



Nov-13-2020 | Issue 364

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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 lazygardenerbrenda@gmail.com

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FANTASTIC FALL WOW NOWs GOATS & ROSE-Y REMINISCES

*"A morning-glory at my window satisfies
me more than the metaphysics of books. "*

~Walt Whitman, Leaves of Grass

by **BRENDA BEUST SMITH**

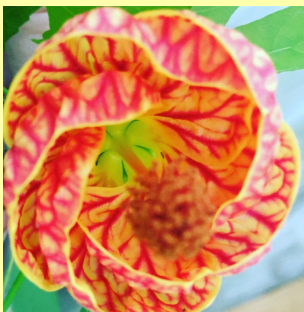
WOW NOW! TOUTS keep a'comin' -- and, boy, can we use them these days, especially if a garden needs a November bloomer-upper (if you'll forgive the concatenation).

FRAN SIMISTER'S CASSIA lives up to its fame as one of our most electric yellow fall bloomers. Two different cassias are real eyecatchers here. Fran's is a *Cassia splendida*, a 10-12' tree, also known as



yellow senna. The pea-shaped flower clusters attract both birds and bees. Usually evergreen, it returns easily after an exceptionally cold winter. Few insect or disease problems. Ideal lazy gardener plant!

Just to prevent confusion, two other cassias that love us and produce showstopping blooms in fall are *Cassia corymbosa* (more of a shrub with Splendida-like blooms) and *C. alata*, the candlestick tree, pictured here. It has more elongated flower clusters and sparser foliage than *C. splendida* and *C. corymbosa*.



ARLEEN HARBIN'S 'BILTMORE BALL GOWN' ABUTILON (from Magnolia Plantation & Gardens in Charleston) seems to be glowing from within. The 4-5' shrubs, planted inground in September, already sport five flower buds that look, Arleen says, "*like mini lanterns hanging down.*" They bloom spring through autumn.

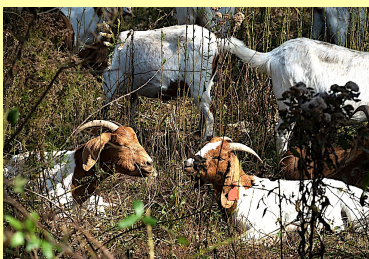
(See "**HAVE YOU TRIED...**" below.)

KAROLYN GEPHART'S CAJUN HIBISCUS

'**GUARDIAN ANGEL**' is her day-brightener. Hers is in a container but they can go in the ground as well. A Galveston County Master Gardener, Carolyn says this 6-inch bloomer -- bought at a GCMG sale -- needs least 4-6 hours of good sun. And she warns the whole Cajun hibiscus line is addicting! (*As a New Orleans native, I definitely need these!*)



* * *



NEED A NEW LAWN SERVICE? By now most folks know the Houston Arboretum & Nature Center has "employed" goats to clean out overgrown areas. The goats back and you're welcome to watch in person to see if this is something you'd like to try. [Videos](#)

Arboretum folks are so pleased with the [Rent-A-Ruminant®](#) goats, around 190 are back here until Nov. 10, "mowing" additional sites. [Trail map](#). The goats love anything with lots of leaves -- blackberries, vines, shrubs, trees & wildflowers and have removed a lot of invasive vines smothering native plants. Go see them and take the kids -- 7am-dusk, Houston Arboretum, 4501 Woodway Dr., Houston, 77024. [Map](#).

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LOOK & LEARN! FRUIT TREE BONANZA

BROWSING &/OR BUYING has opened online for the huge Harris County Master Gardener Fruit Tree Sale. Log on: HCMGA-online.company.site. Click on "Shop now" (no obligation to buy). Scroll through a most amazing opportunity to see what available on our ever-expanding edible plantings horizon!



Browse and/or shop online now through Dec. 31. One fruit tree-pickup will on Sat. Jan. 23 at Richard & Meg Weekley Park, 19110 Longenbaugh Rd, Cypress, TX 77433. See website for information on Pasadena Fairgrounds pickup and future sales at HCMGA-online.company.site

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"YOU CAN'T MAKE OLD FRIENDS . . ." and old friends seem to be what I need most in these unsettled times. So when Houston Rose Society stalwart Baxter Williams mentioned his club lecture: ""THINGS I WISH I HAD KNOWN SOONER," my eyebrows immediately went up. Like what ?

Baxter has given advice for many years as a member of the American Rose Center Advisory Board to the gardens in Shreveport, LA, and regularly gives advice to local rose growers in the Houston area, and to members of local Garden Clubs. Below are just a few of the 73 Rose-Growing "THINGS I WISH I HAD KNOWN SOONER" tips Baxter is passing on to gardeners in his current lectures. (NOTE: OGR stand for "Old Garden Roses".)

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

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*Baxter wishes all roses could have the clarity of color and similar form of 'Pink Promise' (above & unfortunately not readily available). Rose garden visitors always walk first to the most attractive rose and stick his/her nose into it. He says, "The most important things are color and fragrance; everything else is superfluous."
More Baxter musings . . .*

THINGS I WISH I HAD KNOWN SOONER

By BAXTER WILLIAMS
[Houston Rose Society](#)

*(Excerpted from Baxter's Powerpoint
show "Things I Wish I'd Known Sooner")*

- A single 1-inch water line, from which 3/4-inch feeders run to each rose bed, is way-cheaper than separate long 1-inch lines to each bed, timewise and moneywise.
- There are no effective thrips-eaters.
- Spent blooms, cloudy days and dry weather also cause dormancy.
- Cuttings take two years to make a bush capable of producing an adequate quantity of flowers, while field-grown nursery stock can do so in less than six weeks.
- When a person says OGRs "have fragrance that has been bred out of Hybrid Teas, it means he/she either never grew or smelled 'Double Delight,' 'Oklahoma,' 'Mister Lincoln,' 'Chrysler Imperial,' 'John F. Kennedy,' 'Perfume Delight,' 'Jadis,' 'Fragrant Cloud,' 'Dolly Parton,' 'Lemon Spice,' 'Queen Elizabeth,' etc.
- Ladybird Beetles (ladybugs) are two weeks behind aphids. Their coal black-with-orange-stripes larvae look bad, but are really good guys.
- Blind shoots don't make flowers, do block light to other leaves, and do harbor pests.
- Water droplets don't burn leaves, anymore than a magnifying glass laid on a sheet of paper would burn the paper.

- A triple row of roses is a bad mistake.
- The fragrance of Fish Oil Emulsion under your fingernails is magnified after going to bed.
- The outgassing of asphalt from railroad crossties doesn't affect well-watered rose bushes.
- Landscape timbers are heavy, and therefore don't need rebar to stay in place, unless they have been remarkably shortened.
- One person can adequately care for a maximum of 200 rose bushes, with not enough time left to relax with family and friends. Same for two persons. 100 bushes is better.
- Talk to your roses; it does you good.
- Never plant more roses than your spouse can successfully tend.
- Every woman wants a gazebo in her garden area.
- Roses like sunshine all day long.
- Roses are poor converters of solar energy, and therefore require enormous amounts of it.
- Earthworms love alfalfa.
- Aluminum foil is stiffer than Saran Wrap and won't unwrap.
- If I'd known I'd win, I'd have started showing roses sooner.
- Too much alfalfa can kill a potted rose bush.
- If you didn't get wet, then you didn't knock off enough spider mites (using a Water Wand).
- A gallon of clean water left in the rinsed sprayer tank won't let residual wettable powder turn into stone.
- Eighteen-inch lengths of 5/8"-3/4" garden hose, slipped over 1/2"-5/8" reinforcement bar pieces (a 20-foot piece cut into thirds), are good protection for the cambiums of the canes tied thereto.
- White plastic knives make cheap namestakes.
- Rose Judges should have mandatory periodic eye exams.
- A dead bush is oftentimes a first indication that an drip system emitter has plugged.
- A "leaky pipe," left "on," will eventually rot the roots.
- Climbers should be pruned AFTER first bloom.
- All roses with the word "Blue" in their names are really some shade of purple.

- To the general public, fragrance beats show form, hands down.
- Leaf cutter bees obviously either move faster than the speed of light or work during the hours of 2:00 am to 4:00 am, which is why they are never seen.
- The roots of rose bushes in pots grow in the direction that they are twisted into the pots.
- When tilling the "meals" (cotton-, bone-, fish- and blood-meals), apply them in that order, otherwise you will be smelling the blood-meal longer.
- The leaf at which a new cane forms on a cane will soon be aborted by the bush, naturally.
- A blackspotted leaf is doomed.

NOTE: Baxter can be reached at bxtwms@att.net

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NEWS FROM THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF SOIL AND PLANTS # 136

A recent report from France, now that restrictions on the use of glyphosate have been in place, has found that many herbicides now contain arsenic, lead, nickel, and PAC's (poly aromatic hydrocarbons). The tests were from 14 different formulations of herbicides.

Along the same lines France's highest court has found that just inhaling fumes from the Monsanto herbicide known as Lasso causes neurological damage. It has been banned in many countries since 1985 in some countries like Canada.

A study from Penn State University has found that most bags of mulches are not what they claim to be. For example, mulch bags claiming to be cypress were found to be only 50% cypress and some had zero cypress in them.

One bag from Texas was only 50% cypress and another brand from Texas was zero percent cypress. Journal Food and Fiber Science (2020).

Note: Horticulturally and from a healthy soil's perspective, cypress is one of the lowest quality mulches available and should never be used. From the series on mulches a few years ago:

Cypress - Cypress mulch became popular during the first part of this century for two reasons; it is very rot resistant and would last for years (just the opposite of what plants require for good health) and the heartwood of a mature tree is pink (our first colored mulch). It takes decades for a cypress tree to mature enough to get the colored heartwood hence it is not sustainable. Mulch producers dredged up old cypress trees from the bayous around New Orleans to make mulch out of them and this significantly added to the flooding after hurricane Katrina as the storm surge could move in much easier without the trees blocking the flow. Most of the old cypress trees have been used up and we now get plantation grown trees now. These young trees do not have the colored heartwood and have a very high C:N ratio of close to 500:1 which causes nutrient tie-up problems. Studies have shown that Cypress mulch slows (suppresses) the growth of a range of woody plants such as hydrangea, spirea, viburnum and compared to even plain pine bark which is also a low-quality mulch.

Over the last few years there has been an explosion in the demand for products made from the Cannabis or Hemp plant family often known as Marijuana. These species are *Cannabis sativa*, *Cannabis indica*, and *Cannabis ruderalis*, even though some believe they are all *C. sativa* with slight sub species differentiation.

Cannabis is known for its psychoactive chemicals THC (tetrahydrocannabinol) and medical CBD (cannabidiol). Cannabis (Hemp) is also grown for its strong fibers used in many commercial applications.

As this new industry has grown, the question has arisen on what to do with all the massive amounts of cannabis waste. It often has residual levels of THC above the legal limit of a maximum of 0.3% upon which it is a regulated controlled substance. Hence, very expensive to legally handle and dispose of this regulated waste.

A study in Maine found that composting quickly biodegraded the THC component at test sites done at multiple facilities. At the start of the study there was a 5.21% THC level in the left-over cannabis, after processing for the oil. After 6 months of composting there was no detectable THC residues.

Maine Department of Environmental Protection and two local commercial compost operations (2020).

The complexity of microbes and what they do continues to amaze us. Outer space is not a good or safe environment for life forms. Extreme temperatures, zero air pressure (vacuum), many forms of radiation, etc.

It has been discovered that bacteria can work together to survive in space. After three years in space, on the outside of the International Space Station, living microbes have been discovered.

The bacteria formed balls where the outer layer protected the inner layer from the harsh effects of space. Journal Frontiers in Microbiology (2020).

This discovery lends support that life might live in other extreme environments and on other planets. God's creation is amazing!

Many gardeners love roses, however there is a new disease affecting many types of roses called Rose Rosette Disease. The Houston Rose Society November newsletter [had a link](#) to a discussion on this disease.

We have learned in recent years that fungi play a major role in plant health and growth, and that arbuscular mycorrhizal (AM) fungi live in a symbiotic relationship with about 90% of all land-based plants, playing a key role in supplying the essential nutrient phosphorous (P) to the plant.

A new study has found by Texas Tech researchers, published in the journal Proceedings of The National Academy of Sciences (2020), has found these same fungi also supply nitrogen (N) to the plant. These AM fungi were found to supply at least 40% of the required nitrogen.

When a gardener uses a chemical fungicide, they lose these benefits. The reasons to use modern organic methods continue to increase, as they not only provide better results, they cost less.

There was a very interesting article by Dr. Mercola on health and the pandemic. One item that stood out for me was that deaths from all causes totaled up, are the same this year (2020) as in previous years. The full article can be found at: articles.mercola.com

To put the pandemic in perspective:

Cancer deaths in the USA in 2019 = 607,000

Cancer deaths in USA in 2020 = 600,000

A bombshell study published in The Lancet medical journal (April 2018) finds that low-level lead exposure is responsible for the deaths of 412,000 Americans each year, primarily from lead-induced heart disease and ischaemic heart disease.

Deaths due to medical errors in USA (2000) = 225,000

Deaths by heart disease 611,000 in 2015

[Air pollution](#) may have killed more than 30,000 Americans in a single year despite the fact that particulate matter levels in most U.S. counties fell within federal safety standards, [CNN reported](#). July 24, 2019. (2.5 million people per year worldwide)

We as a society do not shut down the economy and penalize people for all the toxic agricultural chemicals that are linked to causing cancer, or the air pollution, or medical errors that kill far more people than Covid. According to the CDC if deaths from other health problems caused by our extremely poor-

Have You Tried

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ORANGE FLOWERING MAPLE

(Abutilon)

Don't be fooled by this name. Orange flowering maple is actually a small multi-stemmed round-form shrub with maple-like leaves (not a true maple at all). In fact, abutilon's orange to red flowers resemble mallow (hibiscus) blooms, not surprising since this southern native is in the mallow family. This hummingbird/butterfly-favorite is hardy here except in very cold winters (should return) and can grow 6' x 6' with lantern-like flowers early spring to late winter. To control size, prune in late winter after hard cold spells have passed. Full sun to part shade. Tolerates our monsoon rains. In spiller-thriller-filler container plantings, this is a favorite center-planting "thriller."



Orange Flowering Maple (Abutilon) is carried by Nature's Way Resources ([Map](#)). Or contact our other sponsors below or your neighborhood nurseryman for possible sources.

LAZY GARDENER & FRIENDS HOUSTON GARDEN NEWSLETTER CALENDAR EVENTS

All events in Houston unless otherwise specified.

See Farmers Markets at end of calendar

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.*
- **FARMERS MARKETS** -- Normally we do not run non-gardening/plant events. During this pandemic, when most gardening events have been cancelled, we are happy to publish a running list of local Farmers Markets. See at end of calendar.

*Submit events to: lazygardenerbrenda@gmail.com.
PLEASE ALWAYS put group's FULL name in email subject.*

CHECK WEBSITES FOR ON-SITE COVID-19-RELATED PRECAUTIONS!

SAT., NOV. 14: COMPOSTING - BENEFITS & HOW TO COMPOST (virtual class). 9am. Fort Bend County Master Gardener event. \$15. Register at least 2 days prior; fortbend.agrilife.org/grow-your-own/. 281-342-3034 or Brandy.rader@ag.tamu.edu

SAT., NOV. 14: KINGWOOD GARDEN CLUB 20th ANNUAL REFOREST THE FOREST TREE SALE & GIFT MARKET, 8am-1pm, Kingwood Town Center Park, 8 N Main St, Kingwood. Free. [facebook.com/KingwoodGardenClub](https://www.facebook.com/KingwoodGardenClub)

SAT., NOV. 14: VIRTUAL SPECIALTY PLANT SALE, 8am-8pm, [The Mercer Society](https://www.themercersociety.org). Online only at [themercersociety.square.site](https://www.themercersociety.square.site). 713-274-4166.

SAT., NOV. 14: WILDFLOWERS FOR WILD WOMEN by Harris Count Precinct 4 Trails Parks Staff, 9am-10am, [Mercer Botanic Gardens](https://www.mercerbogardens.org). Free. 713-274-4160.

SAT., NOV. 14: THE JOHN FAIREY GARDEN OPEN DAY TOURS, 9am, 10am & 11am, 20599 FM 359 Road, Hempstead. \$10. No reservations needed. figarden.org

MON., NOV. 16: TREES: PLANTING & CARE (online) by HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS, 10:30-11:30am. Free. Houston Communit College event.. Register, hccs.edu/community-learning-workshops

TUES., NOV. 17: HEIRLOOM PLANTS (Zoom program) by GREG GRANT, 10am. Sugar Land Garden Club event. [sugarlandgardenclub.org](https://www.sugarlandgardenclub.org)

WED., NOV. 18: FORAGING OF THE KATY PRAIRIE (online event) by DR. MARK 'MERRIWETHER" VORDERBRUGGEN, noon-1pm. Free. Katy Prairie Conservancy event. [Register](https://www.katyprairie.org)

SAT., NOV. 21: THE JOHN FAIREY GARDEN OPEN DAY TOURS, 9am, 10am & 11am, 20599 FM 359 Road, Hempstead. \$10. No reservations needed. figarden.org

SAT., DEC. 5: THE JOHN FAIREY GARDEN IS HAVE OPEN DAY TOURS, 9am, 10am & 11am, 20599 FM 359 Road, Hempstead. \$10. No reservations needed. figarden.org

THURS., DEC. 10: CHRISTMAS AND ROSES, 7-9pm, free. Houston Rose Society virtual event. <https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/864464213> access code: 864-464-213. Or phone dial: +1(646)749-3122

SAT., DEC 12: CHAPPELL HILL GARDEN CLUB 2020 CHRISTMAS HOME TOUR, 10am-5pm, Tickets \$20-pre-date/\$25 tour day. Tickets: chappellhillgardenclub.com/home-tour.html

SAT., DEC. 19: THE JOHN FAIREY GARDEN IS HAVE OPEN DAY TOURS, 9am, 10am & 11am, 20599 FM 359 Road, Hempstead. \$10. No reservations needed. figarden.org

2021

SAT., JAN. 23, 2021: HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENER FRUIT TREE SALE, 9am-noon, Richard & Meg Weekley Park, 19110 Longenbaugh, Cypress. hcmga.tamu.edu/plant-sales/

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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**. Acres Homes Farmers Market Saturday, 10am-2pm, 4333 W Little York Rd.
- **WESTCHASE DISTRICT FARMERS MARKET**, Thursdays, opens 3pm, St. Cyril of

Alexandria Catholic Church, 10503 Westheimer Road (at Rogerdale Road, one block west of Beltway 8)

- **MEMORIAL VILLAGE FARMERS MARKET**, Saturdays, 9am-1pm, 10840 Beinhorn Rd.

Although normally we do 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 . . .

THE LAZY GARDENER & FRIENDS NEWSLETTER!

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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 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.

