



Jun-9-2022 | Issue 439

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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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## WEEDS NEED TO GO? DEER, ROSE-Y RELAXATIONS, THRYALLIS & NIGHT LIGHTS

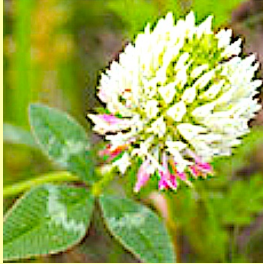
*"I don't have a gardener, because I enjoy pulling weeds.  
It's hard to explain, but there is something fulfilling about pulling  
out a weed and knowing that you got all the roots."*

*-- JUSTIN HARTLEY, American television actor*

**By BRENDA BEUST SMITH**

**MONDAY IS [NATIONAL WEED YOUR GARDEN DAY](#).** Thanks to [Crystal Beach Local News](#) webmasters webmasters Tom & Georgia Osten for reminding us of this June 13 celebration. No one seems to know who decided this for us. But it first start showing up on national "Day" calendars in 2015.)

I seldom pull weeds, prefer to smother them with neighbors' already-raked & bagged pine needles & leaves, admittedly a temporarily-effective-but-never-ending chore.



Not helpful, you say? Here's a link to a [Texas A&M picture guide of our worst weeds](#): Hope it helps! (Pictured: arrow leaf clover, one of the wonderful weeds now in my spring "Enameled mead." Then they all get mowed down.)

**NOTE:** Speaking of weeds, don't miss John's notes below on benefits they provide nearby plants! And John's report on Kingwood's dying red bay trees, especially if you have avocado trees.

\* \* \*

**ROSE-RELAXATION** At our recent St. Agnes Academy Fannin Street luncheon, we were given these lovely peach-colored rose buds. They reminded me of "rose-watching" detailed by Lilian Jackson Braun in *"The Cat Who Went Bananas."* Lilian wrote: "Once a week, everyone buys a single, long-stemmed rose bud and watches it unfurl day by day." I tried it. Just noticing daily changes instantly made my neck and shoulders relax!



**YELLOW'S BAD RAP** Lilian's rose was yellow, a color the now-110-year-old Chelsea Flower show has declared the "Come-back-Color-of the Year." Comeback? Who said it's no long popular? Color experts always point out yellow flowers are the first to draw the eye, shine brighter and be seen longest in the evening than any other color except white. Yellow makes a garden look warm, cheerful and friendly.

Yet., some say, yellow has been suffering a bad rap. As one expert put it: "Yellows in different plants don't always play well together. If planted closely together, the brightest yellow variety makes the others look somewhat 'dingy' by comparison. Best to plant something green inbetween to soften the contrasts." (Not bad advice, actually. Who else would tell you these things?)

All this brought to mind our late, longtime Houston garden writer **ALICE HODGES**. She was 101 when I asked which was her favorite flower. She answered: "Yellow." Yellow what? "Just yellow," she said. "It's the only color I can see now." The older I get, the more yellow I plant. It's one of the colors I see first when I look at my yard."

\* \* \*



**SPEAKING OF FANTASTIC YELLOW . . .** Now, thanks to **GWEN COCHEWSKI**, I have replanted one of my most favorite yellow bloomers, thryallis (*Galphimia glauca*, rain/shower of gold, golden shower). Gwen notes hers (pictured above) do much better in the ground in partial shade (than her



original one did in full sun in a container. Hers have survived the past two winters, so I have high hopes for my new one. She deadheads to keep the flowers blooming off and on all summer.

I originally fell in love with the gorgeous thryallis tree that for decades brightened the entrance at the Houston Arboretum Nature Center's Woodway-facing entrance.

A quick aside: although my inspirational thryallis is now gone, among many great natives to be seen at the Houston Arboretum these days are buttonbush (*Cephalanthus occidentalis* and pickerelweed (*Pontederia cordata*) (pictured l to r), two ideal choices for areas where water stands after a rain.



## HEADS UP!

- **2022 URBAN HARVEST SUMMER PLANTING GUIDE** can now be download at [Urban Harvest 2022 Summer Planting Guide](#)! It's time to think about edibles and ornamentals that should be planted now, such as arugula, beans, corn, Malabar spinach, onions, sweet potatoes, etc.
- **DEER IN GARDEN?** *"Frankly, I'd give anything to look out my window and see deer. But it's true you can have too much of a good thing . . ."* So begins my "Deer NO!" flyer, a compilation of deer-discouraging advice and plant suggestions I've collected over the decades. PDF download: [natureswayresources.com/nl/DeerNOFLYER2022.pdf](https://natureswayresources.com/nl/DeerNOFLYER2022.pdf)
- **GROUPS! PLEASE!!!!** Put the year on your activity dates, especially those on Facebook, begs a reader. Old events WILL pop up when you google an event title. These never go away and often never include the year (if you overlook the tiny google dates). You MUST put the year!
- **SIGN UP FOR [HOUSTON AUDUBON SOCIETY'S FALL LIGHTS OUT](#)** campaign! An analysis of more than 11,000 birds struck dead by a single Chicago's building lighting shows turning lights off during migration can make a big difference. No one is saying to make your yard totally dark. Compromise CAN create safety for us as well as for migrating birds, as **DORIS DURBIN HEARD** shares our Spotlight Article below, based on her work as a Galveston Bay Area Chapter, Texas Master Naturalist and a member of both the Houston Audubon Advisory Board and the Garden Club of Houston.

\* \* \*

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

\* \* \*

# Spotlighting our . . . Local Experts

*Lazy Gardener and Friends Newsletter*



*Smart landscape lighting only helps migrating wildlife, it can protect you too. Can you see the intruder in the first photo? [Darksky.org](https://darksky.org) photo*

## PREPARE YOUR LANDSCAPE LIGHTING NOW FOR PEAK FALL MIGRATION Sept. 6 - Oct. 11, 2022

**By DORIS DURBIN HEARD**

**Galveston County Master Gardeners (or GCH? -- your call!)**

Smart outdoor lighting can benefit the estimated two billion birds that migrate through Texas each year. Some birds traveling at night can be disoriented by misdirected unsafe lighting, resulting in collisions with buildings. Houston Audubon Society's Lights Out spring campaign will be repeated Sept. 6-Oct. 11 for our fall migration. You can help by turning off outside lights during this time or use shields to help direct lighting downwards. This not only helps the birds but is a way to keep the sky dark, the stars visible and your property safer (as the photos above show).

Walk around your neighborhood at night. You will be surprised by the effects of both different street and outdoor house lighting. Some actually make it more difficult to see surrounding areas.

When driving at night, notice how some car headlights are so glaring and bright, they make it difficult for oncoming drivers to see. This "blinding" effect means you only see the lights' glare, not the surrounding area. The same holds true for home lighting. Bright white LED lights can create lots of places to hide in plain sight.

Check out the [Soft Lights Houston](https://softlights.houston.org) website for a wealth of information on what is the best outdoor lighting to use.

Street lights using 2700Kelvin bulbs have a warmer color with less blue and provide excellent lighting without the glare. The same is true for your front door

lighting. Homes using bright white LED front door lights appear harsh and unwelcoming compared to front doors with 2700K bulbs.

Notice how homes with bright white flood lights attached just under the roof shining down are not as effective as those using the softer light bulbs.

Install shields on flood lights to direct lighting so that it does not shine into neighbor's windows. Not only sleep but overall health can be impacted by poor lighting. There are a wide selection of light shields available on the Internet.

After you have looked around your neighborhood at night, you might decide that you can improve the appearance and safety of your home lighting.

Neighborhoods with street lamps that have non glare lighting and downward shields are fortunate because these lamps are not only attractive but safer for you and the migrating birds.

**EDITOR'S NOTE: For more suggestions, check out . . .**

- [Houston Audubon Fall Dates \(Sept 6 - October 11\)](#)
- [Houston Audubon article - City Proclamation](#)
- [SOFT LIGHT HOUSTON](#)

\* \* \*



## John's Corner



### NEWS FROM THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF SOIL AND PLANTS # 199

**A** study from Spain found that organic practices enhanced the flavor of lemons. Those grown organically had more aroma which resulted in people experiencing better flavor. Journal of Agronomy (2022)

**A** paper in the Journal ChemSusChem (2021) — researchers at Leipzig University discovered an enzyme in a compost pile that breaks down PET plastic. They hope this will lead to a new method of recycling plastic. Along the same lines, researchers at the University of California-Riverside have discovered a group of microbes that can degrade toxic PFAS (fluorinated carboxylic acids) under anerobic conditions. Journal Environmental Science & Technology (2022)

**A** question I often get asked is “Why do we need fungi in our gardens?”

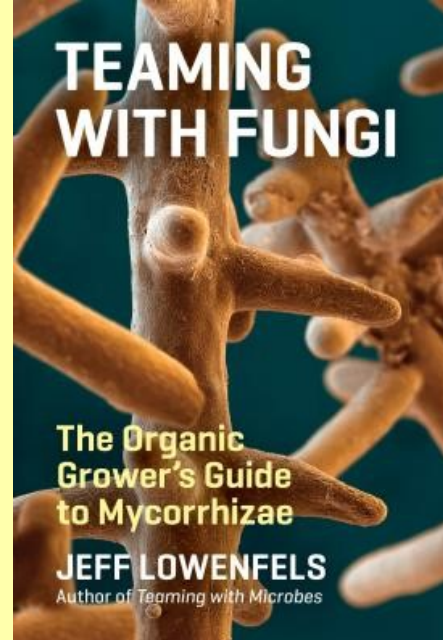
There are thousands of species of fungi that live in healthy soil which provide many



ecosystem services from balancing nutrients to biodegrading toxic chemicals and providing human health benefits.

For example, Penn State University researchers have discovered that some fungi produce a chemical called ergothioneine (ERGO) that is sometimes called the “longevity vitamin” due to its potent antioxidant properties.

Recent research suggests that a lack of this chemical in our diet, often results in increased incidences of chronic diseases of aging, like Parkinson’s, Alzheimer’s and reduced life expectancy.



Ergothioneine is both an antioxidant and an anti-inflammatory chemical produced by soil fungi. When we till the soil, we destroy the fungi that produce this important nutrient. Journal of Agronomy 2022.

Fungi are essential for healthy plants and healthy soil. A great book for gardeners on fungi is **Teaming With Fungi: The Organic Growers Guide to Mycorrhizae**, by Jeff Lowenfels, Timber Press, 2017, ISBN: 978-160469-729

Recently, a customer called us about mature Red Bay trees dying in the Kingwood area. Texas A&M AgriLife recently sent out a paper on this disease called “Laurel Wilt”. The pathogen that causes this disease is *Raffaelea lauricola* which affect trees in the family *Lauraceae*.

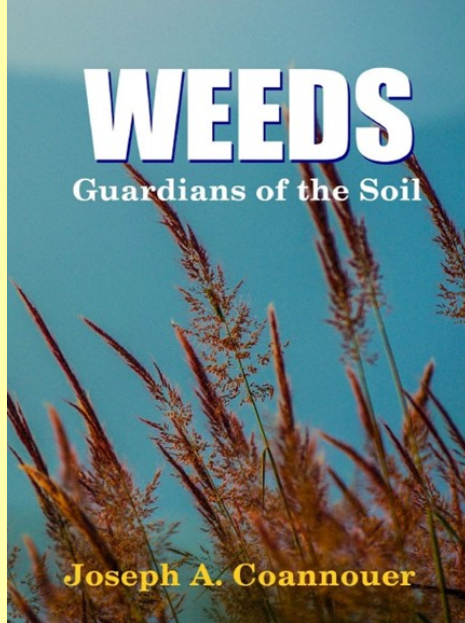
This disease has now been found in 14 East Texas counties. The two largest tree groups affected by this disease are red bay and sassafras trees. Other trees that may become affected are swamp bay, spicebush, and California Laurel. The article mentioned that Avocado trees may eventually be affected.

This disease is spread by the ambrosia beetle which can carry the disease from diseased trees to healthy trees. Weakened or stressed trees attract the beetles hence keep susceptible trees healthy.

Apply a good organic fertilizer like Microlife, apply trace minerals like Re-mineralizer, and use a good compost or composted native mulch out from the trunk to at least the dripline for best results.

Last issue I mentioned a book I had ordered on weeds. It was written in 1950 by Professor Cocannouer from decades of observing the plants we call weeds, how and why they grow.

Many plants benefit from having weeds growing with them and produce larger harvests and have increased insect and disease resistance.



He found that many if not most weedy plants improve the soil. The benefits range from creating soil structure and breaking up compacted layers to bringing up nutrients from deep in the soil.

He wrote this book as the toxic chemical rescue methods were becoming popular after WWII was over and this wisdom was forgotten. In recent years many articles are showing up in the soil science and agronomy literature on the benefits of weeds. Rediscovering what knowledge was lost. ISBN 978-1-329-20916-9.

\* \* \*

## NWR NOW CARRIES SEEDS FROM NATIVE AMERICAN SEED COMPANY

**\$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](mailto:lazygardenerbrenda@gmail.com). Check your published entry!*
- EVENTS ARE ON-SITE UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED***

**SAT., JUNE 11: PLUMERIA SOCIETY SHOW & SALE**, 9am-1pm, 5002 NASA Parkway, Bay Area Community Center, Seabrook, [theplumeriasociety.org](http://theplumeriasociety.org), 281-796-7185

**SAT., JUNE 11: COMPANION PLANTING FOR HIGH DENSITY GARDENS** (Zoom) by **ANGELA CHANDLER**, 9:30-11:30am. Urban Harvest event. [urbanharvest.org/education/classes/](http://urbanharvest.org/education/classes/)

**SAT., JUNE 11: GARDENING FUNDAMENTALS: HERBAL MEDICINE** by **FARMER ELIZABETH** and **CHEF CONNIE LACOBIE**, 10-11am, Plant it Forward Blossom Heights Urban Farm, \$35. [Register.](#) [plantitforward.farm](http://plantitforward.farm)

**WED., JUN.15: CULTURAL CONNECTIONS--ROSELLE HIBISCUS: PRODUCTION TO MARKETING** (Zoom) by **STEDMAN DOUGLAS**, 6-7pm. Urban Harvest event. [urbanharvest.org/education/classes/](http://urbanharvest.org/education/classes/)

**SAT., JUNE 25, CAPTIVATING CARNIVOROUS PLANTS.** 9am-noon, [Mercer Botanic Gardens](#), 22306 Aldine Westfield Road, Humble. 713-274-4160.

**SAT., JUNE 25: POLLINATOR WORKSHOP AND BIOBLITZ. Native Bees** by **MICHAEL ECKENFELS**, 8am-noon, Lawther-Deer Park Prairie. Register: [Della\\_Barbato@TexasPrairie.org](mailto:Della_Barbato@TexasPrairie.org)

**WED., JUN. 29: MARKET GARDENING: THE MONTROSE URBAN FOOD FARM** (Zoom) by **SCOTT HOWARD**, 7-8pm. Urban Harvest event. [urbanharvest.org/education/classes/](http://urbanharvest.org/education/classes/)

**THURS., JULY 7: IDENTIFYING PEST & DISEASE ISSUES IN THE GARDEN** (virtual) by **PAUL WINSKI**, 10am, Free. Harris County Master Gardener event. Register: [homegrown2022.eventbrite.com](http://homegrown2022.eventbrite.com)

**SAT., JUL. 9: LOW VOLUME IRRIGATION (Zoom)** by **ANGELA CHANDLER**, 9:30-11:30am. Urban Harvest event. [urbanharvest.org/education/classes/](http://urbanharvest.org/education/classes/)

**MON., JULY 11, FALL VEGETABLE GARDENING** (virtual) by **HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS**, 10-11:30am. Free. Houston Community College event. Register: [hccs.edu/community-learning-workshops](http://hccs.edu/community-learning-workshops)

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

**TUES., JULY 12: INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT FOR URBAN GARDENERS** (Zoom) by **NATHAN HERMOND**, 7-8pm. Urban Harvest event. [urbanharvest.org/education/classes/](http://urbanharvest.org/education/classes/)

Thurs., July 14: "Chasing a Dream" by Steve Roussell (in-person or virtual), 7-8:30pm, Houston Rose Society/Houston event. Free. Please join us in person at St. Andrews Episcopal Church, 1819 Heights Blvd. Houston, TX; 7:00 pm to 8:30 pm on Thursday, July 14, 2022 or you can join us virtually from the comfort of your home using GoTo Meeting <https://meet.goto.com/917509069>

**THURS., JULY 12: CHASING A DREAM** by **STEVE ROUSSELL** (virtual & in person), 7-830pm, St. Andrews Episcopal Church, 1819 Heights Blvd. Houston Rose Society event. Free. (Virtual: [meet.goto.com/917509069](https://meet.goto.com/917509069))

**SAT., JUL.16: STARTING FALL TOMATOES, ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW!** by **MEG TAPP**, 10-11:30am, UHI Patio Garden at Headquarters. Urban Harvest event. [urbanharvest.org/education/classes/](http://urbanharvest.org/education/classes/)



**MON., JULY 18: GENOA FRIENDSHIP GARDEN DAY & PLANT SALE**, 8:30-11am, 1210 Genoa Red Bluff Rd. Harris County Master Gardener event.

**TUES., JUL.19: POLLINATOR GARDENING: HOW TO CREATE A BUTTERFLY GARDEN** (Zoom) by **SHERRY CRUSE**, 7-8:30pm. Urban Harvest event. [urbanharvest.org/education/classes/](https://urbanharvest.org/education/classes/)

**TUES., JULY 19, FALL VEGETABLE GARDENING** (virtual) by **HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS**, 11am-noon, free. Harris County Public Library event via Facebook Live: [facebook.com/harriscountyp/updates/](https://facebook.com/harriscountyp/updates/)

**SAT., JULY 23: PLUMERIA SOCIETY SHOW & SALE**, 5002 NASA Parkway, 9am-1pm, Bay Area Community Center, Seabrook. [theplumeriasociety.org](https://theplumeriasociety.org), 281-796-7185

**SAT., JUL.23: FALL ORGANIC GARDENING** (Zoom) by **BOB RANDALL & CAROL BURTON**, 9:30-12:30pm. Urban Harvest event. [urbanharvest.org/education/classes/](https://urbanharvest.org/education/classes/)

**TUES., AUG.2: GROWING GREAT TOMATOES FOR FALL** (Zoom) by **SHERRY CRUSE**, 7-8:30pm. Urban Harvest event. [urbanharvest.org/education/classes/](https://urbanharvest.org/education/classes/)

**TUES., AUG.9: A RETURN TO WELLNESS** (Zoom) by **TAMIKA CASTON-MILLER**, 6-7:30pm. Urban Harvest event. [urbanharvest.org/education/classes/](https://urbanharvest.org/education/classes/)

**SAT., AUG.13: FALL WORKSHOP: FRUIT TREE CARE** (Zoom) by **ANGELA CHANDLER**, 9:30am-11:30am. Urban Harvest event. [urbanharvest.org/education/classes/](https://urbanharvest.org/education/classes/)

**TUES., AUG. 16: GARDENING FOR SOIL, COMPOST AND MULCH** by **SHERRY CRUSE**, 7-8:30pm, Urban Harvest event. [urbanharvest.org/education/classes/](https://urbanharvest.org/education/classes/)

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

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If we inspire you to attend any of these,

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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-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.



