



Mar-19-2021 | Issue 379

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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



GETTING CLOSER TO LOOKING FOR UNPROTECTED 'GREEN SURVIVORS'?

"... looks like mother nature got the ball rolling for me in a big way. Once I clean out the dead, I'm pretty sure it's gonna be a clean slate." -

- [Maas Nursery March 2021 Newsletter](#)

by **BRENDA BEUST SMITH**

I had to smile at Pat Cordray's immediate-post-freeze prediction (above) in Seabrook's [Maas Nursery Newsletter](#) as she faced potential ice & snow damage in her garden. I felt the exact same way. Expect most of you did too!

But am sure now Pat has changed her mind, as I have, and probably most of you have too. Aren't you amazed at how many even-unprotected, uncovered plants that looked dead-dead are already producing a planopy of green leaves? Reports from readers are confirming this!

Just guessing, of course, but two important triggers could be the rains we had pre- and post-freeze and the high temperatures that followed. Whatever . . . I'm thankful -- even though it's a little hard to grasp that Spring officially starts at 5:37am Saturday!

WARNING: Be cautious in looking for cold-hardy plants to replace those that don't come back. Just looking at colder-zoned plants won't cut it here. We need plants also heat-, drought- AND flood-tolerant, which most plants listed for colder zones aren't. That's why tips from local plant experts are so important.

Frequent horticulture speaker and Lake Houston Garden Club founder Gudrun Opperman definitely qualifies. In her Kingwood garden, her Afghan Cherry (*Prunus jacquemontii*) was blooming when the freeze hit. The open flowers were frozen, but it has bloomed ever since. Not as full, Gudrun reports, but still a welcome sight along with bees using it!



L to r: Penstemon tenuis, Lobelia cardinalis, Iris Virginica, Afghan cherry (*Prunus jacquemontii*) and red buckeye. (File photos, not Gudrun's)

Gudrun's Red Buckeye held onto its swollen buds and leafed out easily, as did hydrangeas and Dichroa. Iris virginica and Old Blush rose didn't miss a beat nor did her bluebonnets, Penstemon tenuis, Lobelia cardinalis and Lonicera sempervirens.

THE EXPLOSION OF ONLINE PLANT SALE INVENTORIES is a silver lining in our latest rash of life challenges. Use these to expand your awareness of what's available!

- **HOUSTON HEMEROCALLIS SOCIETY'S BILL JARVIS** notes most daylilies took snow & ice right right in stride and started putting out new foliage within a few days after the freeze ended. Daylilies grown in pots can be at risk with temperatures in the low to mid-teens, but lows in the 20s seldom cause any serious problems.



L to r, 'Ryan's Fireworks Fantasy,' 'Celtic Moonglow' and 'Picotee Prism' are a few daylilies previewed in the inventory of the on-site SAT., MAY. 8, Houston Hemerocallis Society DAYLILY PLANT SALE, 10am-2pm, 5705 Pinemont, ofts.com/hhs/. Click on "Plant Sales"

* * *

- **MERCER BOTANIC GARDEN'S ANNUAL MARCH MART** (virtual only) is this weekend. Mercer Society members get a ordering head start today (starting at 4pm, Fri., Mar. 19) at the online-only sale, which opens to the public tomorrow, Sat., Mar. 20 at 8am. But everyone can preview sale plants now, including those pictured below, even if you're not in the market for purchases, The inventory (and how to quickly join the Mercer Society) is posted at themercersociety.square.site/



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ONE SIZE DOES NOT FIT ALL WHEN PRUNING FREEZE-KILLED FOLIAGE.

In his **Practical Southern Gardener** column for the [El Campo Leader News](#), area horticultural expert **LEON MACHA** recently helped his readers with

specific advice for many of our most popular plants. He generously allowed us to excerpt from it here:

First: a warning — Juniper, Pine, and Palm relatives do not regrow after a severe top-cut. 'De-horning' or 'topping' a tree is the single worst management plan for trees. When you think you need to 'top' a tree, the TRUE answer is total removal.

A general guide:

- **Yaupon Holly (Dwarf, Regular, Weeping)** – If too ugly, cut as needed to within 2"-3" of the ground. They always grow back, as good as new.
- **Nandina (all forms)** – Cut to near ground. New sprouts emerge from at or below ground. Don't prune as a hedge; will never look natural.
- **Asparagus, Plumbago, Salvia, Ginger, etc.** – Cut to near ground level. New growth starts below the soil surface.
- **Liriope, Monkey Grass, Asian Jasmine, etc.** – Mow off old, ragged foliage. New growth will reward you.
- **Indian Hawthorn** – Old growth below 50% of current height may not sprout new buds. Limit severe pruning to stems that grew during last 3-5 years. If need to do severe pruning, NOW is your time. It's hard to tell with these. This is first time I've ever seen them freeze back.
- **Photinia, Loropetalum** — **Not too late, still ok to cut back or leave alone.** Loropetalum is best as an informal hedge (can get 15' high!).
- **Azaleas** – Many azaleas lost all their leaves but kept their buds. If you're lucky enough to get blooms, wait until the last flower opens. Azalea regrowth will surprise you. Keep them well watered while they grow back. New growth will probably be at top of plant only.
- **Hedge Plants (Ligustrum, Holly, Eleagnus, Pitosporum, Guava** – cut 2' shorter than height you want. Many of these can be cut to 12" tall if the stump is not too old. Never severely cut in summer. **Viburnum** — cut to the ground. Don't leave any decaying wood.
- **Crapemyrtle** – **NO CRAPE MURDER** – If previous pruning ruined their natural beauty, cut as needed train the new growth into pure beauty.
- **Texas Sage** – As Texas Sage ages, its natural form can be pretty straggly. Can cut to about 6-12" tall. Returning sprouts will amaze you.
- **Hibiscus, Bougainvillea, Pride of Barbados, Firebush, Esperanza, Firecracker Plants, etc.** - These all recover from whatever you do. Best to cut to the ground. They won't come out from the dead wood.
- **Topiaries** – Rehabilitate poodles, pyramids, patio trees, espaliers, etc., by cutting at least 6" smaller than final look you want. They will start with a bare, strange look, but will end up looking beautiful and new.

* * *

THINKING POSITIVE ABOUT WILDFLOWERS

[Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center](#) says we can look forward to the familiar joys of a wonderful spring wildflower season. [Their predictions.](#)

- [TEXAS' OFFICIAL BLUEBONNET FESTIVAL](#) is a go for Sat.-Sun., April 10-11, in the delightful

little town of Chappell Hill, 65 miles northwest of Houston on Hwy. 290.

- **TYLER COUNTY DOGWOOD FESTIVAL** runs for 3 weekends: March 20-21 & 26-27 and April 3 in Woodville (not the City of Tyler). 100 miles northeast of Houston off I-59/69 N.

HELP WILDFLOWER LOVERS by reporting exceptional displays to:

- <https://www.facebook.com/TexasWildflowerReport/>
- <http://www.texaswildflowerpictures.com/update.htm>

NOTE IN CALENDAR BELOW: MANY SALES MAY HAVE SUFFERED SEVERE FREEZE DAMAGE ON PLANTS, BUT HAVE NOT SO NOTIFIED US. CHECK WEBSITES UPDATES & COVID-19 PRECAUTIONS!

***Brenda's LAZY GARDENER & FRIENDS HOUSTON GARDEN NEWSLETTER column is based on her 40+ years as Houston Chronicle's Lazy Gardener
Email: lazygardenerbrenda@gmail.com***

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OHBA

GROW BETTER VEGGIES A 3 PART WEBINAR SERIES

Dany Millikin is the Host of HomeShow Garden Pros & Executive Director of OHBA. Eating healthy food is a paramount importance and growing your own is richly rewarding and fun. From this three part series you will learn the tips and tricks on what vegetables to grow and how to keep up with them. Join us as Dany shares his knowledge and successful habits for growing food.



with Dany Millikin

MARCH

22ND
6:00 – 7:30PM

Class 1: How to Grow Food: The Many Methods & Singular Truths

24TH
6:00 – 7:30PM

Class 2: 21 Food Plants you Should Grow in Houston

25TH
6:00 – 7:30PM

Class 3: Tips and Tricks: Food Gardening Habits that will lead to better success Grow in Houston

TICKET PRICES:

OHBA Members: FREE • Non-OHBA Members: \$25

Registration ends March 21ST • Sign up @ ohbaonline.org/register

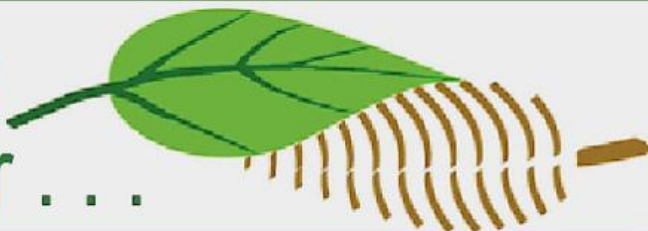
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John's Corner . . .



BOOK REVIEW

THE SOIL – HUMAN HEALTH NEXUS edited by Rattan Lal, PhD,
CRC Press, 2021, ISBN: 978-0-367-42214-1

This book ties together many of the issues facing society today and is part of a series of books titled *Advances in Soil Science*. This book compiles the studies of over 25 scientists and hundreds of papers from around the world.

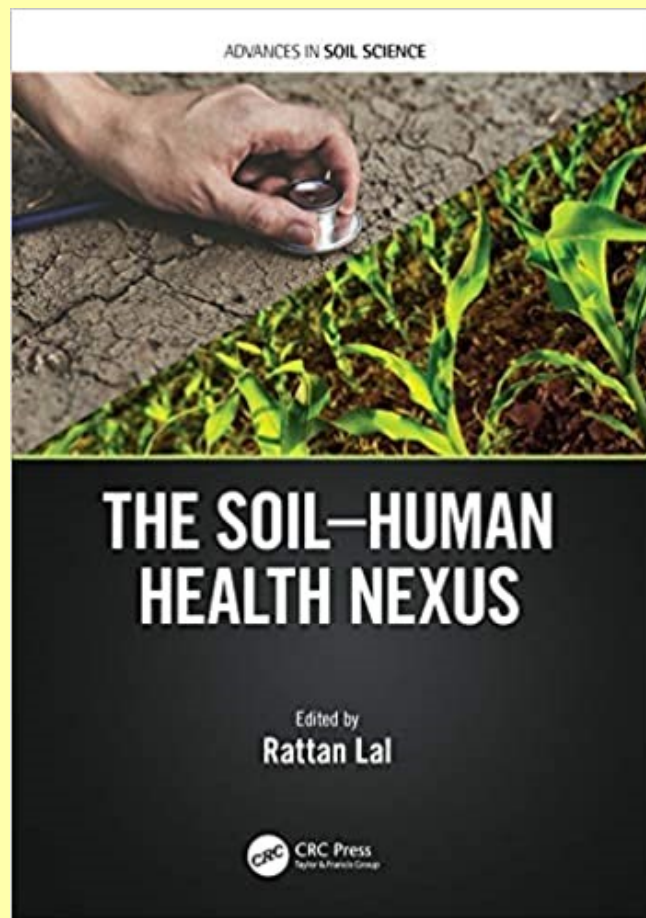
The focus is on what has become known as “*One Health*” from multiple disciplines from all over the world to obtain optimal health for people, animals, plants, and our environment. The concept of One health has a strong history in the Bible as far back as Moses.

See what the land is like and whether the people that live there are strong or weak, few or many. What kind of land do they live in? How is the soil? Is it fertile or poor? Are there trees on it or not? Do your best to bring back some fruit of the land. Numbers 13:18-20.

The term “soil health” refers to the functionality of a soil as a living ecosystem capable of sustaining plants, animals, and humans while also improving the environment. In addition to soil health, the environment also comprises the quality of air, water, vegetation, and biota. The health of soil, plants, animals, people, and the environment is an indivisible continuum.

“Soils can beneficially or adversely affect human health, and likewise human activity can improve or destroy soil health. In the new anthropogenic era, it is worth examining the soil health-human health nexus. To do this, the author evaluates soil from the perspective of what infects us, what heals us, what contaminates us, what nourishes us, and what we breathe. Likewise, the author examines the impact of humans on soil using a similar matrix and suggests strategies to improve human health by maintaining or improving soil health.”

“One of the notable ramifications of the Anthropocene is the growing risks of decline in soil health by anthropogenic activities. Important among these activities are deforestation, biomass burning, excessive soil tillage, indiscriminate use of agrochemicals, excessive irrigation by flooding or inundation, and extractive farming practices. Soil pollution, by industrial effluents and urban waste adversely impacts human health. Degradation of soil health impacts nutritional quality of food, such as the uptake of heavy metals or deficit of essential micro-nutrients, and contamination by pests and pathogens. Indirectly, soil health may impact human health through contamination of water and pollution of air. This book aims to: Present



relationships of soil health to human health and soil health to human nutrition. Discuss the nexus between soil degradation and malnourishment as well as the important links between soil, plant, animal and human health.”

This book is a great way for one to learn about these relationships and how they can be applied in one's own garden and has a tremendous amount of information for the serious gardener or naturalist.

* * *

Have you tried . .

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VINTAGE JADE DISTYLUM

Thick-growing dark green evergreen foliage and petite red flowers on this lovely 2-3' high/4-5' tall spreading shrub that blooms in winter! A member of the witch hazel family, Full sun to part shade, well drained site. Tolerates drought and is exceptionally resistant to insects and disease. Low maintenance, fast growing and adaptable. Used as a screen, mass planting, background plant, thick hedge or ground cover.



VINTAGE JADE DISTYLUM 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.

NOTE: IF YOU'RE CONCERNED ABOUT MASKING

POLICIES AT EVENTS, CHECK WITH CONTACTS LISTED

SAT. FEB. 27-MAR. 6: 2021 SPRING VEGETABLE AND HERB PLANT SALE by FORT BEND COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS. Online: fbmg.org/events/annual-sales/vegetable-herb-sale/. FortBendmg@ag.tamu.edu; 281-341-7068.

FRI., MAR. 19: YEAR-ROUND CARE OF LANDSCAPE TREES AND SHRUBS (virtual), 10-11:30am. Register: galveston.agrilife.org/event/year-round-care-of-landscape-trees-and-shrubs/

SAT, MAR. 20: MARCH MART VIRTUAL PLANT SALE, 8am-8pm The Mercer Society. Online: themercersociety.square.site. Details: 713-274-4166.

FRI., MAR. 26: TOMATO STRESS MANAGEMENT – GROWING GREAT TOMATOES (virtual) by IRA GERVAIS, 10-11:30am. Register: galveston.agrilife.org/event/tomato-stress-management/

SAT., MAR. 27, HERB AND PLANT SALE AT THE WYNNE HOME. 8am-2pm. Wynne Home Arts Center, 1428 11th St., Huntsville. Texas Thyme Unit, Herb Society of America event. texasthymeunit.org; 936-891-5024

SAT., MAR. 27, NATIVE PLANT SALE BY NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY OF TEXAS – CLEAR LAKE CHAPTER. (live sale –Covid precautions apply) 9am-noon. EIH Habitat Garden, University Of Houston Clear Lake, 2700 Bay Area Blvd.. npsot.org/wp/clearlake/

SUN., MAR. 28-APR. 3: NEAR NORTHWEST MANAGEMENT DISTRICT VIRTUAL SPRING PLANT SALE, SALE PREVIEW by HEIDI SHEESLEY at nnmd.org. Pick up at Treeseach Farms, Inc.

THURS., APR. 8: JOURNEY TO INTRODUCTION AND EXCITING NEW ROSES FOR TODAY'S GARDEN by KRISTEN SMITH (virtual), 7- 9pm, Houston Rose Society/Houston event. Free. Meeting link: houstonrose.org

APR. 10-14: COCKRELL BUTTERFLY CENTER PLANT SALE (virtual). hmns.org/plantsale

TUES, APR. 13: MONTGOMERY COUNTY MASTER GARDENER VIRTUAL SPRING SALE, 8am – Wed noon, Online at mcmga.square.site ,AgriLife Extension Office, 9020 Airport Road, Conroe. mcmga.com; 936-539-7824

FRI., APR 16: GROWING CUCURBITS by HERMAN AUER (Zoom), 10-11:30. Pre-register: <https://galveston.agrilife.org/horticulture/mgseminars/>

FRI., APR 23: BEST PRACTICES OF WATERING by KAROLYN GEPHART (Zoom), 10-11:30. Register: galveston.agrilife.org/horticulture/mgseminars/

WED., APR. 24: INTERNATIONAL OLEANDER SOCIETY (Zoom event), 7pm. Free. [Join meeting](#). (Meeting ID: 952 433 8090. Passcode: 006790)

FRI, APR 30-MAY 1: GALVESTON COUNTY MASTER GARDENER MAY DAY SALE. Online. Browse beginning Fri, Apr 23. Shopping Noon Fri-Noon Sat. <https://store.galvestonmg.org>

SAT., MAY. 8: DAYLILY PLANT SALE, 10am-2pm, 5705 Pinemont, Houston.

Houston Hemerocallis Society event. List of varieties posted at ofts.com/hhs/

SAT.-SUN., JUNE 5-6: GALVESTON HOME & GARDEN SHOW, Galveston Island Convention Center. galvestonhomeandgarden.com/

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 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.

