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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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This is one of my favorite columns. It is a repeat (with updates) while I break to help Husband recover from West Nile Please notice how beautiful & bountiful fields are with goldenrod this fall!



GOOD GUY – GOLDENROD
(Pictured here with brown-eye sunflowers)



BAD GUY - RAGWEED
(ah-choo!)

GOLDENROD'S BAD WRAP & BOUGAINVILLEA BONANZA!

"We blame Walt Disney for goldenrod's undeserved bad name. Despite Sneezy's pronouncement, plants such as goldenrod with heavy, insect-carried pollen rarely cause allergic reaction."

--Janet Macunovich

It's true. That's where the first known mass public "blow" to goldenrod's reputation happened. The movie: "**Snow White**."

Remember when . . .

- **Doc says. "Look . . . Goldenrod!"**
- **Sneezy cries, "Take them away! My Nose! My hay fever! You know I can't stand it!" And then, he sneezes.**
- **And goldenrod has been branded ever since.**

GOLDENROD DOES NOT CAUSE ALLERGIES! When you start sneezing at the sight of masses of yellow goldenrod now lighting up left-to-nature sites all over Greater Houston, chance are really high the true culprit is ragweed, which usually prefers to grow among goldenrod stalks. (**See above!**)

Goldenrod, a cousin of daisies and sunflowers, is no more likely to cause allergies than the majority of our most common, favorite garden plants. <https://blog.nwf.org/2014/09/the-goldenrod-allergy-myth/>

On the contrary, according to Doug Tallamy, *author of Bringing Nature Home*, goldenrods support more than 100 species of butterflies and moths, including providing incredible food and shelter benefits to birds. In winter, they are one of the few food sources to migrating birds.

But not all goldenrods are equal! For landscape use, don't dig up just any wild goldenrod and transplant it into your garden. As a young and clueless gardener, I did this with one of our local varieties, and spent the next 10 years digging up the nonstop, rapidly spreading stalks.

Instead, opt for a dwarf and/or clumping varieties now available. NOTE: With natives, don't expect instant color. Many require specific weather patterns before flowering. Bloom delays may have been a need for more chill hours or just an aging thing. Dwarf, mounding, and other noninvasive goldenrod varieties share their *au natural* cousin's more friendly attributes (herbaceous perennials, drought-tolerant, sun-loving, spectacular color) and are just as ideal for flower arrangements.



The steadily increasing demand for pollinator plants, especially for butterflies, is providing incentive for growers to get more garden-friendly varieties into retail trade. Other good goldenrod garden-friendly choices for southern Gulf gardeners could be these below:



L to r, goldenrods okay for gardens — Solidago petiolaris, S. nitida & S. odora

If you order online, check the variety's [garden zone listing](#). The Greater Houston area is Zone 9-A/B-10 for cold-tolerance. The [Heat Tolerance Zone Map](#) is more pertinent to our plants' survival but it's not widely used or promoted. Maybe that will change over the long run in the future if this is an accurate prediction: *"Winters will slowly be averaging warmer until one day your area will enter an era of no freezing temps - 2050? 2080?"*

I'll be 107 in 2050. Hope I'm around, still gardening. I don't like winter much! But, as we've seen often in this area, Mother Nature ALWAYS bats last!

2022 UPDATES:

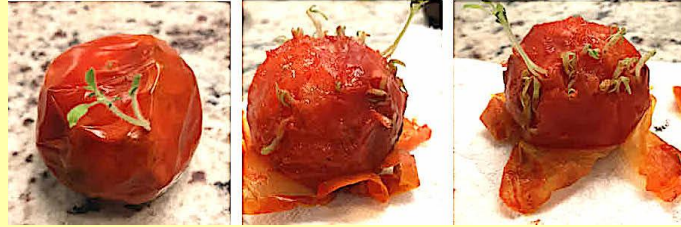
- ***"FOREST OF BOUGAINVILLEAS IN OUR BACKYARD!"***-- Clint & Mary Alice Horne's Katy area bougainvilleas have been highlighted before but this 2022 fall they are truly outstanding. Witness below! The first three are treats from a single variegated bougainvillea: yellow/green leaves, red flowers and unusual sprays of solid white leaves. At far right, a hanging basket with green/yellow leaf variegation and orange flowers



Above left, yet another yellow/green variegated with an abundance of with orange flowers in a hanging basket. Center and left, bougainvilleas in 2 ft. wide pots love their long, narrow sun-baked driveway planting strip. All are in full sun almost all day. Mary Alice feeds them once a month with a bougainvillea fertilizer (using package directions). Clint waters every other day.

Come winter, those in hanging baskets are moved to garage ceiling hangers. Those in pots are left in place, covered with blankets during cold spells, removed during the day so plants get some sun. This year, Mary Alice is going to try frost cloths. Some of their plants are 20+ years old!

- **2022-STYLE FUN WITH TOMATOES!** Before you toss that squishy tomato, see what DEANY MEINKE discovered when a



slightly-past-prime specimen looked a little strange. Deany peeled back the skin and . . . watta ya know! A virtual "garden" in there with very determined seeds growing! So, Deany, let us know if these produce tomatoes!

* * *

***If you don't see your submitted event
in the Calendar below, email me!***

***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***



NEWS FROM THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF SOIL AND PLANTS # 216

We often talk about the dangers of the herbicide glyphosate that is used in products like Round Up. It has been linked to cancer, intestinal issues, severe Covid outcomes and many more health issues.

A new study by Arizona State University and the Translational Genomics Institute (TGEN) has found that glyphosate crosses the blood brain barrier and infiltrates the brain. Once in the brain it triggers the formation of beta amyloid plaques which is one of the proteins characteristic of Alzheimer's disease.

They also found that the prevalence of Alzheimer's disease is much higher in agricultural communities that are using this chemical.

More reasons to avoid GMO foods, buy organic and better yet, grow one's own vegetables and fruits organically.

As gardeners we all know how soft a growing root tip can be, or how easily a

fungal hyphae strand in our soil tears apart. Have you ever wondered how root tips will grow into concrete or how a fungal hypha will grow into solid granite if they are so soft and fragile?

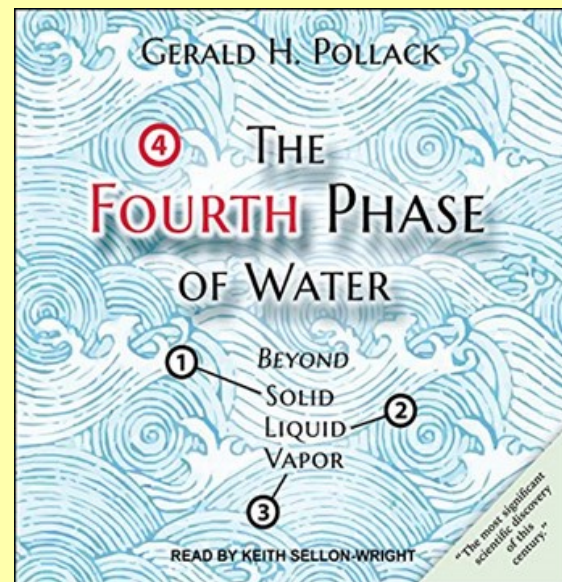
The book below has an explanation of how this is done by roots and fungi ("Radical Mycology - A Treatise On Seeing and Working With Fungi" by Peter McCoy, 2016, Chthaeus Press, ISBN 978-0-9863996-0-2).

We are all familiar with the common phases of water that we call solid, liquid, or gas. The explanation presented is that fungi and root hairs, have the ability to form a different phase of water called the exclusion zone (EZ) in their tissues. At the microscopic level water molecules will layer up in a form a few molecules thick and becomes many times harder and stronger than steel. This physical change in the water molecules of the root tip along with the chemical action allows fungi and roots to penetrate the hardest substances.

The book below explains this effect in detail. "The Fourth Phase of Water - Beyond Solid, Liquid, and Vapor" by Gerald Pollack, 2013, Ebner & Sons Publisher, ISBN 978-0-9626895-4-3. Dr.

Dr. Pollack is a professor with Washington State University and has spent decades studying water. The book is about all the research on this effect called the Exclusion Zone (EZ) and how it is used in science and nature, where it explains many effects seen by other researchers that have never been explained.

The book is easy to read with lots of photos for those whom love science. For gardeners it explains why water dropped onto the leaves of certain plants curl up and form into balls that just roll off the leaves. This effect also explains why some mulches (or low-quality compost) become hydrophobic (water haters) and prevent water from entering the soil even after a hard rain.



Now researchers at Cambridge University have added to the new properties or phases of water being discovered. They found that water in a one molecule thick layer does not behave like a liquid or solid. It also becomes highly conductive to electricity at high pressures.

Water trapped between membranes or in tiny nanoscale cavities is common as it can be found in everything from microbes, to membranes in plants, in our bodies and in geological formations. When water is trapped in this manner it behaves very differently than water we drink.

The researchers discovered that when the water is confined to a one - molecule thick layer it exists in several phases, including a "hexatic" and "superionic" phase. In the hexatic phase it is neither a liquid or solid (somewhere in between) and in the superionic phase it is highly conductive to

electrical charges.

This new research may help explain how plants communicate for dozens of miles over fungal networks, or how trees talk with each other. God's creation continues to amaze me. Published in the Journal Nature (2022).

* * *

A lot of folks have asked for heirloom and non-GMO seeds. We listened, and now we offer Bentley seeds!



VEGETABLE/HERB/FLOWER SEEDS

NON-GMO, HEIRLOOM, OPEN POLLINATED

Forget Me Not-Firmament-Cynoglossum amabile	Eggplant, Black Beauty Seed Packets - 22
Marigold-Crackerjack Mixed-Tagetes erecta	Kale, Dwarf Siberian Seed Packets - 594
Morning Glory Mixed Colors-Ipomoea	Lettuce, Simpson's Curled Seed Packets - 29
Sunflower-Mammoth-Helianthus annuus	Lettuce, Parris Island Romaine Seed Packets - 452
Sunflower, All Sorts Mix	Lettuce, Buttercrunch Seed Packets - 24
Zinnia-Lilliput Mixed Colors-Zinnia elegans	Mustard, Southern Giant Curled Seed Packets - 70
Basil, Genovese Seed Packets - 3	Onion, Evergreen Bunching Seed Packets - 32
Catnip Seed Packets - 63	Onion, Sweet Yellow Seed Packets - 589
Garlic Chives Seed Packets - 556	Pepper, Long Red Cayenne Seed Packets - 38
Cilantro, Coriander Seed Packets - 66	Pepper, California Wonder Seed Packets - 37
Dill, Long Island Mammoth Seed Packets - 68	Peas, Sugar Ann Snap Seed Packets - 36
Parsley, Plain Italian Seed Packets - 73	Pumpkin, Jack O'Lantern Seed Packets - 40
Arugula, Rouquette Seed Packets - 567	Pumpkin, Small Sugar 'NEW'
Beans, Provider Seed Packets - 5	Radish, Cherry Belle Seed Packets - 41
Beets, Detroit Seed Packets - 8	Radish, Sparkler Seed Packets - 43
Brussel Sprouts-Long Island Improved	Spinach, Bloomsdale Savoy Seed Packets - 44
Cabbage, Pak Choi 'NEW'	Squash, Acorn Seed Packets - 45
Cabbage, Copenhagen Market Seed Packets - 10	Squash, Yellow Crookneck Seed Packets - 48
Cantaloupe, Hale's Best Seed Packets - 12	Squash, Zucchini Seed Packets - 49
Carrot, Nantes Seed Packets - 14	Tomato, Ace
Celery, Tall Utah 'NEW'	Tomato, Cherry
Corn-Golden Bantam 8 Row	Turnip, Purple White Globe Seed Packets - 57
Corn, Pearls & Gold Seed Packets - 18	Watermelon, Sugar Baby Seed Packets - 60
Cucumber, Boston Pickling Seed Packets - 19	
Cucumber, Marketmore 76 Seed Packets - 20	

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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!**
- **Always check to make sure your event is listed. if not let Brenda know**
EVENTS ARE ON-SITE UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED

FRI.-SAT., OCT., 28-29: TEXAS COASTAL PRAIRIE CONFERENCE: PRESERVING LANDS & LEGACIES. University of Houston Clear Lake Bayou Building, <https://www.prairiepartner.org/conference>

WED., NOV. 2: BEES AND THE ENVIRONMENT by **ED BOYER**, 9:30-11am, Webster Presbyterian Church, 201 NASA Pkwy, Webster. Gardeners By The Bay event. gbtb.org

SAT., NOV. 5: 49th ANNUAL HERB FAIR by **THE HERB SOCIETY OF AMERICA, SOUTH TEXAS UNIT**, 9am-2pm, Southside Place Clubhouse, 3743 Garnet St. Free. herbsociety-stu.org

SAT., NOV. 5: DISEASES AND INSECTS, 10-11am, Beauty's Community Garden, 3201 Airline Dr. Free but register: <https://bit.ly/3RSTppZ>

SAT., NOV. 5: NATIVE TEXAS PLANTS by **MARK BOWEN**, 10:30, Wabash Feed and Garden, 4537 N. Shepherd, \$10. Register here <https://bit.ly/3VbBD3m>, wabashfeed.com

THURS., NOV. 10: PEST FREE ORGANICALLY by **JAY WHITE**, 7-9pm, St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, 1819 Heights Blvd. Houston Rose Society/Houston event. Free. Virtual: meet.goto.com/475926661

SAT., NOV. 11: HARVEST, HANDLING & STORAGE, 10-11am, Beauty's Community Garden, 3201 Airline Dr. Free but register: <https://bit.ly/3RSTppZ>

SAT., NOV. 12: FRIENDS OF MERCER BOTANIC GARDENS CAMELLIA & WINTER COLOR SALE (virtual), friendsofmercer.com

TUES., NOV. 15: ALL ABOUT BROMELIADS by **ALICIA BAKER**, 10am, St. Basil's Hall, 702 Burney Road, Sugar Land. Free. sugarlandgardenclub.org.

SAT., NOV. 12: PROTECT OUR POLLINATORS, A BUDBURST COMMUNITY PROJECT, 10 a.m.-12 p.m., Houston Botanic Garden, 1 Botanic Lane, 77017, \$15. hbg.org/events/protect-our-pollinator-2022-10-22-10-00/

TUES., NOV. 15: ALL ABOUT BROMELIADS by **ALICIA BAKER**, 10am, St. Basil's Hall, 702 Burney Road, Sugar Land. Free. sugarlandgardenclub.org

WED., DEC. 7: HOW TO GROW AMARYLLIS by **PATTY CORDRAY**, 9:30-11am Webster Presbyterian Church, 201 NASA Parkway, Webster. Gardeners By The Bay event.gbtb.org

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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.





Lazy Gardener And Friends | 101 Sherbrook Circle, Conroe, TX 77385

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