



LAZY GARDENER & FRIENDS

Houston Garden Newsletter



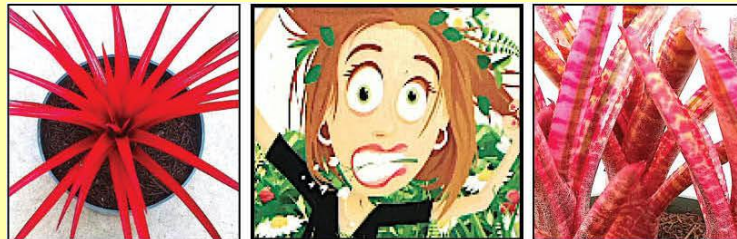
April-22-2022 | Issue 433

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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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FUN LOOK AT AMARYLLIS, BROMELIADS & ARE YOU A 'CRAZY PLANT LADY'?

*"The butterfly is a flying flower,
the flower a tethered butterfly"*

Écouchard Lebrun (1729 – 1807) , French lyric poet.

By **BRENDA BEUST SMITH**

INSANT SMILES -- SUSAN MANNING SWIERENGA

in Sinton sent in this Easter-blooming gorgeous pink potted amaryllis (*pictured*) which has taken over 2 years to rebloom after original flowering. When a flower this gorgeous finally reappears, it's like seeing a treasured loved one after a long absence.



Plants can become really good friends if you know their backstory. One legend: Amaryllis (Greek for 'sparkle') fell for a handsome, cold-hearted shepherd. Desperate to win his love, she pierced her heart with a golden arrow, shedding blood drops as she headed to his cottage. ([Rest of story](#)). From the drops, 'amaryllis' spouted.



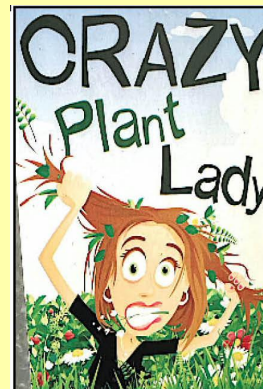
These super-hardy flowers love us so much, often one laid on an indirect-light windowsill may sprout either leaves and flower or a baby bulb, just as it does outside. This is mine (pictured), not by design but by being totally forgotten! In the interest of science, I'll continue to ignore and report on what happens!

The larger the bulb, the more flowers it will produce. To maybe get an original bulb to rebloom sooner, cut the flower stalk (not leaves!) down to 1". Stop watering so it will go dormant. Set in cool dark place. In a few weeks, move into warm bright spot. Start watering again. [More tips](#)

* * *

A LITTLE MORE GARDENING HUMOR

- **ANNA S.** decided to try her hand at peonies too(see *Apr. 8, 2022, issue*). She was stopped by price, lack of availability and, she's just *"not ready to air condition and freeze a flower bed!"*



- This fun cartoon (*pictured*) started **ARLEEN HARBIN** wondering (a la Jeff Foxworthy) when a gardener turns into a "Crazy Plant Lady"? She made up this test for her [Sugar Land Garden Club](#) cohorts. Each "yes" counts as one point)
 1. Relevant conversations lead to plants, flowers, trees, mulch, etc.
 2. Vacations are centered around visiting all gardens in the area.
 3. Subscribing to all the seed catalogues.
 4. Reading best garden design magazines, websites, Instagram posts.
 5. Hanging out with friends at various garden nurseries.
 6. Just one more pot for this one more plant.
 7. Well, I don't have this plant so I guess I have to have it.
 8. Most of the photos stored on your phone are of flowers.
 9. Most of your friends share your passion of gardening.
 10. Looking at everything as something to repurpose in your garden.
 11. Never has enough plants.
 12. Brings a shovel to public gardens.
 13. Travels with a shovel and plastic bags.
 14. Never too ashamed to ask "are you throwing out these plants?"(Often asked at Home Depot, Lowe's, Wal Mart!)
 15. Never say no to free plants or passalongs.
 16. Always collecting seeds in wild, my yard, or your yard. It doesn't matter!
 17. Plants vines wherever possible. Worry about excessive growth later.
 18. Gifts seeds to others.
 19. Goes to garden club meetings solely for the plant swaps.
 20. Vacation photos are mostly of flowers and plants.

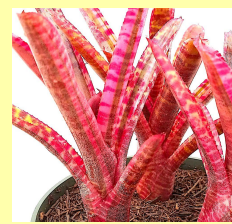
Each statement counts as ONE point. Score:

- 1 to 5 — Gardener wannabe
- 5 to 10 — Gardener with a passion
- 10 or more — Certified Crazy Plant Lady

* * *

In. our **SPOTLIGHT ARTICLE** below, [Bromeliad Society/Houston](#) details choice, in-demand specimens available at two upcoming BS/H events (Go early! Supplies limited):

- **SAT., APR. 30: BS/H SPRING SALE**, 9am-4pm, Metropolitan Multi-services Center, 1475 W. Gray. Free.
- **SAT.-SUN., MAY 21-22: BS/H ANNUAL SHOW/SALE**: Sat: 9-5; Sun: 11-4, Judson Robinson, Jr. Community Center, 2020 Hermann Dr. Free.



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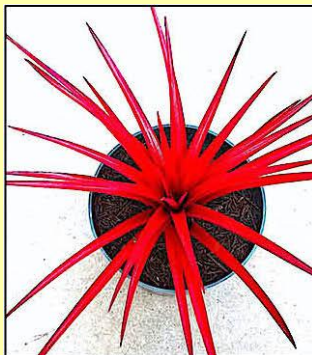
*Brenda Beust Smith's cfoolumn in the
LAZY GARDENER & FRIENDS HOUSTON GARDEN NEWSLETTER
is based on her 40+ years as Houston Chronicle's Lazy Gardener
Email: lazygardenerbrenda@gmail.com*

* * *

FAVOR? IF SUBMITTING EVENTS FOR CALENDAR . . .

*Event notices limited to 3 lines type. Type info, in exact calendar format, format, directly into email. so it can be copied/pasted into next issue.
NO event notices as pdf or jpg flyer. Otherwise, expect publication delay.
lazygardenerbrenda@gmail.com*

* * *



GREAT BROMELIADS FOR OUR GULF COAST AREA!

By BROMELIAD SOCIETY/HOUSTON
(bromeliadsocietyhouston.org)

We'd like to introduce to you some interesting bromeliads that you might want to consider adding to your collections – and why you should consider them.

The following plants include six different genera and the growing conditions they prefer. All of them can be grown in Houston, keeping in mind that they will need to be protected during winter temperatures below 45 degrees.

Hohenbergia *magnispina* 'Karla'

- Beautiful vegetative sport of a Hohenbergia species developed over many years, with an upright, branched inflorescence.
- The only variegated Hohenbergia.
- Grow in bright light to maintain compact tubular

shape.

- Probably best grown in a pot due to large size.
- All of the listed plants may not be easy to find but well worth adding to your collection.



Sincoregelia 'Firecracker'

- Colorful, bigeneric terrestrial hybrid of Sincoraea and Neoregelia.
- Grows best in good potting mix with the addition of some porous rock or coarse sand to aid drainage. Keep mix moist but not water-logged.
- Grow in bright light including some direct sunlight to develop the striking red color.
- Blooms with lavender flowers in center of plant.



Billbergia 'Poquito Blanco'.

- Grow in well-draining potting mix or epiphytically.
- Prefers bright light to develop the distinctive green and black patterning of the leaves.
- Do not fertilize mature plants until they have bloomed (for pups) or they will lose color and conformation.
- Rapid grower and prolific pupper, makes a great hanging basket.



Neoregelia 'White Hot Embers'

- Pink margined leaves, stoloniferous so will form a nice clump for hanging baskets.
- Grow in well-draining mix or epiphytically.
- Prefers bright light for best color.
- Do not fertilize until after plants have bloomed.



Dyckia estevesii

- Rare, slow-growing Brazilian terrestrial species that grows in a distinctive distichous fan-shape.
- Prefers full sun.
- This, like most Dyckias, prefers a well-draining potting mix, but leave the pot sitting in a saucer of water to prevent brown leaf-tips.
- Lateral inflorescence with yellow orange flowers allows the plant to continue growing after it blooms.



Aechmea egleriana

- Outstanding rarity from the Amazon basin, this is a large spiny Aechmea with a distinctive bulbous

base.

- Probably best grown in a pot due to large size.
- Not difficult to grow but cold tender.
- Bloom is a multi-branched panicle of orange berries.

* * *

EDITOR'S NOTE: You can find all of these at two upcoming [Bromeliad Society/Houston sales](#) :

- **SAT., APR. 30: BS/H SPRING SALE**, 9am-4pm, Metropolitan Multi-services Center, 1475 W. Gray. Free.
- **SAT.-SUN., MAY 21-22: BS/H ANNUAL SHOW/SALE:** Sat: 9-5; Sun: 11-4, Judson Robinson, Jr. Community Center, 2020 Hermann Dr.
- GO EARLY! Limited supplies at both sales.



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John's Corner



NEWS FROM THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF SOIL AND PLANTS # 193

Another benefit of gardening has been discovered. A review of 1,279 studies has found that exercising three times per week for four months benefits one's memory. The sooner one starts and the longer we exercise the more pronounced the benefits. Communications Medicine (2022)

When we shovel soil, rake leaves, spread mulch or top dress our lawns with compost or pull weeds we are getting the required exercise.

Herbicides residues cause long term damage to plants especially glyphosate-based herbicides. The residues cause changes in a plant's hormone levels like phytohormone, which is found in three major crops oats, potatoes, and strawberries.

Glyphosate inhibits a specific enzyme in the shikimate pathway which is required for the creation of aromatic amino acids the building blocks of proteins. This effectively lowers the nutrient density of the food. Frontiers in Plant Science (2022).

The journal PeerJ (2022) had a paper from the University of Washington that looked at regenerative farming and gardening techniques.

Farms that combined no-till, cover crops, and diverse rotations, produced crops with higher soil organic matter levels, higher soil health scores and hence higher levels of vitamins, minerals, and phytochemicals.

Crops were also grown on the farm for animal feed. Pigs raised on the farm had higher levels of omega-3 fatty acids and 11 times more alpha-linolenic acid (ALA) than conventionally raised animals.

They researchers also looked at beef. They found that meat raised on farms using regenerative methods, when compared to conventional meat, had higher levels of good Omega-3 fats and lower amounts of bad omega-6 fats.

A preliminary release of an on-going study in the journal *Nutrients* (2022) has found a link between certain bacteria in our guts and certain personality traits. The old adage: “You are what you eat” becomes truer every day.

A common worm called nematodes (*Caenorhabditis elegans*) is normally asexual. However, when stressed by a harsh changing environment, over several generations it begins to reproduce sexually. This is an epigenetic change that occurs by modifying the RNA fragments it releases. *Developmental Cell* (2022)

When we apply toxic chemicals to our gardens (artificial fertilizers to herbicides and fungicides, etc., even chlorinated water we create a stressful environment for soil organisms.

Researchers from Exeter University published a paper titled: “How Do pathogens learn to be pathogens? Partnerships between microbes leads to human disease.”

Our environment is inhabited by trillions of microbes that are mostly good. When the fungus *Rhizopus* that lives in the soil and grows on spoiled food is attacked by an amoeba that want to eat it, the fungus must defend itself.

The fungus partners with a bacterium (*Ralstonia*) that allows the fungus to live inside its body (hide from the amoeba). In return the bacteria now produces a toxin that the fungus can use to stop the predator.

Using this same strategy is how some fungi cause disease in humans like mucormycosis. *Current Biology* (2022). God’s creation is amazing.

A study in the *Journal of the American College of Nutrition* examined nutrition from 43 different crops comparing present levels to those in 1950 using USDA data.

They found that protein, calcium, iron, phosphorous, vitamins B-2 and C had all dropped markedly.

“Mineral deficiency is estimated to affect 1/3 of all humanity causing health problems.”

One of the reasons is that plants have been breed to live on damaged soils, to have disease and herbicide resistance, and for yield, not nutritional quality or taste.

Many elements require a healthy soil microbiome for them to be absorbed by the plants. The use of artificial fertilizers, pesticides, herbicides, fungicides, etc. destroys the soil food web.

More reasons to grow one's own food organically using heirloom varieties of plants.

* * *

NWR NOW CARRIES SEEDS FROM

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\$3.00 EACH !

LAZY GARDENER & FRIENDS HOUSTON GARDEN NEWSLETTER CALENDAR EVENTS

SUBMITTING EVENTS? PLEASE READ!

- *Only events submitted specifically to LG&F calendar are used*
 - *Use our exact format, type into email, no pdfs/jpgs/flyers*
 - *3 lines max per entry. We will edit down if you don't.*
 - *Too long links activated by word "Details."*
 - *Submit: lazygardenerbrenda@gmail.com. Check your published entry!*
- EVENTS ARE ON-SITE UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED***

FRI., APR. 22: GARDEN CLUB OF HOUSTON "COLOR" FLOWER SHOW,
10am-4pm. Contemporary Arts Museum, 5216 Montrose Blvd. Free.
gchouston.org

SAT., APR. 23: 2022 OLEANDER FESTIVAL, 9am-1pm, Betty Head
Oleander Park, 2624 Sealy Ave., Galveston. Free. International Oleander
Society event. oleander.org/

SAT. APR 23: INCREDIBLE EDIBLE HERBS by **GALVESTON COUNTY
MASTER GARDENERS.** \$10. Register:
galveston.agrilife.org/horticulture/mgseminars/

SAT., APR. 23: NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY SALE, 9:30-2:30, New World Botanical, 2701 Lone Star Parkway, Montgomery. Pines and Prairies Chapter - NPSOT event. Availability list: npsot.org/wp/pinesandprairies/

SAT-SUN, APR. 23-24: HERITAGE GARDENERS SPRING TOURS/MARKET, tours (\$15) 1-5 pm. Markets Sat. & Sun, 9am-5 pm, 112 W. Spreading Oaks, Friendswood. [Heritage Gardeners on Facebook](#).

SUN., APR. 24: TEXAS SUPERSTARS, by **DEBRA STALLINGS**, 2-3pm. Plants for All Seasons, 21328 SH 249. Cypress Creek Daylily Club event. Free. cypresscreekdaylily.wixsite.com/ccdc

TUES., APR. 26: THE WORMERY (Zoom) by **MEG TAPP**, 5-6pm. Urban Harvest event. urbanharvest.org/education/classes/

WED., APR. 17: SAMPLE OF HCSS TABLE SMORGASBORD AT THE SPRING SALE by **WALLY WARD**, 7pm, Metropolitan Multi-Service Center, 1475 W Gray. Free. Houston Cactus and Succulent Society event. hcsstex.org

FRI. APR. 22: EARTH DAY CELEBRATION, 2-5pm, The Betty and Jacob Friedman Holistic Garden, Rice University. garden.rice.edu/garden-events

FRI.-SUN, APR. 29 - MAY 1: KINGWOOD GARDEN CLUB GARDENSAPES TOUR & PLANT SALE, Fri: 10am-4pm; Sat: 10am-4pm, Sun: 12pm-4pm. \$25. kingwoodgardenclub.org

SAT., APR. 30: BROMELIAD SOCIETY/HOUSTON SPRING SALE, 9am-4pm, Metropolitan Multi-services Center, 1475 W. Gray. Free. bromeliadsocietyhouston.org

TUES-TUES, MAY 3-10: FRI.: "MOWING GOATS RETURN TO HOUSTON ARBORETUM. houstonarboretum.org

SAT., MAY 6 & 7: HOUSTON CACTUS & SUCCULENT SOCIETY SPRING SALE. 9am-5pm Metropolitan Multi-Service Center, 1475 West Gray. Cash Preferred. hcsstex.org

SAT MAY 7: HOUSTON HEMEROCALLIS SOCIETY ANNUAL DAYLILY SALE, 9am-2pm, 5705 Pinemont Dr. Inventory: ofts.com/hhs/plantsales.html

MON., MAY 9; SUCCULENTS (virtual) by **HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS**, 10-11:30am. Free. HCMG & Houston Community College event. Register: hccs.edu/community-learning-workshops

TUES., MAY 10: GROWING PLUMERIAS, 7pm, (ZOOM & in-person), Cherie Flores Garden Pavillion, 1500 Hermann Dr. Free. Plumeria Society of America event. theplumeriasociety.org; 281-796-7185

FRI., MAY 13: NATURE'S BURIAL, NATURAL LANDSCAPE AS YOUR LEGACY, by **KATY PRAIRIE CONSERVANCY**, 10am, Trinity Episcopal Church. 1015 Holman. Free. Federation of Garden Clubs event. [\(Details\)](#)

SAT. & MON., MAY 14 & 16: PERENNIALS & HERB SALE, 9am-1pm. Harris

Cty Master Gardener event. On-site sales & online-pickup: Genoa Friendship Garden, 1210 Genoa Red Bluff Rd. Inventory: hcmga.tamu.edu/plant-sales/

MON., MAY 16: OPEN GARDEN DAY, 8:30-11am. Genoa Friendship Garden, 1210 Genoa Red Bluff Rd, Pasadena. Harris Cty Master Gardener event. hcmga.tamu.edu/plant-sales/

TUES., MAY 17: SUCCULENTS (virtual), 11am-noon, Harris Cty Master Gardeners/Harris County Public Library event. Free. facebook.com/harriscountypub/events/

SAT.-SUN., MAY 21-22: BROMELIAD SOCIETY/HOUSTON ANNUAL SHOW-SALE, 9am-5pm Sat.; 11am-4pm Sun., Judson Robinson, Jr. Community Center, 2020 Hermann Drive. bromeliadsocietyhouston.org

SAT., JUN 11: PLUMERIA SOCIETY SHOW & SALE, 5002 NASA Parkway, Bay Area Community Center, Seabrook, theplumeriasociety.org, 281-796-7185

TUES., JULY 12: GROWING PLUMERIAS, (Zoom & in-person), 7pm, Cherie Flores Garden Pavillion, 1500 Hermann Dr. Free. Plumeria Society of America event. theplumeriasociety.org; 281-796-7185

SAT., JULY 23: PLUMERIA SOCIETY SHOW & SALE, 5002 NASA Parkway, Bay Area Community Center, Seabrook. theplumeriasociety.org, 281-796-7185

TUES., OCT 11: GROWING PLUMERIAS, (Zoom & in-person), 7pm, Cherie Flores Garden Pavillion, 1500 Hermann Dr. Free. Plumeria Society of America event. theplumeriasociety.org; 281-796-7185

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If we inspire you to attend any of these,
please let them know you heard about it in . . .
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Saturdays 7-9am • SportsRadio 610



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-project to reporting, it then ranked as the longest-running, continuously-published local newspaper column in the Greater Houston area. The name, she says, is not just fun, it's true.

Brenda's gradual sideways step from 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 which morphed into her **Lazy Gardener's Guide on CD**, which she now emails free upon request.

Brenda became a Harris County Master Gardener and, over the years, served on the boards of many Greater Houston area horticulture organizations. She 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 Assistant 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.

