfield, Humble. Free. Register: legacytrees@hcp4.net. hcp4.net/parks/mercer

WED., JUN. 24: FAMILY NIGHT – GEOCACHING, 4pm-6:30pm, Mercer Botanic Gardens, 22306 Aldine-Westfield, Humble. Free. Register: 713-274-4160. hcp4.net/parks/mercer

THURS., JUN. 25: BIRD SURVEY by Paul Gregg and Christy Jones, 8am-10am, Mercer Botanic Gardens, 22306 Aldine-Westfield, Humble. Free. Register: 713-274-4160. hcp4.net/parks/mercer

SAT., JUNE 27: STARTING A SCHOOL OR COMMUNITY GARDEN, 10:00am-12:30pm. Zoom Live Class by Invitation, \$20. Urban Harvest class. Register: urbanharvest.org/education/classes/

TUES., JUL 14: BONSAI by SCOTT BARBOZA, 7-9pm; Cherie Flores Garden Pavillion, 1500 Hermann Dr. Free. Plumeria Society of America event. theplumeriasociety.org

SAT., JULY 18: FALL VEGETABLE GARDENING, 9:30am-12:00pm. Zoom Live Class by Invitation, \$20. Urban Harvest class. Register: urbanharvest.org/education/classes/

SAT., AUG. 8: BOKASHI – WASTE NOT, WANT NO, 9:30am-11:30am. Zoom Live Class by Invitation, \$20. Urban Harvest class. Register: urbanharvest.org/education/classes/

TUES., OCT 13: FALL PLUMERIA SOCIETY OF AMERICA SOCIAL/LUAU 7-9:00 pm; Cherie Flores Garden Pavillion, 1500 Hermann Dr. Free. theplumeriasociety.org

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LOCAL FARMERS MARKETS

- **URBAN HARVEST FARMERS MARKET**, Saturdays, 8am-noon, in St. John's School parking lot, 2752 Buffalo Speedway.
- **FULSHEAR FARMERS MARKET** Saturdays, 9am-1pm, 9035 Bois d'Arc Lane @ FM 1093, Fulshear.
- **THE WOODLANDS FARMERS MARKET AT GROGAN'S MILL**, Saturdays, 8am-noon, Grogan's Mill Shopping Center Parking Lot, 7 Switchbud Pl., The Woodlands
- **BEAUTY'S GARDEN** is now participating in the Acres Homes Farmers Market Saturday, June 29, 10am-2pm, 4333 W Little York Rd.

Although normally we did not run out-of-garden events, during this pandemic period when most gardening events have been cancelled, we are happy to publish a running list of local Farmers Markets.
Send notices to lazygardenerbrenda@gmail.com

For event submission rules, see top of calendar

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

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About Us

BRENDA BEUST SMITH

WE KNOW HER BEST AS THE LAZY GARDENER . . .

. . . but Brenda Beust Smith is also:

- * a national award-winning writer & editor
- * a nationally-published writer & photographer
- * a national horticultural speaker
- * a former Houston Chronicle reporter

When the Chronicle discontinued Brenda's 45-year-old "Lazy Gardener" print column -- started in the early '70s as a fun side-, it then ranked as the longest-running, continuously-published local newspaper column in the Greater Houston area.

Brenda's gradual sideways step from reporter into gardening writing -- first as a just-a-fun side Chronicle assignment in the early '70s -- led first to an 18-year series of when-to-do-what Lazy Gardener Calendars, then to her Lazy Gardener's Guide book which morphed into her Lazy Gardener's Guide on CD. which she now emails free upon request.

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 specialty shows on HoustonPBS (Ch. 8) and her call-in "EcoGardening" show on KPFT-FM.

For over three decades, Brenda served as as Production Manager of the Garden Club of America's BULLETIN magazine. Although still an active 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 Humble, TX, and is married to the 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.

