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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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BY BRENDA BEUST SMITH

***"What's in a name? That which we call a rose by any other name would smell as sweet"***

"ROMEO AND JULIET" by WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE



**'SUNNY SKY' Nroses** adorn top of [Houston Rose Society website](#) which is loaded with help growing roses

**MUCHO HELP WITH ROSES**, below, but first, maybe I should rename this column **"The Chaos Gardener"**? That's the predicted leading horticulture trend this summer -- at least according to now-202-year-old **Better Homes & Garden magazine**. (It was originally called **"Fruit, Garden and Home magazine**. Who else would tell you these things?)

**THE CHAOS GARDENER**, according to **BH&G's CORI SEARS**, promotes a haphazard, laid-back approach over meticulous garden planning. Throw those leftover seed packs (flowers, fruits, vegetables, etc.) all helter-skelter around the yard (or selected spots) to see what takes! (Click link above for full story)

Who knows, maybe you'll get a natural-looking garden that teems with life and plenty of variety! Chaos gardening may save you a lot of time and energy! (Or,

maybe not!). Whole yard or few beds: your choice!

*(Not to brag, but this has been MY 'Lazy Gardening' approach for 60 years! See bios below calendar!)*

**IN OUR SPOTLIGHT TODAY: ROSES!** **Houston Rose Society** is the largest local rose society in the United States. If you have questions about your roses or want to try them, first read **HRS' KAREN GERLACH, SUSAN KELLY & GAYE HAMMOND's SPOTLIGHT ARTICLE** below. Then attend **HRS's...**

**THURS., JULY 10: ROSE QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS** by **HOUSTON ROSE SOCIETY**, 7pm, St. Andrew's Episcopal Church 1819 Heights Blvd. Free.

[houstonrose.org/](http://houstonrose.org/).

***PS. Those gorgeous (NAME????) roses at top are at the top of HRS' homepage!***

## Potpourri

- **NIGHT GARDEN ENJOYMENT** starts now! But, be careful, warns [DARKSKY INTERNATIONAL](#). Excessive use of ... artificial light sources ...can disrupt natural mating patterns and migratory routes for birds, bees, bats, and turtles, among others . . . High-wattage blue lights in particular can disrupt natural mating patterns and migratory routes for . . . birds, bees, bats, and turtles, among others." [Full report by Emily Latimer in Cottage Life magazine](#)
- **SPEAKING OF SPARKLING LIGHTS**, If you prefer yours alive & kickin', **World Firefly Day** is celebrated annually during this coming weekend. Here in Texas (best to know your own among the 2,400 species (also called lightning bugs) worldwide. [Lampyridae](#) (beetle family) occupy every continent except Antarctica. Best to know your own. Texas-based, nonprofit [Firefly Conservation & Research](#) was founded in 2009 by Ben Pfeiffer, a recognized firefly researcher and Texas-certified master naturalist..  
*Photo courtesy of [Fireflyersinternational.net/world-firefly-day](http://Fireflyersinternational.net/world-firefly-day)*
- **ATTN. GARDEN/PLANT GROUPS --** [Nature's Way Resources](#) offers free guided tours of NWR's extensive nursery/soil/mulch enterprise to plant-oriented, organized groups. As usual, NWR's now-expanded meeting site is free to above groups. Reservations a must for both. Great time to visit!
- **SUBMITTING A CALENDAR EVENT?** For next upcoming newsletter, submit in exact format (see top of calendar below. Reformatting = delay)



\* \* \*

HAVE A COLUMN SUGGESTION OR CALENDAR SUBMISSION?  
ADDRESS DIRECTLY TO ME AT [LAZYGARDENERBRENDA@GMAIL.COM](mailto:LAZYGARDENERBRENDA@GMAIL.COM)  
(USE "REPLY" for general newsletter suggestions and John's column.

\* \* \*



## A few most popular summer rose questions

by KAREN GERLACH, SUSAN KELLY & GAYE HAMMOND  
Houston Rose Society  
[houstonrose.org](http://houstonrose.org)

- **I want to prune my roses. Is it too late?** Avoid removing leaves from bushes when temperatures reach 95 degrees. Plants need those leaves working at breakneck speed to make enough food and regulate the plant's temperature to make it through the brutal summer months.
- **How much water do my roses need during the summer?** When temperatures reach 95 degrees, roses need 2 inches of water per week. During droughts, salts build up in the root zone due to causes such as saline soil, water conditions, and granular synthetic fertilizers (which are composed of mineral salts). This salt builds up in the root zone and dehydrates the roots causing the bushes to wiggle in their planting spot, just like a loose tooth!
- **My Rose leaves look distorted. Do I have Rose Rosette Disease?** Not so quick! July through August is the peak time for chili thrips. Avoid fertilizing during these months as tender new growth leads to more chille thrips! If you suspect Rose Rosette, please contact the Houston Rose Society for additional information and resources for confirmatory testing.
- **I see webbing on my roses! What is happening?** Spider mite damage peaks during the warmest months. If you see web-like material on your roses, check under the leaves for a small, pinpoint, barely moving insect, They pierce plant leaves causing their damage. They can be treated with a strong water spray to knock them off.

**AND FOR THOSE WHO NEED PICTURES . . . Houston Rose Society's GAYE HAMMOND** adds the educational look at identifying rose challenges. (and she has a rose named for her!). Below, Gaye adds pictures and comments to further help gardeners.



### CHILI THRIP TIPS:

**No. 1 & 2:** Asparagus-like growth on canes of hybrid tea roses. Canes may be completely slick and devoid of leaves/prickles; or may have a few pieces of small deformed foliage that is a fraction of the size of normal leaves.

**No 3:** This *St. Patrick* hybrid tea rose would normally have a 4 ½ inch bloom containing between 40 – 50 petals. Due to extensive damage by chlli thrips, the deformed bloom takes on more of the appearance of a daisy and is about the size of a half-dollar coin.

**No. 4:** With heavy infestation, seeing deformed foliage and canes containing dark lesions is common. Lesions may be black or brown.

Leaves decrease in size to 1/4<sup>th</sup> to 1/8<sup>th</sup> of an inch. Damage at this level normally appears at the top and sides of the plant canopy (where the tender new growth starts).



**No. 5 & 8:** Leaf lesions on the underneath sides of leaves.

**No 6:** Examples of the progression of leaf distortion from the same hybrid tea rose bush. The smallest and most distorted samples came from the top of the plant with the normal-sized leaflets at the bottom of the plant. Sometimes gardeners find leaf distortion caused by spider mites. Spider mite damage starts at bottom of the plant and works its way up. Chili thrips damage starts at top and works its way down.

**No. 7:** Examples of leaf veining from the same hybrid tea rose bush. The most distorted size leaflets with the most veining came from the top of the plant. Leaflets with the least veining came from the bottom of the plant.

**NOTE from Gaye:** If anyone thinks they have chlli thrips, they can e-mail photos to me at [gayeh@LPM-triallaw.com](mailto:gayeh@LPM-triallaw.com).

\* \* \*

**EDITOR NOTE:** Have more questions? Jot them down and attend Houston Rose Society's Meeting and Ice Cream Social where Master and Consulting Rosarians ready with expert answers!

**Thurs., July 10, 7pm., Andrew's Episcopal Church, 1819 Heights Blvd. [houstonrose.org](http://houstonrose.org)**

\* \* \*



Our Summer Clearout Sale is going on now at Nature's Way Resources! For a limited time, enjoy up to 50% off of select trees, shrubs, perennials, and more. Whether you're planting for pollinators, refreshing your beds, or just adding a splash of color, now's the time to stock up and save.



## John's Corner

NEWS FROM THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF SOIL  
AND PLANTS # 336

### **Subject: Pollinators , Glyphosate and cancer**

One of the most rewarding things about restoring this old farm is to watch how the pollinators have returned. When I purchased the farm, the soil was very degraded and not much life around and zero wildflowers.

Over the last 10 years I have worked to bring the soil back to life and have planted over 174 different species of trees and shrubs. Each with a distinct purpose in nature.

For example, Texas has 5 species of wild plums indigenous to it. Hence, I planted several of each of our native species. Several species have struggled while others have suckered and grown into colonies. One colony was full of yellow fruits when I was driving around yesterday.

The parade of flowers begins with the trees each spring starting with the white

flowered fragrant Mexican plum and some redbuds, this is followed a week later by the red and yellow buckeyes. In another couple weeks the black locust and honey locust add their clusters of flowers. About the time they start to fade, the Rusty Blackhaw viburnum and Rough Leaf dogwood join the show. The Texas Mimosa (*Mimosa borealis*) with its pink and fragrant flowers joins the golden ball lead tree in its spring show. As we move into late spring the Catalpa's join in with their large clusters of white flowers along with other red bud species and the Arroyo Sweetwood. Next the Silverbells and Desert Willows join in. With the spring rains the Texas rain lilies and cactus flowers dominate the landscape along with the milkweeds.

One of my surprises was Kidneywood (*Eysenhardtia texana*) as I had never grown it living in Houston. I planted two one-gallon plants and later found one growing wild on the property. I chose them since they were the host plant for the Southern Dogface butterfly.

They have proven very heat and drought tolerant and are moderate growers with zero care and one is now 10' tall. They will flush several times a year with 3–4-inch white flower spikes that are very pretty.

My surprise was how many of our native bees from the ground dwelling to bumble bees nectar on the flowers.



Picture from the Internet

Another surprise was my buttonbushes. They have done well through heat and drought and total neglect and just keep blooming. I planted them near my lake as the seed pods in the fall are a favorite food for migrating ducks. It has been interesting how many bees, butterflies and other insects use them.



Driving around the property yesterday there were numerous patches of wild verbena, Blue Bells, Milkweed, Monarda and dozens of more species of flowers. It has been nonstop flowers since early February. Butterflies and insects everywhere. Each species of wildflower seems to have certain insects that favor it while some like the thistles are magnets for many species.

**A** new international study has found that glyphosate (Round Up) causes six of the most common cancers ***even at levels far less than legal standards*** Journal of Environmental Health (2025).

This was part of the multi-institutional Global Glyphosate study being led by the Cesare Maltoni Cancer Research Center of the Ramazzini Institute in Italy. It is composed of many researchers and institutes around the world.

The Global Glyphosate study is the most comprehensive toxicological study ever conducted on glyphosate-based herbicides.

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## LAZY GARDENER & FRIENDS HOUSTON GARDEN NEWSLETTER CALENDAR EVENTS

### WANT EVENT IN RIGHT AWAY? FOLLOW RULES!

#### -- ONLY GREATER HOUSTON AREA NONPROFIT GROUP EVENTS --

Expect delay if we must reformat: 3-LINE (max)**EXACT FORMAT:**  
**DAY, DATE: TITLE** (by **NAME if talk**), time, site. Sponsor (*if not in title*).  
website/phone (NOTE CAPITALS VS lower case)

- Gardening events **ONLY!** No harvest, cooking, arranging, etc
- **ONLY** events sent **SPECIFICALLY TO US FOR CALENDAR** are used!
- **NO** events picked up from flyers -- **NO PDFS! TYPE IN EMAIL ONLY.**
- Don't add city unless not "Houston." (Don't add "Houston")
- Submit to: [lazygardenerbrenda@gmail.com](mailto:lazygardenerbrenda@gmail.com). Check published entry!

**THURS., JULY 10: ROSE QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS** by **HOUSTON ROSE SOCIETY**, 7pm, St. Andrew's Episcopal Church 1819 Heights Blvd. Free. [houstonrose.org/](http://houstonrose.org/)

**THURS., JULY 10: EARTHKIND and TEXAS SUPERSTARS** by **MONTGOMERY COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS**, 6:30-8pm, Texas A&M Agrilife Extension, 9020 Airport Rd., Conroe. 936-539-7824, [mcmga.com](http://mcmga.com)

**SAT., JULY 12: SQUARE FOOT GARDENING – NOT BY THE BOOK!** by **ANGELA CHANDLER**, 10am–noon, College of Mainland, 10000 Emmett F Lowry, Texas City, \$29. 409-933-8461; register: [Square Foot Gardening](#)

**SAT. JULY 12: AMAZING SUCCULENT PLANTS**, by **GALVESTON COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS**. 9-11am, AgriLife Extension Bldg., Carbide Park, 4102-B Main St. (FM 519), La Marque. Free. Register: [galveston.agrilife.org/events/](http://galveston.agrilife.org/events/)

**SAT., JULY 12: EARTHKIND AND TEXAS SUPERSTARS** by **MONTGOMERY COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS**, 9-11am, Texas A&M Agrilife Extension, 9020 Airport Rd., Conroe, 936-539-7824, [mcmga.com](http://mcmga.com)

**MON., JULY 14: FALL VEGETABLE GARDENING** (virtual) by **HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS**, 10-11:30am, Free. Register in advance to receive link: [hcc.idloom.events/gardening-series/register](https://hcc.idloom.events/gardening-series/register)

**TUES., JULY 15: FALL VEGETABLE GARDENING** (virtual) by **HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS**, 11am-noon, Free. Facebook Live, no reservation required: [facebook.com/harriscountyp/levents](https://facebook.com/harriscountyp/levents)

**SAT., JULY. 19: PLUMERIA SOCIETY OF AMERICA SALE** , 9am-1pm, Bay Areal Community Center, 5002 E. NASA Pkwy, Seabrook. Free admission and parking. [theplumeriasociety.org](https://theplumeriasociety.org)

**SAT. JULY 19: YARD WASTE** by **ROBIN KENDRICK YATES**, 10am-noon. Free. Magnolia Multi-Service Center, East End District, 7037 Capitol St, [bayoupreservation.org/events/2025-summer-resiliency-workshop](https://bayoupreservation.org/events/2025-summer-resiliency-workshop)

**SAT., JULY 26: HERBS FOR HEALTH OF IT** by **GALVESTON COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS**, 9-11am, AgriLife Extension Bldg., Carbide Park, 4102-B Main St. (FM519), La Marque. Free. [galveston.agrilife.org/events](https://galveston.agrilife.org/events); 281-309-5065

**SAT., AUG, 16: VEGGIE GARDENING 101** by **MONTGOMERY COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS**, 9am-4pm, Texas A&M Agrilife Extension, 9020 Airport Rd., Conroe 936-539-7824 [mcmga.com](https://mcmga.com)

**SAT., AUG.18: RAINWATER HARVESTING** by **THERESA SEE**, 10am-noon, Bayou Preservation Assn., Magnolia Multi-Service Center, 7037 Capital St. . RSVP: [bayoupreservation.org/events/2025-summer-resiliency-workshop](https://bayoupreservation.org/events/2025-summer-resiliency-workshop)

**SAT., SEPT.13: TURF FOR THE FALL** by **MONTGOMERY COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS**, 9-12am, Texas A&M Agrilife Extension, 9020 Airport Rd., Conroe 936-539-7824, [mcmga.com](https://mcmga.com)

**SAT., OCT. 11: GROWING CITRUS** by **MONTGOMERY COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS**, 9-11am, Texas A&M Agrilife Extension, 9020 Airport Rd., Conroe 936-539-7824, [mcmga.com](https://mcmga.com)

*If your event didn't get in right away,  
PROBABLY NOT In our EXACT - NEVER CHANGING  
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(delays event publication and  
opens doors for errors).  
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SEE TOP OF CALENDAR FOR EXACT FORMAT.*



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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 general feature 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 later was said (at that time)

to rank 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 general reporting into also doing gardening reporting 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 (lazygardenerbrenda@gmail.com)

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 show 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 had 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.

About her column, Brenda says: "I don't consider myself a 'garden writer.'" I started out 50+ years ago as a very lazy "gardening reporter." I still feel that way today. I hope my columns inspire/help newcomers, but I do not write to them. I write to very experienced gardeners who want to expand their horizons.

### **JOHN FERGUSON**

John is a native Houstonian and has over 35 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. For years he represented 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.



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