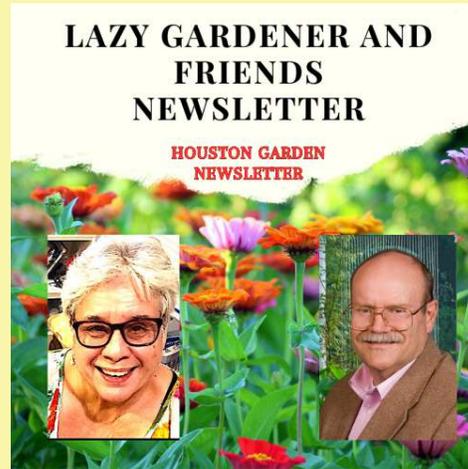


**Nature's Way Resources** is proud to bring you this free weekly newsletter. While we don't run ads, generous sponsors help support this project as a public service. Their names are listed below, please consider showing your appreciation by supporting their businesses!

**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.



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***Look what's suddenly blooming for me!***

*Christmas has long passed so can't be a Christmas cactus. Easter and Thanksgiving cactus bloom times are too far in the future. So . . . it must be a VALENTINE Cactus!*

\* \* \*



## BLUEBONNETS PLANTS FOR SALE? THEY ARE NOW!

*By Brenda Beust Smith | The Lazy Gardener*

Word is, potted bluebonnets are now appearing for sale in grocery stores and plant sales. Will they work in our gardens? A LOT depends on the soil they're already planted in and -- more important -- whether or not they like the soil YOU plan to plant them in! Add climate and other growing factors, and, well, it's worth a try! (*See growing tips below*)

If you want to be absolutely sure the bluebonnets you buy are correctly grown for OUR climate, drop by **Mercer Arboretum & Botanic Garden** for their annual massive plant sale: **March Mart - Friday & Saturday, March 21 & 22, 2025**. And here's the best part: available **Plants Preview** will go up online March 1 (same website link as above)!

Planting wildflowers at home is becoming more popular. Just be sure you respect their history and toughness. Like all wildflowers, ours have spent centuries developing love affairs with soil and surrounding plants. They know what they like, and it's one of THE most important criteria in their decision to stay, or not to stay. For example, bluebonnets do like us . . . in some situations. Indian Paintbrushes usually don't do well in our yards. Why?

Decades ago, when I tackled experts on this, I was repeatedly told Indian Paintbrushes are symbiotic with bluebonnets AND other plants that tend to grow alongside highways and other sun-blasted, undisturbed areas with their favorite "weeds." That's not to say they can't grow and bloom alone, but they THRIVE when bluebonnets, etc., are close by.

If you just have to try: Here are some Houston area bluebonnet planting guidelines. Listen carefully, they won't grow just anywhere.

Speaking of bluebonnets, just to be absolutely accurate: The Chappell Hill Historical Society will, as always, host the **62nd Annual "Official State of Texas Bluebonnet Festival"** April 11-12, 2026, in downtown historic Chappell Hill

*(roughly 160 miles NW from downtown Houston on Highway 290), just before you get to Brenham.*

It is SO WORTH the trip when bluebonnets (and Indian Paintbrushes) are in full bloom. *(Don't go by last year. That was a real weather fluke -- Mother Nature showing us she's still in charge!)*

In the interest of fair play, Burnet (north Texas) also hosts a wonderful Bluebonnet Festival, as do many other cities around the state. *(I'm just partial to Chappell Hill!)* If you know of anywhere folks in our area can see beautiful bluebonnets locally, do share!

**YOU'RE PROBABLY NOT GOING TO FIND** directions for planting bluebonnet 'plants' in Houston this time of year. All traditional advice is based on seed plantings in late September to mid-November. But never hurts to try! Full sun, well-drained, friable, grass-free soil, loosened with gravel or sand if not already present. (Clay soil may cause rot.) Some folks lightly scratch seed coats. Sprinkle seeds loosely, pat down. Think roadside! No rain, water every few days at first, then periodically, with prayers, they'll germinate!

Bluebonnet seedlings (may differ, remember we have 5 or 6 specific different varieties of native bluebonnets in Texas. And that doesn't count varieties brought in by human or divine hands! So "budding leaves" will vary. But generally, they look something like this when they first appear. Mark sites well! **DON'T MOW THEM DOWN!!!!**



*Bluebonnet seed popping up*

**IF YOU SUCCEED IN GETTING FLOWERS**, do share pictures, sources, and any other planting tricks you've found successful:

*([lazygardenerbrenda@gmail.com](mailto:lazygardenerbrenda@gmail.com)). Check our calendar below for all the plant sales coming up and their individual group websites to see if more than we've listed here will be selling plants for home garden plantings! Most sales also post their available plant lists.*

\* \* \*

Potpourri

- **NOT SURE** what bluebonnets look like when they sprout? Great place to see sprouts now (and watch them develop) is the [Houston Botanic](#)

Garden, especially in the parking lot. While you're there, check the gardens for even more ideas on early Spring color!

- **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!



- **GOOD NEWS FOR BUSY/LAZY GARDENERS:** Curbside pickup is now available in the [Nature's Way Resources](#) nursery, and we're offering plant preorders for special requests. Call in your order, pick it up when it works for you, or let us try to source the plants you're looking for on upcoming shipments. *Find inventory sheet [here](#).*
- **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)*

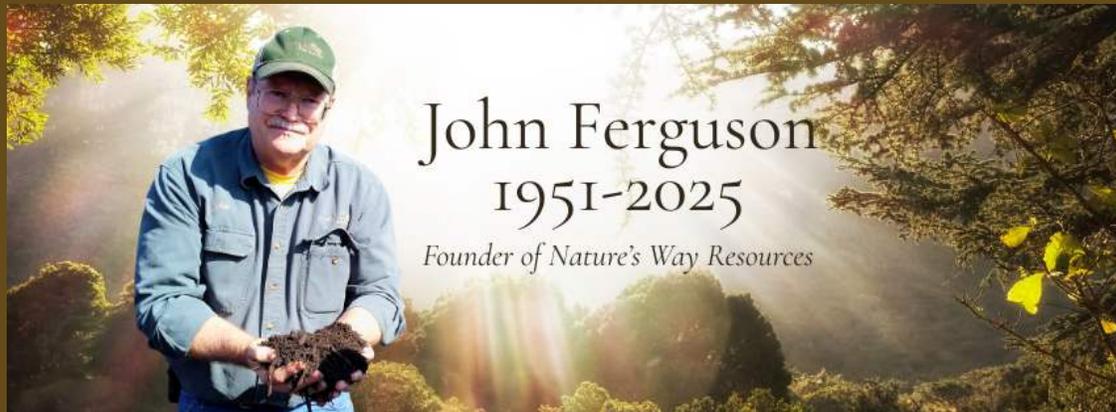
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Address questions, suggestions, and your successes to [lazygardenerbrenda@gmail.com](mailto:lazygardenerbrenda@gmail.com)

*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

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*As we prepare for spring gardening, we often think about top-dressing with compost, mulching, and fertilizing. There is an unsung hero that we should consider: the remineralizer. Unsure what this is? Read ahead to understand why it is a fantastic addition to your garden beds and beyond.*

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## Subject: Re-mineralizer

Over the last couple of years, we have talked about the poor quality of our food today, from toxic chemicals on and in it, to the lack of nutrition. One of the most positive developments in soil science and gardening is the use of rock dusts to improve soil fertility and quickly regenerate soils to a healthy status.

As a society, we have known for generations that rock dusts improve soils, but with the obsolete toxic chemical rescue model of gardening and farming that was taught by the chemical companies, we have forgotten important principles our forefathers knew. The book called "Bread from Stones" by Julius Hensel was written over 100 years ago explained how crushed rock improved fertility and yields. In the book "Survival of Civilization" by John Hamaker and Don Weaver, they explain how adding rock dust to our soils creates a massive carbon sink, helping to fight climate change and restore fertility. The book "Geotherapy" in 2015 discussed studies all over the world, rock dusts were essential to restore fertility and rapidly rebuild healthy soils.

In the 1980's, Dr. Phillip Callahan published many papers on an effect called para- magnetism that increased plant growth and health and helped energy enter the soil. He showed how volcanic rock sands can help supply this property to soils, reducing insect pressure and increasing yields.

Most of the problems we encounter in gardening and farming are caused by nutrient-poor soils, especially minor, trace, and micronutrients. Numerous studies have shown that one of the fastest ways to rebuild soil health is with the use of rock dusts, sometimes referred to as mineral-enriched sands.

Microorganisms need these trace minerals to rapidly grow and reproduce to very high levels. When they die, their bodies turn into a stable colloidal humus that is vital for plants, animals, and humans to thrive on. We have learned that many microbes, from bacteria to algae, can collect nitrogen from the air *IF* there are the correct trace minerals (elements) available in the soil. These microbes also pull carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) from the air to create many types of organic molecules that help feed our plants and form valuable humus.

My first experience with rock dusts occurred many years ago when planting an early spring vegetable garden. I planted Brussel sprouts, cauliflower, broccoli, and cabbage. This was on rich soil maintained organically and amended with leaf mold compost and organic fertilizers for many years. On every other

transplant, I applied a tablespoon of a rock dust product from New Zealand called Eco-Min to the bottom of the hole. Nothing showed a response except the Brussels sprouts, and Boy did they!

In horticulture, there is a law known as “Liebig’s Law of the Minimum”, which states that plant growth is limited by the element (mineral) in shortest supply. Obviously, the rock dust had some element in it that the Brussel sprouts required that the other vegetables did not, and the lack of this nutrient was limiting the growth of the Brussel sprouts.

There are many types of rock dusts available in the market, but they are NOT the same! For example, we often find powdered limestone (Ag Lime), which is a common rock dust, however it only contains two primary elements, calcium (Ca) and maybe magnesium (Mg). Often, scientists and vendors (myself included) use the word minerals interchangeably with elements. Over 1,000 minerals contain calcium, but they provide only one element: calcium. Hence, one needs to be careful when reading labels as they can be misleading.

The most nutrient-rich sources (containing the most elements) are found in igneous rocks like granite and basalt, and in some rocks that form in the deep body of the ocean, like glauconite from which we get greensand.

Rock dust or mineral sands are not soil. Healthy soil is formed by a very complex interaction between the weathering of rock minerals (geology) and soil biology. As the microbes and plant roots react with the decomposition of the rock minerals, the elements in the minerals are released. Some of the most fertile, rich, and productive soils on the planet are found near volcanoes. This is why, historically, many cultures lived near volcanoes in spite of the dangers. When we use these type minerals to regenerate soils, we are just copying nature but greatly speeding up the process of soil restoration. Similarly, we find very fertile soils below glaciers where the moving ice sheets have ground the rocks down into dust. This dust gives the water from melting ice a milky appearance and is extremely rich in nutrients, creating very fertile soils downstream. Many of the historically fertile fields of the USA were created as the glaciers grew and melted from the last ice age.

A couple of years ago, we went through all 79 elements found in the human body and found that hundreds of health problems are caused or aggravated by trace element deficiencies in our food supply. If these elements (minerals) are not in the soil, our fruits and vegetables cannot absorb them, hence we have more health problems. The elements found in healthy human blood closely match those found in seawater. For reference, the 84 elements in seawater are shown in the chart below. Since greensand comes from the ocean, it has these same elements in it.

Granites and basalts also have many of these same elements, but in a different mineral form, and these types of mineral-rich sands are also para-magnetic which provides many additional benefits. When microbes in the soil eat the greensand, granite, or basalt sands, the nutrients (elements) are released and become available for plants.

For example, among the benefits, elements like molybdenum (Mo) and vanadium (V) are required for microbes to fix nitrogen from the air. Without these elements, the microbes cannot provide the free nitrogen (N). As the

mineral sands are broken down and these elements are released, they become available for the microbes to capture nitrogen.

Particle size is another very important property of rock minerals. When the particle size gets smaller, the surface area increases, giving the microbes more area to attack and break down the minerals faster, releasing the elements. If the particle size is very large, then the breakdown and release of the elements is very slow. Conversely, if the rocks are ground down to a powder, the minerals are released faster than the soil and plants can utilize them, hence they are leached out of the soil and washed away. For most purposes, sand-sized particles offer the best balance between release rate of the elements and cost (grinding rocks into a powder or dust, which is very expensive).

Application rates vary depending on many factors. Some types of rocks have low levels of various elements, hence it may take up to 10 tons per acre to provide benefits. However, granite, basalt, and glauconite (greensand) are some of the most nutrient-rich (element-rich) rocks in the world, and they are the most cost-effective. They provide more elements at lower application rates per acre. A mix of these rock minerals has shown results at as little as 400 pounds per acre. Many farmers and ranchers like to use 5 tons per acre; however, for most acreages, a rate of one ton per acre is a good starting point, then repeat if needed. One ton per acre converts to approximately 5 pounds per 100 square feet, or a 40-pound bag will cover 800 square feet at this rate of application. These types of rock minerals will not burn plants, hence they can safely be applied at much higher application rates.

Mineral sands can be applied through many types of commercial fertilizer spreaders on large acreage. Smaller spreaders are available for utility vehicles and mount on the trailer hitch. On standard-sized yards and gardens, one can just scatter it like chicken feed by hand.

These mineral sands can be added as a feedstock to compost. The high microbial activity in a compost pile accelerates the release of the elements by the microbes and converts them into a plant-available form, creating an enriched compost.

### **Benefits of Remineralization**

- Provides slow, natural release of elements and trace minerals.
- Increase the nutrient intake of plants.
- Increase yields and increase Brix reading.
- Rebalances soil pH.
- Increases growth rate and diversity of microorganisms.
- Increases earthworm activity.
- Increases seed germination rates
- Speeds up the formation of the humus complex in soil.
- Prevents soil erosion.
- Increases aeration and helps loosen tight soils.
- Increases the nutrient storage capacity of soils.
- Increases the moisture retention ability of soils.
- Increases resistance to insects, disease, frost, and drought.
- Increases nutrient density of food crops.
- Increases a plant's resistance to pathogens.
- Enhances the flavor of crops.
- Reduces weed problems.
- Reduces plant mortality rate.

- Makes organic fertilizers work more efficiently.

**Note:** At Nature's Way Resources, we recently received permission from the Office of the State Chemist to start selling these mineral sands in bags. We call it "Re-Mineralizer," and it is a blend of the most valuable mineral sands to make it simple for gardeners. It is now available in 40-pound bags. We recommend 40 pounds per 800-1,000 square feet every few years; it is very inexpensive for the benefits it provides. Since all the material comes from Texas, it is a lot cheaper and provides far more elements (nutrients) than other products being sold in our area, shipped in from thousands of miles away.

### Re-Mineralizer

- Texas Green Sand (all minerals in seawater)
- Granite Sand (rich in K and is para-magnetic)
- Basalt Sand (rich in Fe, Mg, and is paramagnetic)

To learn more, read on by clicking below

[Click Here](#)



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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.

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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!

**NOTE FROM EDITOR: An overwhelming number of event notices are coming in. Those submitted in our exact never-changing format (word order, caps, punctuation, etc) will go in immediately. If we have to retype to format (we will!), they'll get in as soon as possible.**

## February

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**SAT., FEB. 28: MONTGOMERY COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS & ROOTS FOR CONROE TREE GIVEAWAY**, 8am-1pm, Heritage Plaza, 205 Metcalf, Conroe. [MCMGA.com](http://MCMGA.com)

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

**SAT., FEB. 28: TREE GIVEAWAY by FORT BEND MASTER GARDENERS**, 9am-sellout, 9035 Bois d'Arc Lane, Fulshear. [fulshearfarmersmarket.com](http://fulshearfarmersmarket.com)

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## March

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**MON., MAR. 2: GROWING TOMATOES by HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS**, 10:30–11:30am, Visitor's Center, Mercer Arboretum & Botanic Gardens, 22306 Aldine Westfield Rd. Free. Register: [pct3.com/MBG](http://pct3.com/MBG)

**WED., MAR. 4: LEARN TO GROW PICKLES by MERCER STAFF**, 10–11:30am, Visitor's Center, Mercer Arboretum & Botanic Gardens, 22306 Aldine Westfield Rd. Free. Register: [pct3.com/MBG](http://pct3.com/MBG)

**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 7: PLANT PROPAGATION by GALVESTON COUNTY MASTER GARDENER**. 9-11am, AgriLife Extension Bldg., Carbide Park, 4102-B Main St. (FM 519), La Marque. Free. Register: [txmg.org/galveston/events/](http://txmg.org/galveston/events/)

**SAT. MAR 7: AVOCADOS**, 1-3pm, by **GALVESTON COUNTY MASTER GARDENER**. AgriLife Extension Bldg., Carbide Park, 4102-B Main St. (FM 519), La Marque. Free. Register: [txmg.org/galveston/events/](http://txmg.org/galveston/events/)

**SAT., MAR 7: GARDEN BASICS**, 10 am, LSC-Montgomery; Maverick Conference Center, 3200 College Park Drive, Conroe. Montgomery County PVAMU Extension. Free. [Register](#)

**SAT., MAR. 14: MONTGOMERY COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS & HEB WILLIS TREE GIVEAWAY**, Parking lot, 12350 I-45 N, Willis. [MCMGA.com](http://MCMGA.com)

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

**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. 14: 2026 SPRING PLANT SALE** by **WALKER COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS**, 8am-noon, Texas A&M Agrilife Extension Office, 102 Tam Rd., Huntsville. 936-435-2426. [txmg.org/walker](http://txmg.org/walker)

**FRI.-SAT., MAR. 20-21: HOUSTON ARBORETUM SPRING PLANT SALE**, 9 am–2pm, 20 West Loop North (between Post Oak Boulevard & Woodway Dr.). [houstonarboretum.org](http://houstonarboretum.org)

**FRI-SAT, MARCH 20-21, MARCH MART PLANT SALE**, Fri., 8am-4pm, Sat., 8am-3pm, Mercer Arboretum & Botanic Gardens, 22306 Aldine Westfield Rd, Humble. Free. [friendsofmercer.org](http://friendsofmercer.org), 713-274-4166

**SAT. MAR 21: SPRING GARDEN SALE**, 9-11AM, Discovery Garden in Carbide Park, 4102 Main St. (FM 519), La Marque. [galvestonmg.square.site](http://galvestonmg.square.site)

**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. 21: CLEAR LAKE NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY PLANT SPRING SALE**, 8-10am, Environmental Institute Of Houston, .2700 Bay Area Blvd. [npsot.org/chapters/clearlake/](http://npsot.org/chapters/clearlake/)

**SAT., MAR. 28: NPSOT PINES & PRAIRIES NATIVE PLANT SALE, 8:30am**, 2701 Lone Star Parkway, Montgomery. Plant list week prior [Pines and Prairies - Native Plant Society of Texas](#)

**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., MAR. 28: SPRING PLANT SALE** by **SAN JACINTO COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS**, 9am-1pm, Coldspring Community Center, 101 E. Cedar Ave., Coldspring, . [txmg.org/sjmg/](http://txmg.org/sjmg/)

**SAT., MAR. 28: GARDEN VILLAS GARDEN CLUB PLANT SALE**, 9am-2pm, Garden Villas Park, 6720 S. Haywood Dr., Free

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## April

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**WED., APR. 8: GROW YOUR BEST ROSES 2026** by **SUZANNE GILBERT**, Noon–2pm, Mercer Visitor’s Center, Mercer Arboretum & Botanic Gardens, 22306 Aldine Westfield Rd. Free. Register: [pct3.com/MBG](http://pct3.com/MBG)

**FRI., APR. 10: TOUR “NATIVE WILDFLOWERS”** by **HORTICULTURE STAFF**, 9–10am, Visitor’s Center, Mercer Arboretum & Botanic Gardens, 22306 Aldine Westfield Rd. Free. Register: [pct3.com/MBG](http://pct3.com/MBG)

**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 18: SEED STARTING & PROPAGATION** by FORT BEND COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS, 9-10:30am. FBC Fairgrounds, 4310 Tx 36, Rosenberg. 281-342-3034, [fbmg.org/grow-your-own-2026/](https://fbmg.org/grow-your-own-2026/)

**FRI.-SUN., APR. 17-19: 2026 KINGWOOD GARDEN CLUB GARDENSCAPES HOME & GARDEN TOUR & PLANT SALE.** \$30. [KingwoodGardenClub.org](https://KingwoodGardenClub.org).

**FRI., APR 24: USING IRRIGATION WISELY** by FORT BEND COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS, 1-2:30pm Online. 281-342-3034. [fbmg.org/landscape-success-2026/](https://fbmg.org/landscape-success-2026/)

**TUES., APR. 28: COMPOSTING 101** by HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS, 10:30-11:30am, Visitor's Center, Mercer Arboretum & Botanic Gardens, 22306 Aldine Westfield Rd. Free. Register: [pct3.com/MBG](https://pct3.com/MBG)

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## May

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**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](https://galvestonbayorchidsociety.org)

**SAT., MAY 16: POLLINATORS & COMPANION PLANTS** by FORT BEND MASTER GARDENERS, 9-10:30am, Bud O'Shieles Community Center, 1330 Band Rd., Rosenberg. 281-342-3034. <https://fbmg.org/grow-your-own-2026/>

**FRI., MAY 22: CONTAINER GARDENING** by FORT BEND COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS. 1-2:30pm Online. 281-342-3034. [fbmg.org/landscape-success-2026/](https://fbmg.org/landscape-success-2026/)

*If your event didn't get in right away, probably was 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*



## 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 -- John Ferguson called immediately (the next morning!) to ask if she'd continue publishing it for his **Nature's Way Resources**. Familiar with John's international reputation as a soil/mulch expert, she jumped at the opportunity and has been writing weekly for NWR ever since! The name, she says, is STILL 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](mailto: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.



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