



Aug-12-2022 | Issue 448

Nature's Way Resources is proud to produce & email you this free weekly newsletter. We have no ads, but sponsors do graciously help support this project as a public service. Please note their names below & show your gratitude for this free service by patronizing their businesses! To become a sponsor, call (936) 273-1200

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

[Click here to join our email list](#)

[CLICK HERE for PDFs OF PAST LG&F NEWSLETTERS](#)



WHY ISN'T MY PLANT BLOOMING?

(This is my most requested column for repeat, covering a concern that tops the emails I get. Hope you find slightly-updated answers here!)

**"Flowers are restless to look at.
They have neither emotions nor conflicts."**

-- Sigmund Freud, (1856-1939), founding father of psychoanalysis

By BRENDA BEUST SMITH

Seems a little presumptuous to disagree with Sigmund, but I do on this one.

One of the most common questions I get asked is why this or that plant isn't blooming? Latest came from Debbie Starns, who has grown both mandevilla and esperanza before with no problem. So why, she writes, are her new plants producing lots of green growth but no flowers?



Mandevilla, left, & esperanza (yellow bells, Tecoma stans)

Spoiler: you're not going to like this.

I think plants are a lot like us. They bloom when they're happy. If they're not, they don't.

Sometimes plants can be tricked into blooming in spite of their pouting. But if you don't find out the reason why they're pouting, it just makes for more work down the line.

Unfortunately, the possible reasons are many:

- **TOO MUCH OR TWO LITTLE SUN.** Symptoms are often the same for both sins. First sign - no flowers. Drought-tolerant plants that won't bloom with too-wet roots include antique roses, black-eyed Susans, blue daze, bougainvillea, bulbine, cassia, cestrum, coneflowers, Copper Canyon daisy, coreopsis, coral vine, duranta, gaura, hamelia (hummingbird bush), lantana, fernleaf lavender, oleander, pavonia, pride of Barbados (Caesalpinia), Rangoon creeper, russelia, hardy salvia and thyrsallis.



L to r, blue daze, Copper Canyon daisies, pavonia, pride of Barbados and Rangoon creeper.

If you don't water very often, try watering not just more, but smarter. Don't use sprinklers during these hot days. Most water will be lost to evaporation. Best: water early in morning. Second best: late in evening.

Lay the hose right next to the plant base. Let water slow drip for a longer period so it seeps deep down into the soil. Quick watering just soaks top layers. Roots grow upward to get moisture, then are baked when these top layers dry out and heat up during the day.

If you're watering every day, cut back. Make sure automatic sprinklers aren't keeping drought-tolerant plants too wet. Group these with like plants, not with flowers that need regular watering.



L to r, firespike, barlaria and hosta

- **TOO LITTLE OR TOO MUCH SUN.** Plants listed for full sun in northern areas may need shade in our blistering afternoons. Some part-sun plants (firespike, barlaria, newer hostas) may not bloom as well in full sun as in part shade. Most often, however, too little sun is the culprit. Tomatoes, most grafted roses and lots of natives require all-day sun to produce fruit or flowers.
- **BUD DAMAGE.** Buds that form, then won't open, may be infested with thrips, gall midge and other insects. Tear open a few buds. If you see bugs inside, put all the buds on the bush in a sealed bag. Throw in the trash. Let the plant start over.
- **NEED DEADHEADING.** Most plants are genetically programmed to produce a certain amount of seed. If you leave spent blooms on, flowering stops and seeds develop. Removing spent blooms tricks the plant into producing more flowers. Some newer varieties don't need deadheading so that won't work.
- **IMPROPER PRUNING.** Prune at the wrong time and you literally might cut off flower buds. Prune early spring bloomers, such as azaleas, camellias, bridal wreath, Confederate rose, dogwood, mock orange (Philadelphus/English dogwood) and pink magnolias right AFTER they bloom. They almost immediately start setting next year's buds. Spring bloomers generally bloom on old wood, which is why they need that full year of growth to produce new buds. Prune summer bloomers in winter.
 - Even better, don't prune AT ALL unless absolutely necessary -- and certainly not just because someone said it's time to prune. Always have a good reason for creating those open wounds.



L to r, bridal wreath, Confederate rose, fringe tree, pink magnolia

- **INSUFFICIENT NUTRIENTS.** We have such a long growing season here, plants may quickly use up available nutrients. Boost soil fertility with compost or other organic matter. All plants appreciate a cup of Epsom salts sprinkled around the base to boost blooming. Coffee grounds and banana peels worked into the soil may also help.

- **WRONG FERTILIZER.** Fertilizers come with a three-number ratio. The first number = percentage of nitrogen, in part for good green growth (lawns!). Second number = phosphorus in part aids flowering. Third = potash general good health. (This is a very simplified look at complex chemical interactions.) If someone fertilizes your lawn, then dumps his excess nitrogen-high food on flowering plants, they might produce a lot of green growth and no blooms.
- **OVERCROWDING.** Amaryllis and daylilies are among plants that stop blooming if overcrowded. They need good air circulation, and often roots have become too intertwined. Although fall is the best time to separate, you can transplant daylilies anytime.
- **LONELY!** Other plants (bird of paradise, gerbera daisies) seem to bloom better once they become overcrowded.
- **IMMATURITY.** First come the roots, then come flowers . . . in a plant-happy world. Unfortunately, we gardeners demand flowers on plants we buy. Poor plants get doused with bloom hormones so all energies are forced into flowering, often at the expense of healthy root systems. If this happens, just be patient. And sympathetic! How would you like being forced to tap dance for strangers when you're longing for peace and quiet to just do your own thing in your own good time?

Trees, in particular, may take several years to produce flowers, as they may **INSIST** on first spreading a strong root system underground -- even if a bloom hormone has tricked them into a quickie display for nursery sales. A lack of the plant's own bloom hormone production might also be the issue. Sometimes this happens in plumerias if the rooted cutting doesn't already have the growth hormone already present. You just have to wait until the plant produces enough itself . . . and that may take years.

- **UNKNOWN PLANT DAMAGE/STRESS.** Before you bought the plant, it might have been allowed to completely dry out, damaging roots. Bulbs, in particular, may have become overheated. Most likely, growers forced that plant into bloom for sale so you would buy it. It may just be exhausted. Cut it back by about a third. This will give the root system a chance to recuperate.
- **YOUR IMPATIENCE.** Next time, use display plants in bloom to find colors you want. But purchase those **NOT** in bloom. At least they'll have had a bloom-free rest period.
- **"GIVE ME TIME TO GET USED TO THIS NEW PLACE!"** Some plants take a while to acclimate to a new site, up to a year or two if the new environment is very different from the old one. Spider lilies, lycoris, rainlilies and crinums acclimate more slowly than some other plants. (Not so different from us, eh?)



L to r, angel trumpet, aster, Mexican mint marigold and sweet autumn clematis

Hummingbird bushes and firespikes are normally fall bloomers here. But weather variations may trigger summer blooming in these and other traditional fall bloomers, such as angel trumpet, asters, Mexican mint marigolds and sweet autumn clematis. Some fruit trees bloom one year, rest the next year, then bloom again. Removing excess fruit sometimes will trigger blooms the next year.

- **WRONG PLANTING DEPTH.** Everything sinks in our gumbo clay soil and heavy rains. Amaryllis may complain if they've sunk too deep by not blooming. Lift the bulb up so its "neck" is above ground. Iris, callas and other lilies may do the same.
- **WRONG VARIETY.** Some varieties of the same plant may do better than others along the Gulf Coast -- a good reason for shopping at your locally-run neighborhood nursery. The owner wants your repeat business and will focus on plants that do well in your specific area, not plants purchased for a wide sweep of chain stores. Just like us, plants have favorite climates. Lilacs, peonies and many Holland-type bulbs want prolonged cold, not our roller-coaster winter temperatures.
- **BLAME THE WEATHER!** Sometimes plants are smarter than we are. Blooming takes a lot of energy. Unusually hot and/or dry summers, abnormally cold winters or sudden freezes following mild weather may trigger such stress. Plants conserve energy by slowing bloom production.

Ironically, extremely stressful weather can also trigger exceptionally spectacular bloom periods. If plants fear they're dying, they may produce lots of seed to continue the species. They flower to produce seed, not to please us!

- **WRONG BLOOM TIME IN OUR AREA** Spring bloomers up north are winter bloomers here. Their summer bloomers are our spring bloomers. Larkspur, snapdragons, hollyhocks, delphiniums and many daisies stop blooming once it gets hot.
- **SLOW SAP MOVEMENT.** This sounds crazy, but it's true. Beating larger shrubs with a broom may trigger blooming by forcing sap movement. Switching okra and beating fruit tree trunks are historic solutions when these plants don't produce their edibles! ***(Preferably do this at night when the neighbors can't see you)***

I apologize if I *"tightened your jaws,"* as an old friend likes to say. I know this isn't a quickie answer readers want.

But I hope these options help you realize that plants are really a lot like people.

Sorry, Sigmund!

GIVEN OUR RECENT CLIMATIC CHALLENGES, NEED TO ADD . . .

- **UNUSUAL WEATHER EXTREMES** have been as life-altering to plants as for us. There's no way to know if or when a "supposedly" dying plant will return. Many die back on top to focus all strength on root systems. If it's a plant you really want and have planted in the right spot, continue watering, mulch well, and do a mild trim. In the meantime, plant summer annuals around it, leaving space around the hopefully-returning base.

How long to wait? Until your patience runs out. My cassia took 4 years to return and it's now growing strong. This wait was worth it to me. It's your call.

UPDATES:

- **FARMERS MARKETS** aren't just great for buying fresh foods. Flowers and plants (especially natives) are also usually available. [National Farmers Market Week](#) continues through Sun., Aug. 13. The Houston Environmental Coalition lists ones open this week (so watch dates closely). [cechouston.org](#). Sign up for regular environment-related notices.
- **NATIVE POLLINATOR GRANT PROGRAM.** Applications for funding for such a project is sponsored annually by the Native Plant Society of Texas/Clear Lake Chapter. [Application](#). Deadline Sept. 1. Overviews of previous projects:
 - [Pollinator Road Trip: A Habitat Grant Update](#)
 - [Pollinator Road Trip II: A Habitat Grant Update](#)

* * *

*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*

* * *



John's Corner



NEWS FROM THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF SOIL AND PLANTS # 208

Do you ever think bananas do not taste as good as they used to many years ago?

Well, you are correct. Starting in the 1950's the main variety of banana was a member of the Cavendish group of cultivars called Gros Michel. As it was overplanted it became susceptible to a fungal disease known as Panama disease (*Fusarium oxysporum*) which attacks a plant's roots.

This variety was replaced with another member of the Cavendish group called

Grand Nain and some other varieties that were just not as tasty to most folks.

We were told that only GM (genetically modified) can save the banana. However, researchers at Cambridge University have found that like many other food crops, different varieties of banana can be grafted together to build in natural disease resistance and other traits to keep bananas healthy, without any need for genetic manipulation! Nature (2022)

If you are growing bananas, several studies have found that most banana plantations have imbalanced soil nutrition, poor soil structure and quality and high salinity. These are conditions that favor the growth of the disease and prevent bio-control methods from working. These conditions also tend to favor the growth of nematodes that attack the banana plant, weakening it and making the plant more susceptible to the disease.

Numerous studies have found that soils rich in microbial species like *rhizobacteria* out-compete fusarium for nutrients preventing the pathogen from growing. Other microbes produce chemicals (enzymes, phytoalexins, etc.) that increase resistance to the disease in bananas.

Many species of plants who have their roots colonized by mycorrhizal fungi are extremely resistant to all forms of fusarium pathogens. When banana roots are inoculated by mycorrhizal spores of the *Glomulas sp.* they have greatly reduced symptoms of infection both inside and outside of the banana plant.

Note: If artificial fertilizers are used, mycorrhizal fungi will not colonize the roots of plants.

A good quality compost contains many of the microbes mentioned above and is generally effective against many species of the fusarium wilt pathogen. Also nutrients need to be supplied in an organic form for biological control to work. I grew bananas for many years and never has a disease problem. They love a good compost which I applied regularly; they grew over 15' tall and were beautiful. About every three years if we had a mild winter, I would get stalks of bananas which were delicious.

Speaking about fungus pathogens, a new study by the Max Planck Institute for Chemical Ecology has found the plant defense hormones salicylic acid and jasmonic acid actually work together to increase a plants resistance to disease, contrary to what was previously believed. New Phytologist (2022)

Organic soils rich in trace minerals and good organic matter (humus) create conditions where plants can produce more of these type defensive chemicals. This is one of the reasons organic gardens have fewer problems when compared to the obsolete toxic chemical rescue methods.

Researchers at Texas A&M have confirmed that organic methods produce more nutrient-rich fruit than the toxic chemical methods. They found that when a plant's leaves are damaged by chewing insects, they produce more anti-oxidants.

Anti-oxidants are a part of a plant's defensive chemicals and for humans they

are the anti-cancer chemicals.

I was asked the other day, "How can I increase the beneficial insects in my yard?"

One of the things I do is keep small brush piles out along the back corners of my lot which are hidden behind taller plants. When I am doing pruning, I just toss the branches and limbs on the pile. Periodically, I will toss some mulch or topsoil on the pile which helps it keep cool and moist.

This makes a great home for beneficial spiders, centipedes, earwigs, and many other predators that eat our pest insects. As the material decomposes it feeds the good microbes and provides nutrient to my plants.

Speaking of beneficial control of insects, the other day I was out watering my flower pots and my cell phone rang. So, I set the garden hose down on the ground near the base of the house. After a few minutes while I was still talking, I noticed many small insects like roaches scurrying up the brick wall to get away from the water that was piling up against the foundation.

The insects had not climbed more than two feet up the wall when a half dozen lizards appeared out of nowhere and gobbled them down. I have to admit that I find that being gobbled up by a lizard a suitable fate for a roach.

* * *

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

MON., AUG. 15: GENOA FRIENDSHIP OPEN GARDEN DAY, 8:30-11am,
1210 Genoa Red Bluff Rd. Harris County Master Gardener event.

TUES., AUG. 16: HERBS 101 (virtual) by **HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS**, 11am-noon, free. Harris County Public Library event via Facebook Live: facebook.com/harriscountyppl/events/

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

THURS., AUG. 11: LOW VOLUME IRRIGATION by **ANGELA CHANDLER**

(virtual & in-person), 7-9pm, St. Andrews Episcopal Church, 1819 Heights Blvd. Free. Houston Rose Society event. houstonrose.org/hrsmeet.htm

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

SAT., AUG. 13, PREPARING TURF FOR FALL & WINTER. 9am-noon, Montgomery County Texas AgriLife Extension, 9020 Airport Road Conroe. 936-539-7824. Register: MCMGA.com

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

SAT., AUG. 20, ASK A MASTER GARDENER AT TOWNE LAKE FARMERS MARKET by **HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS**, 9:30am-1pm, free, 9955 Barker Cypress Rd, Cypress, TX 77433, Hands on children's activity.

WED., AUG 24: BOTANICAL GARDEN OF QUITO ECUADOR by **JOSIE WATTS** and **BRUCE MOFFETT**, 7pm, Metropolitan Multi-Service Center, 1475 West Gray St. Houston Cactus & Succulents Society event. hcsstex.org

THURS., AUG. 25: HOW TO GROW MINI GREENS. 6:30-8pm, Montgomery County Texas AgriLife Extension, 9020 Airport Road. Conroe. 936-539-7824. Register: MCMGA.com

THUR., SEPT.1: ALL ABOUT MINT (virtual) by **BRANDI KELLER**, 10-11am. Free. Register: homegrown2022.eventbrite.com

TUES., SEPT. 6: BASIC ORGANIC GARDENING CLASS 1 (Zoom, 4-part series), by UHI GARDEN EDU, 6-7:30pm, Urban Harvest event. urbanharvest.org/education/classes/

FRI-SAT, SEPT. 9-10: GALVESTON COUNTY MASTER GARDENER SUNDOWN SALE. Online. Details/Shop: store.galvestonmg.org

FRI-SAT, SEP 9-10: SUMMER SUNDOWN SALE by **GALVESTON COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS**, Noon-Noon. Online. Details and shop: store.galvestonmg.org or 281-786-6834.

SAT., SEPT. 10: INSECTARY GARDENS, HOW TO ATTRACT THE GOOD GUYS by **ANGELA CHANDLER**, 9:30-11:30 AM. Urban Harvest event. urbanharvest.org/education/classes/

SAT, SEP 10: ONIONS & GARLIC by **KEVIN LANCON**, 9-11 am., AgriLife Extension, Carbide Park, 4012-B, La Marque. Galveston County Master Gardener events. Free. Register: txmg.org/galveston; 281-309-4065

HERBS FOR GULF COAST by **BRIANA ETIE & NANCY LANGSTON-NOH**, 1-3 pm. AgriLife Extension, Carbide Park, 4012-B, La Marque. Galveston Cty Master Gardeners. Free. Register: galveston.agrilife.org/event/; 281-309-4065

MON., SEPT. 12, PLANT PROPAGATION, (virtual) by **HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS**, 10-11:30am. Free. Houston Community College event. Register: hccs.edu/community-learning-workshops

SAT., SEPT. 17: WILDSAPES WORKSHOP & EXTRAVAGANZA SALE. Native Plant Society of Texas/Houston Chapter. Register/sale inventory: npsot.org/wp/houston/wildscapes-workshop-2022

SAT., SEPT. 17 (& 24): XTREME HUMMINGBIRD XTRAVAGANZA! 8am-noon, Gulf Coast Bird Observatory, 299 Hwy 332 W. Lake Jackson. info@gcbo.org

SAT., SEPT. 17, MONTGOMERY COUNTY MASTER GARDNERS FALL FLORAL SALE. 9am-noon, County Texas AgriLife Extension, 9020 Airport Road Conroe. 936-539-7824. Register: MCMGA.com

MON., SEPT. 19, GENOA FRIENDSHIP OPEN GARDEN DAY, 8:30-11am, 1210 Genoa Red Bluff Rd. Harris County Master Gardener event.

TUES., SEPT. 20, PLANT PROPAGATION (virtual) by **HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS**, 11am-noon, free. Harris County Public Library event via Facebook Live: facebook.com/harriscountyppl/events/

SAT, SEPT. 24: T-BUD GRAFTING, HANDS-ON, by **HAZEL LAMPTON**, 9-11:30am. AgriLife Extension, Carbide Park, 4012-B, La Marque. Galveston County Master Gardener event. Register: txmq.org/galveston; 281-309-4065

SAT., SEPT 24, TRANQUILITY TREASURES, A GARDEN WALK, 10-4 pm. League City Garden Club. \$15, leaguecitygardenclub.org.

SUN., SEPT. 25: SUSTAINABLE LIVING THROUGH PERMACULTURE 1, (Southwest Houston), 1-5pm. Urban Harvest event. urbanharvest.org/education/classes/

SAT., SEPT. 17: XTREME HUMMINGBIRD XTRAVAGANZA! 8am-noon, Gulf Coast Bird Observatory, 299 Hwy 332 W. Lake Jackson. info@gcbo.org

FRI., SEPT. 30, THE FUTURE OF URBAN FOOD SYSTEMS SUMMIT by **AGRILIFE EXTENSION**, 9am-3pm. University of Houston Downtown, 315 N. Main St., Houston, TX 77002. \$50 fee. Register: <https://fufss2022.eventbrite.com/>

SAT., OCT. 1: FRIENDS OF MERCER BOTANIC GARDEN AUTUMN PLANT SALE, 22306 Aldine Westfield Rd, Humble. themercersociety.org/

SAT., OCT 1: MEMBER-GROWN PLANT SALE AND GARDENING DEMOS, 8am-1pm, Shepherd Community Center, 10251 TX-150. Shepherd. <https://txmq.org/sjmg/event/plant-sale-10-22/>

TUES., OCT. 4: IN THE GARDEN: FALL VEGETABLE PLANTING DEMONSTRATIONS by **SHARON STINSON**, 5:30-6:30pm, Urban Harvest event. urbanharvest.org/education/classes/

SAT., OCT. 8: FALL GARDENING AND NUTRITION WORKSHOP by

CAROL BURTON, 9am-1pm. Urban Harvest event.
urbanharvest.org/education/classes/

SAT, OCT. 8: GALVESTON COUNTY AGRILIFE FALL FESTIVAL, 9am-1pm., Carbide Park, 4012-B, La Marque. Master Gardener event.
galveston.agrilife.org/

SAT., OCT. 8: INDOOR & CONTAINER GARDENING, 9-11am, Montgomery County Texas AgriLife Extension, 9020 Airport Road Conroe. 936-539-7824. Register: MCMGA.com

SAT., OCT. 8: COMPOSTING (Zoom) by **ANGELA CHANDLER**, 9:30-11:30. Urban Harvest event. urbanharvest.org/education/classes/

SAT., OCT. 8: FALL GARDENING WORKSHOP by **CAROL BURTON**, 9am-1pm. Urban Harvest event. 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; 281-796-7185

TUES., OCT. 11: ALL ABOUT STRAWBERRIES, BLACKBERRIES AND BLUEBERRIES (Zoom) by **JUSTIN DUNCAN**, 6-7pm. Urban Harvest event. urbanharvest.org/education/classes/

THURS., OCT 13: GARDEN CLUB OF HOUSTON BULB AND PLANT MART., St. John the Divine Church 2450 River Oaks Blvd. www.GCHOUSTON.ORG

SAT., OCT. 15: MONTGOMERY COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS FALL VEGGIES, HERBS & SUCCULENTS SALE. 9am-Noon, Texas AgriLife Extension, 9020 Airport Road, Conroe. 936-539-7824; MCMGA.com

SAT., OCT. 15: MONTGOMERY COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS OPEN GARDEN DAYS. 9am-noon, Texas AgriLife Extension, 9020 Airport Road, Conroe. 936-539-7824. MCMGA.com

MON., OCT. 17, GENOA FRIENDSHIP OPEN GARDEN DAY, 8:30-11am, 1210 Genoa Red Bluff Rd. Harris County Master Gardener event.

TUES., OCT. 25: GROWING HERBS FOR HEALTH AND THE HOLIDAYS (Zoom) by **SHERRY CRUSE**, 7:00-8:30pm. Urban Harvest event
urbanharvest.org/education/classes/

SAT., NOV. 12: FRIENDS OF MERCER BOTANIC GARDENS CAMELLIA & WINTER COLOR SALE (virtual), themercersociety.org/

SAT., NOV. 12: HOLIDAYS AT MERCER BOTANIC GARDENS
themercersociety.org/



If we inspire you to attend any of these,
please let them know you heard about it in . . .
THE LAZY GARDENER & FRIENDS NEWSLETTER!
& please patronize our Newsletter & Calendar sponsors below!

If you are interested in becoming a sponsor, please contact us
at 936-273-1200 or send an e-mail to: lazygardenerandfriends@gmail.com



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.

