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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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LAZARUS PLANTS ARISING! DAYLILIES EARN THEIR KEEP

*"A garden . . . teaches patience and careful watchfulness;
it teaches industry and thrift; above all it teaches entire trust."*

— Gertrude Jekyll (1843-1932 British gardener extraordinaire!)
by **BRENDA BEUST SMITH**

GOOD NEWS CONTINUES for gardeners who have faith their plants will return, even this long after our Arctic Invasion. I'll start with another in my yard, an angel trumpet I named 'Penny Brown', for wonderful cousin who gave it to me. Tiny green shoots finally appeared this past week (*I've been checking!*) from roots just under the soil surface. This tells me this plant has the fantastically-strong root system for which lazy gardeners always dream!

MORE LAZARUS PLANTS FROM READERS:

- **MICHAEL RIEKE** in Northwest Harris County brought smiles to **MARGARET PIERCE** (re her

yet-to-return bottlebrush tree) with report his 15-year-old plant is showing green at the roots! Also, ditto for both his (and my!) giant red turk's cap, hummingbird bush and firespikes (pictured). Just before publication, he added his two pipevines!

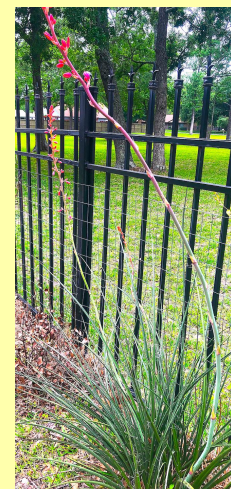


- **DR. M.** reported no news yet for his "yet-to-reappear" bleeding heart vine. But among treasures finally coming back to life are esperanza, butterflybush, confederate rose, oleander, thryallis, night-blooming & star jasmines and his grapefruit, lemon and fig trees. I'm literally praying over my thryallis and esperanza, so find great comfort in his report!
- **PAULA BAZAN's** porterweed and firecracker plant (coral fountain plant / *Russelia equisetiformis*) have finally returned. Neither of mine have so far, but I have faith! Certainly not going to dig them up yet.



Paula started pinching off tomato suckers, tiny new branches that grow in the crotch between a main stem and a strong side stem. They will produce fruit, but it tends to be weak and inferior quality. Paula can't swear this is why she is having such a bumper tomato crop this year but says her bushes are an amazing "sea of yellow blooms."

- **LYNN SMITH** wants to warn fellow gardeners that cutting back citrus -- she specifically listed lemons -- to below the graft point (bump at bottom of main trunk) means what will come back is not your treasured variety, but the root stock onto which it was grafted for hardiness. That root stock will not produce the fruit the graft was giving you.
- **'PEGGY MARTIN' ANTIQUE ROSE's** impressively-long blooming displays this spring certainly have earned her a WOW Award. But I'm going to also tout red yucca (pictured). Mine is blooming for the first time since planted 3+ years ago.



WAVES OF "KNOCK OUT" roses around town are truly spectacular. Did your established "Knock Out" die back? If so, did it return and immediately set buds? Be sure to add how old it is, plus color. Since Knock Outs now come in red, pink, yellow, double and single flowers -- have you noticed any hardiness/growth/bloom differences in the colors/types?

* * *

DAYLILIES — BILL JARVIS' report grabbed my eye with this: "I grow over 250 different daylilies and they came through the freeze just fine. The foliage died back to the ground but within a few days it started coming back." Daylilies have always been at the top of my Lazy Gardener's Favorite Plants list, but it surprises me how many folk don't realize daylilies don't all bloom at the same time.

Some daylilies are early bloomers, some mid-, some late. In our Spotlight article below, Bill Jarvis shows just a few of the beauties that will be on sale at the Houston Hemerocallis Society's Sat., May 8, Daylily Plant Sale, 10 am-2pm, 5705 Pinemont. A full list of varieties is posted at ofts.com/hhs/. First, however . . .



TIP O THE TROWEL TO . . .

- **KATY PRAIRIE CONSERVANCY's** "Texas Coastal Prairie Initiative" which been invited to join the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) project by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). katyprairie.org/pressrelease.
- **'CITY NATURE CHALLENGE'** -- This broad-based campaign is designed be fun and to promote awareness of, and document, wildlife in our area. Native Prairies Association of Texas and many local organizations are involved in this April 30-May 3 Greater Houston area nature challenge. Details: citynaturechallenge.org/
- **H-E-B TEXAS EARTH SUPPORT** for its aid to 38 Texas-based environmental/conservation nonprofits, including our own Citizens Environmental Coalition and other local Earth-caring organizations. heb.com/static-page/environment

* * *



AFTER 50+/- YEARS of trying to help with readers' garden dilemmas, this is a first. Seems our proliferation of now-feral peacocks is becoming a landscaping challenge. DON'T send suggestions you know I won't/can't print! But glad to share gardening (only!) solutions other than "*build a fence!*" They do fly. For example, which plants do they eat, and which do they seem not to prefer? [See this gorgeous one strut his stuff in Duessen Park on Lake Houston.](#) (my video)

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





Qneak peak at Houston Hemerocallis Society's sale inventory plants, l to r, 'Caribbean Magic,' 'Christmas In Oz,' 'Ruby Spider' and Top Show Off.

DAYLILIES TOOK RECENT SNOW & ICE "RIGHT IN STRIDE"

BY BILL JARVIS

[Houston Hemerocallis Society](#)

During the recent unusual hard freeze, daylily foliage died back to ground level. Fortunately, most daylilies took this right in stride and started putting out new foliage within a few days after the freeze ended.

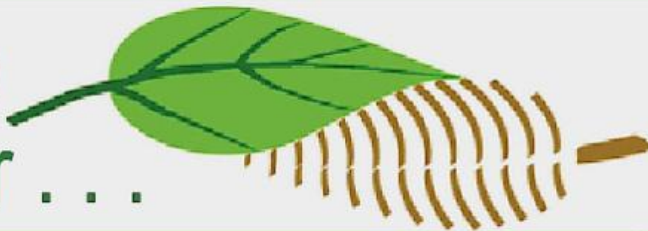
In my garden, a few individual fans did not survive but these were mostly small fans that had been transplanted only 2-3 months prior. Daylilies grown in pots can be at risk with temperatures in the low to mid-teens like we experienced this year. However, normal Houston winter lows in the 20s seldom cause any serious problems to daylilies even when grown in pots.

Weather can play a significant part in when bloom happens. A generally cool spring can delay blooming while just the opposite happens when the winter is mild and spring warm-up comes early. I can remember one year when only 5 daylilies had begun blooming by Mother's Day weekend (May). But I've also seen years where 60-70% of the daylilies were blooming at the end of April. Normal bloom times typically fall somewhere in-between.

Other factors include the maturity or general health of individual fans. Fans that haven't reached maturity may delay putting up scapes until later in the spring. Plants unusually stressed may bloom later than normal also. Top Show Off is often one of the first daylilies to bloom each year while Caribbean Magic and Christmas In Oz tend to be more mid-season bloomers.

Stress can be from an unusually hot dry summer & fall (like 2011) or a late hard freeze (like this year). Individual plants may also be been stressed by the amount of scapes they produced the previous year. I have one seedling that looks great and blooms like crazy one year but all the blooms stress the plants so the following year it blooms later and doesn't have a lot of blooms.

STILL HAVE DAYLILY QUESTIONS? Houston Hemerocallis Society experts will be on hand at the Sat., May 8, HHS Daylily Plant Sale, 10 am-2pm, 5705 Pinemont, A full list of varieties is posted at ofts.com/hhs/



NEWS FROM THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF SOIL AND PLANTS # 151

I enjoy a good cup of coffee every morning and prefer organic shade grown coffee for many reasons, from more flavonoids to higher levels of phytochemicals that support our health.

Originally, coffee was an understory tree found in Ethiopia. However, most coffee has been hybridized to grow in the sun to produce higher yields, and most of the health benefits are lost as well as the flavor. The complication is that coffee (Arabica) when grown in the sun is subject to a parasitic fungal pathogen we know as coffee leaf rust. This requires that more toxic chemicals be sprayed on the coffee plants which ends up in the coffee.

Researchers from Stockholm University wondered why shade grown coffee had fewer rust issues. They discovered that there is a hyper-parasitic fungus that grows on top of the rust in humid environments (like those found under shade trees) which is associated with less rust issues. *Journal of Agriculture, Ecosystems & Environment* (2021).

Shade grown coffee besides being better for our health, also sequesters carbon that helps fight climate change. As the bible states: "Study nature and let it teach us!"

On many occasions we have talked about the importance of minerals for both plants and our health. Several dozen studies have shown that nutrition (vitamins and minerals) is the best way to protect us against the Covid and other viruses.

I am reading a new book called "The Mineral Fix" by James DiNicolantonio, PhD on the importance of minerals, elements technically. In the book he states that 1 in 3 Americans is deficient in at least 10 minerals (elements)! These include potassium (K), manganese (Mn), magnesium (Mg), and zinc (Zn) which are all required for our immune system to protect us from disease.

The 10 elements that people are deficient in are Boron (>75%), Manganese (~75%), Magnesium (50-70%), Chromium (56%), Calcium (44-73%), Zinc (42%), Iron (35-35%), Copper (25-31%), Selenium (15-40%), and Molybdenum (15%). These are all essential for good health.

There are several reasons why this has happened: 1) they are not in our soil any more 2) many hybridized and GMO plants have lost the ability to absorb these elements from the soil assuming they are there in the first place, 3) glyphosate the active ingredient in the herbicide Round Up that contaminates

most food available today prevents the absorption of these elements by our bodies.

The reason to grow one's own vegetables, fruits and herbs, in fertile organic soil that has been re-mineralized, becomes more important each day.

Note: The RDA (recommended Daily Allowance) by the FDA is the minimum one needs to prevent severe deficiency. However, optimum health often require level 1,000 times higher than the RDA. Dr. Mercola newsletter.

Another study published in the journal Nature Communications (2020) was on the human microbiome in our digestive system. They found that a human's living environment, can significantly change and improve out gut's microbiota. For example, students living on farms for only 3 months had a significantly increase in microbes that promotes health. These same microbes were found in soil samples from the farm environment.

The effects of the environment out weighed the genetic factors in shaping the microbiota. This is another reason to be an organic gardener and get our hands in the soil, compost and mulch. If we incorporate habitat gardening for birds and wildlife, I suspect the benefits are even greater.

Many folks I have spoken with over the years have stated that talking to one's plants help them grow better. I remember reading a study many years ago that found that playing classical music helped plants grow better and healthier while hard rock music retarded growth and the plants had more problems like insects and disease.

Research from the International Laboratory of Plant Science at the University of Florence supports that plants have a form of intelligence and are conscious. Studies have shown that plants can communicate with each other, they can learn, they exhibit decision making ability, they can remember. They have identified that plants may have up to 20 types of senses and it could be higher (humans only have 5).

For example, they believe the scent of freshly cut grass is actually a distress signal and warning of danger, that the grass communicates to other plants.

* * *

Have you tried .

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LITTLE BLUESTEM

(Schizachyrium scoparium)

Bluish perennial stems give a beautiful ornamental air to this slender, upright grass that can reach 3' tall and 1' wide. in Fall, it

turns a radiant mahogany-red with white, shining seed tufts. Color remains nearly all winter, even through snow! Especially beloved by small birds in winter, also attracts butterflies. Rated highly resistant to deer.

Little Bluestem *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

FRI.-SAT., 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 1: TEXAS ROSE RUSTLERS SPRING EVENT, 10am, Memory Park, 202 Bessie Price Owen Dr., Montgomery. Free. Texasroserustlers.com

SAT., MAY 1: QUAIL VALLEY GARDEN CLUB SPRING PLANT SALE, 10am-3pm, The Tee Garden, 2880 LaQuinta Drive, Missouri City. QuailValleyGardenClub.org

SAT., MAY 1: BROMELIAD SOCIETY/HOUSTON SALE, 7am.-4pm, Jimbo's Nursery, 15019 W. 8th Street, Santa Fe. bromeliadsocietyhouston.org/, Jimbo's 409-925-6933; Allyn Pearlman 713-858-3047

SAT., MAY 1: FAMILY ADVENTURE SERIES: SACHET THIS WAY, 10:30am-12pm, [Mercer Botanic Gardens](http://MercerBotanicGardens.com). Free. Register: 713-274-4160.

WED., MAY 5: GULF COAST ANNUAL HERB FAIR, 9am-3pm, Moody Gardens Grand

Ballroom, 2903 Dominique Dr., Galveston. Luncheon, \$40. pelicanway88@att.net

THURS., MAY 6: BENEFITS OF BATS by BRANDI KELLER, virtual, 10am. Harris County Master Gardener event. Register: eventbrite.com/e/home-grown-lecture-series-tickets-143797162183

SAT., MAY. 8: DAYLILY PLANT SALE, 10am-2pm, 5705 Pinemont, Houston. Houston Hemerocallis Society event. List of varieties posted at ofts.com/hhs/

SAT., MAY 8: SPRING PLANT SALE, 9am-4pm, [Mercer Botanic Gardens](https://www.mercerbogardens.com). Free. 713-274-4160

MON., MAY 10: INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT, virtual, 10-11am. Harris County Master Gardener event. Register: hccs.edu/community-learning-workshops

THURS., MAY 13: BENEFICIALS AND PESTS IN THE ROSE GARDEN by SUZANNE WAINWRIGHT-EVENS, virtual, 7-9pm, Houston Rose Society event. Free. Details: houstonrose.org

FRI., MAY 14 AND 28: GARDEN CRUISIN': TOUR DE 4, 9am & 11am, [Mercer Botanic Gardens](https://www.mercerbogardens.com). Free. Ages 60+ or age 12+ with transport needs. Register: 713-274-4160

TUES., MAY 18: INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT, virtual, 11am-noon. Harris County Master Gardeners & Public Library System event. Live at: facebook.com/harriscountyp/live

THUR., MAY 20: GROWING FABULOUS HOUSEPLANTS by PAUL WINSKI (virtual). 10am. Harris County Master Gardener event. Free. Register: eventbrite.com/e/home-grown-lecture-series-tickets-143797162183

THURS., MAY 20: VOLUNTEER ORIENTATION, 6-7pm, [Mercer Botanic Gardens](https://www.mercerbogardens.com). Free. Off-site: Timber Lane Community Center. Register: 713-274-4160

FRI., MAY 21: COMPOSTING by JIM GILLIAM (Zoom), 10-11:30. Pre-register: galveston.agrilife.org/horticulture/mgseminars/

FRI., MAY 22: EXPLORING DENDROLOGY: THE STUDY OF TREES, 9-11am, [Mercer Botanic Gardens](https://www.mercerbogardens.com). Free. Register: 713-274-4160.

THURS., MAY 27: BIRD SURVEY, 8-10am, [Mercer Botanic Gardens](https://www.mercerbogardens.com). Free. Register: 713-274-4160

FRI., MAY 28: RAINWATER HARVESTING by NAT GRUESEN (Zoom), 10-11:30. Pre-register: galveston.agrilife.org/horticulture/mgseminars/

SAT., MAY 29: ALL ABOUT INVASIVES, 9-11am, [Mercer Botanic Gardens](https://www.mercerbogardens.com). Free. Register: 713-274-4160

SAT., JUNE 5: MORNING FAMILY HIKE, 9am-11am, [Mercer Botanic Gardens](https://www.mercerbogardens.com). Free. Register: 713-274-4160

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

FRI., JUNE 11: GARDEN CRUISIN': TOUR DE 4, 9am & 11am, [Mercer Botanic Gardens](https://www.mercerbogardens.com). Free. Ages 60+ or 12+ with transport needs. Register: 713-274-4160

SATURDAY, JUNE 19: FATHER'S DAY VIRTUAL PLANT SALE, 8am-8pm, [Mercer Botanic Gardens](https://www.mercerbogardens.com). Online only at themerchersociety.square.site. 713-274-4166.

FRI., JUNE 25: BEYOND BEES!, 9:30-10:30am, [Mercer Botanic Gardens](https://www.mercerbogardens.com). Free. Register: 713-274-4160

SAT., JUNE 26: ALL ABOUT INVASIVES, 9am-11am, [Mercer Botanic Gardens](https://www.mercerbogardens.com). Free.

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 . . .

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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.

