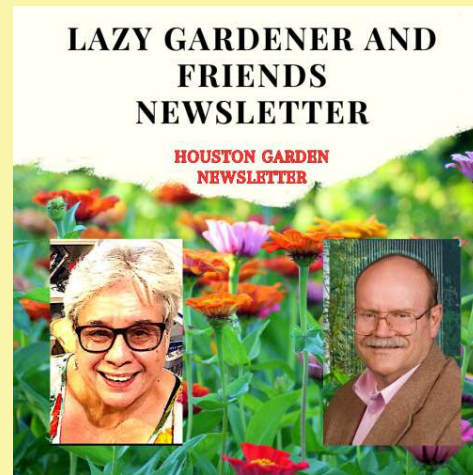


**Nature's Way Resources** is proud to bring you this free weekly newsletter. While we don't run ads, generous sponsors help support this project as a public service. Their names are listed below, please consider showing your appreciation by supporting their businesses!

**Nature's Way Resources** honors the contributions of our late founder, John Ferguson. "The Lazy Gardener" Brenda Beust Smith, and Shelby Cassano welcome your feedback and remain grateful to the many horticulturists who share their expertise.



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

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

*By Brenda Beust Smith | The Lazy Gardener*



Common Milkweed, *Asclepias syriaca*, Union County, Ohio, June 27, 2019 ©

*Image sourced from Jim McCormac's website, find full portfolio at <https://www.jimmccormac.com/p64570232>*

## **Growing Caterpillars: A Tangled Tale of Birds, Plants, and Conservation**

"There are untold thousands of species of moths and butterflies in eastern North America (overwhelmingly moths). The winged adults are but the short-lived finale of a four-stage life cycle: egg, pupa, caterpillar, and adult. It's the caterpillar phase that makes much of the natural world go around, and countless billions become food for other organisms. Without vegetation-eating

caterpillars and the native plants that they require, most songbirds would go extinct, botanical diversity would plummet, and our forests would fall silent."

**by Jim McCormac,  
Nature Photographer, author and botanist  
Guest Speaker 35th Annual Sadie Gwin Blackburn  
Environmental Seminar**

**Thurs., Jan. 15, 10-11am, Museum of Fine Arts Brown Auditorium,  
1001 Bissonnet Street, free. River Oaks Garden Club event**

\* \* \*



**DON'T TOSS THAT POINSETTIA!!!** Tip o' the Trowel to **MADELEINE SHEEHY**, who sent in this picture of her gorgeous 2-year-old poinsettia, now almost as tall as she is! Obviously likes her East-facing site.

Sure helps to have someone local tell how they succeeded. Most directions on poinsettias (considering from those who live farther north) is to keep them potted & protected until March or later. (*Madeleine didn't!*) Cover if hard freezes are predicted. At least 6 hours of indirect sunlight is recommended for indoor potted poinsettias. Outdoors, use well-drained, loose, slightly acidic, organic soil with nutrients from organic matter. Indoors, water when top is dry to the touch. Be careful. Susceptible to root rot.

e: Our area is so large (Zones 9-12), you might want to check specific poinsettia care for your zone.

Thanks to **Madeleine Sheehy**, before you attempt growing your own poinsettia, it's crucial to check and see what hardiness zone you live in to know whether or not poinsettias can tolerate the environment. Poinsettias prefer zones 9 to 11, but it's best to continue monitoring the temperatures so you don't compromise the plant's health with freezing temperatures. Generally, in-



ground planting is recommended in March. That gives them time to set strong roots before next winter.

Here is everything you need to know, from the type of soil to plant your poinsettia in and when to water for growing poinsettias outdoors.

### Time of Year to Plant

The best time to plant your poinsettia seeds or propagations is during March or late spring when the threat of frost has passed. If you already have a poinsettia potted indoors, place them in indirect sunlight for at least six hours. Outside plant in well-drained, loose, slightly acidic, organic rich soil. Full sun will fade color intensity. Indirect best. Overwatering will cause root rot, so water moderately when needed.

Thanks, Madeleine! Perfect time for this advice!

\* \* \*

Potpourri



- **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 best chance of getting it in next upcoming newsletter, submit in exact requested format (see top of calendar below. Reformatting by us may = delay in publication)*

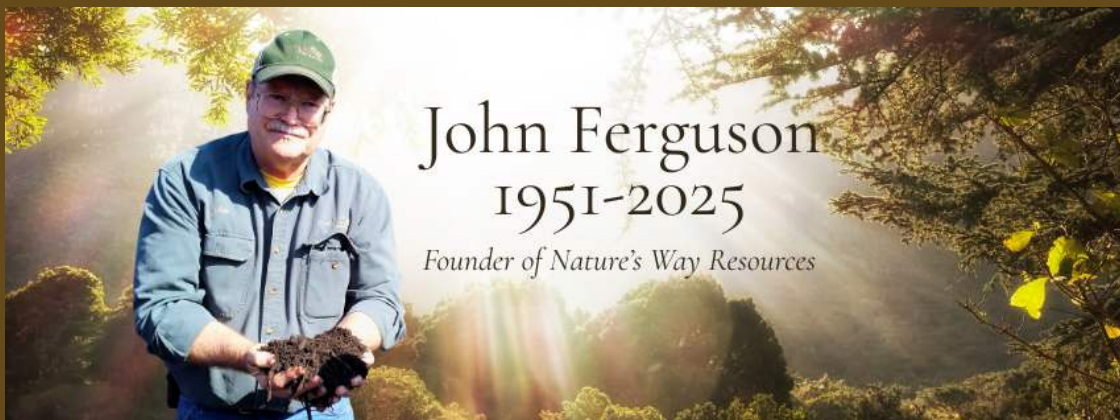
\* \* \*

**Want to receive The Lazy Gardener & Friends weekly newsletter?**

**Subscribe**

*Address questions, suggestions, and your successes to [lazygardenerbrenda@gmail.com](mailto:lazygardenerbrenda@gmail.com)*

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



## **John's Corner**

**NEWS FROM THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF SOIL AND PLANTS  
#140**

---

**Merry Christmas from Nature's Way Resources**

---





## Subscribe to our Email Chain.



Sign up for the exclusive newsletter from Nature's Way Resources and be the first to receive updates on special promotions, news, events, and more! Stay informed about all things NWR.

[Learn more](#)



## 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!

**SAT. JAN 10: WEDGE GRAFTING**, by GALVESTON COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS. 9-11am, AgriLife Extension Bldg., Carbide Park, 4102-B Main St. (FM519), La Marque. Limited space. Free. Reg. [txmg.org/galveston/events/](http://txmg.org/galveston/events/)

**SAT. JAN 10: GROWING GREAT TOMATOES**, by GALVESTON COUNTY MASTER GARDENER. 1-3pm, AgriLife Extension Bldg., Carbide Park, 4102-B Main St. (FM519), La Marque. Free. Register: [txmg.org/galveston/](http://txmg.org/galveston/)

**THURS., JAN.15: NATURE PHOTOGRAPHER, AUTHOR, BOTANIST JIM MCCORMAC**, 10-11:30am, Museum of Fine Arts, Brown Auditorium, 1001 Bissonnet. Sadie Gwin Blackburn Seminar. Free.

**TUES. JAN, 20: HYBRIDIZING DYCKIAS** by CHRIS NGUYEN. 7pm, West Grey Multi-Service Center, 1475 West Grey. Free. Bromeliad Society Houston, [bromeliadsocietyhouston.org](http://bromeliadsocietyhouston.org)

**SAT., JAN 24: GREAT ROSES TO KNOW AND GROW** by MONTGOMERY COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS, 9-11am, Texas A&M Agrilife Extension, 9020 Airport Rd., Conroe 936-539-7824

**SAT., JAN. 31: BRANCHING OUT: AN ORCHARD GROWER'S SEMINAR** by **WALLER COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS**, 9am-3pm, 811 14th St, Hempstead, Free. [txmg.org/wallermg](http://txmg.org/wallermg). Register: (opens Dec.15).

**SAT., JAN 31: FRUIT AND NUT TREE SALE** by **MONTGOMERY COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS**, 9am-noon, Texas A&M Agrilife Extension, 9020 Airport Rd., Conroe 936-539-7824, [mcmga.com](http://mcmga.com)

**SAT., FEB 14: VEGGIE GARDENING 101** by **MONTGOMERY COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS**, 9am-4pm, Texas A&M Agrilife Extension, 9020 Airport Rd., Conroe 936-539-7824, [mcmga.com](http://mcmga.com)

**SAT., FEB. 21: GROWING ROSES** by **ANGELA CHANDLER**, 10am–noon, 1411 West Main St, League City, \$29. College of the Mainland. 409-933-8461; [Register](#)

**WED., FEB. 25: SUCCULENT TERRARIUMS** by **JENNIFER HARDY**, 6pm–8pm, 1411 West Main St, League City, \$45. College of the Mainland. 409-933-8461; [Register](#)

**SAT., FEB 28: ARBOR DAY CONROE** by **MONTGOMERY COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS**, 8am-noon, Conroe Founders Plaza, 205 Metcalf St., Conroe 936-539-7824

**FRI.-SUN., MAR. 6-8 (2026): RIVER OAKS GARDEN CLUB AZALEA TRAIL**, 11am-5pm, 5 sites (Tanglewood/Memorial, Bayou Bend, Rienzi, ROGC's Forum. \$35. [riveroaksgc.org](http://riveroaksgc.org).

**SAT., MAR 14: LANDSCAPING WITH NATIVES** by **MONTGOMERY COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS**, 9am-11am, Texas A&M Agrilife Extension, 9020 Airport Rd., Conroe 936-539-7824, [mcmga.com](http://mcmga.com)

**SAT., MAR 21: SPRING PLANT SALE** by **MONTGOMERY COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS**, 9am-noon, Texas A&M Agrilife Extension, 9020 Airport Rd., Conroe 936-539-7824, [mcmga.com](http://mcmga.com)

**SAT., MAR. 28: SEED SNAILS** by **ANGELA CHANDLER**, 10am–noon, 1411 West Main St, League City, \$35. College of the Mainland. 409-933-8461; [Register](#)

**SAT., APR. 18: HOW TO FERTILIZE FRUGALLY** by **ANGELA CHANDLER**, 10am–noon, Mainland City Centre, 10000 Emmett F Lowry, Texas City, \$29. College of the Mainland. 409-933-8461

**SAT., APR. 26, HOUSTON ROSE SOCIETY ROSE DEMONSTRATION & SPRING FLING**, Memorial City Mall.

**SAT-SUN, MAY 9-10, GALVESTON BAY ORCHID SOCIETY SHOW & SALE**, Sat., 9am-5pm. Sun. 10am-4pm. Webster Civic Center, 311 Pennsylvania Avenue Webster. Free. [galvestonbayorchidsociety.org](http://galvestonbayorchidsociety.org).

**SAT., MAR 14: ARBOR DAY WILLIS** by **MONTGOMERY COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS**, 8am-noon, HEB Willis, 12350 Interstate 45 N, Willis 936-539-7824

**To ensure publication in time,  
Submit at least two weeks before the event occurs.**

***If your event didn't get in right away, was probably set aside to be  
rewritten in our exact, never-changing format (See top of calendar)!  
Your choice!***



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!

## *A Legend Has Passed* **John Ferguson**



🌱 1951 - 2025 🌱

On October 31<sup>st</sup>, our beloved John Ferguson passed away and is now spreading the Organic gospel all around Heaven. His passing was quick and took us all by surprise. We surmise that God wanted more stimulating conversation around him.

John was (is) a magnificent human being, one of the finest God every created. For John, it was always about being of service to humanity and to all of creation. John loved people, believed in the goodness of folks and cherished the environment.

John has built his career on helping people and all life that inhabits earth. His company, Nature's Way Resources, set the gold standard for improving our home, Earth, by providing the world's best Compost, Soil and Mulch that could be made.

John was a dedicated scholar and relentless teacher about Human Health, Plant Health and Soil Health and how all are related. John believed in people and was devoted to improving the lives of all. His impact will be felt for generations to come.

His son, Ian Ferguson, is continuing Nature's Way Resources and is doing a magnificent job, making sure John's high standards are upheld.

John is missed dearly by the thousands of folks that he touched. John was instrumental in creating and strengthening The Texas Organic Community. One example from hundreds is that he was a co-founder of OHBA, which 23 years later is still the premier Organic education provider in all of America.

How to say goodbye to a Texas legend and someone that is irreplaceable?

*John, we miss you deeply.*

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



NATURE'S WAY  
RESOURCES  
*an organically based service company*



**MicroLife**™



**f&s**  
landscaping  
LLC  
Complete Organic Solutions

## 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 -- *Founder, Mentor, and Friend (1951–2025)***

John was a native Houstonian and had over 35 years of business experience. He passed down [Nature's Way Resources](#), a composting company that specializes in high-quality compost, mulch, and soil mixes, to his son Ian Ferguson. He held an MS degree in Physics and Geology and was a licensed Soil Scientist in Texas.

John 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 its products. He was 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.

### **SHELBY CASSANO**

Shelby Cassano is the communications and marketing lead for Nature's Way Resources and the editor of The Lazy Gardener and Friends newsletter. Through her business, Leaf and Ledger, she exclusively partners with NWR to direct all marketing efforts, from strategy and planning to technical production of the newsletter. Shelby holds a B.S. in Agriculture with a concentration in Horticulture from Stephen F. Austin State University and previously managed the company's nursery.



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

[Unsubscribe](#) | [Update Profile](#) | [Our Privacy Policy](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)



Try email marketing for free today!