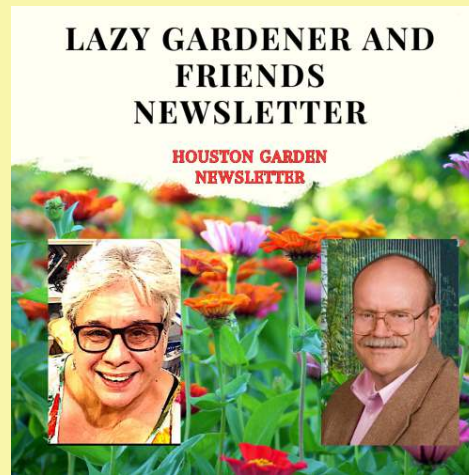


**Nature's Way Resources** is proud to bring you this free weekly newsletter. While we don't run ads, generous sponsors help support this project as a public service. Their names are listed below, please consider showing your appreciation by supporting their businesses!

**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](#)



## NO APRIL FOOLS HERE! ONLY GREAT NEWS!

*By Brenda Beust Smith | The Lazy Gardener*

Ever wonder who started the idea of playing jokes on folks in honor of April Fool's Day? Or why? A quick search actually indicates that apparently no one knows! Maybe Mother Nature's laughing since tonight and tomorrow night's (hopefully) "Pink Moon" are sort of a joke. Not pink at all. This moon is named for a wildflower, not a color: Phlox subulata ("creeping phlox" or "moss pink"), wildflowers named by (again, not sure) Native Americans, Colonial Americans, or Europeans!

Even so, before you head to bed Wednesday, you may want to look up. According to the [Old Farmer's Almanac](#), the Pink Full Moon is set to peak in the night sky, offering a celestial show from 9pm on for Southeast Texas. The good news? No rain is expected to ruin your view. But, folks, . . . this news below is no joke! Or an April Fool's Day prank.

\* \* \*



***Garden's for Life.com's "Trisha from Garden for Wildlife" report is just one of many coming from Mexico now confirming the eastern migratory monarch butterfly population has seen an at-least 64% increase this year! YEY!!!***

Reports coming in verify colonies occupied 7.24+/- acres of forest this winter, compared to 4.42 acres last year -- thanks to increasing forest protection, decreasing illegal logging, and (hopefully) growing conservation efforts.

We humans (and changing weather) have destroyed so much of their stopping spots, they must find more on their longer journey paths northward now and southward in fall. They need our help, and reports prove it's working!

As they migrate northward (then southward in fall), adult butterflies need "fuel stations" of more native, nectar-rich, local varieties like penstemon, coneflower, goldenrod (and others recommended by your local groups to grow in gardens, on balconies, and in community spaces.

Houston offers so many butterfly-awareness resources and special programs at the *Cockrell Butterfly Center (Museum of Natural Science)*, Houston Botanic Garden, and Mercer Arboretum & Nature Center (not to mention all those in outlying areas). If you've never been to the Cockrell Butterfly Center at the Museum of Natural Science in Hermann Park, you've missed one of Houston's greatest treasures.

*(If you'd like to help promote other open-to-the-public, Greater Houston Area (only) butterfly-learning opportunities you know are coming up, be glad to list them. They're certainly a vital aspect of gardening.*

*Saved the best for last: You do know, right? The NATIONAL BUTTERFLY CENTER is located in Texas. Straight down south from Houston. Do yourself a favor, check them out and join!! 956-583-5400 or e-mail: [nbc@naba.org](mailto:nbc@naba.org).*

\* \* \*

*The rains they are a'comin' -- thank goodness! It's been close to a month since we heard the pittey-pat on our plants. Have plants to put in and to make the most of this welcome watering? Dig the holes. Set the plants outside nearby where they can enjoy the natural watering. Dig the holes. Then . . . stop!*

Why stop? Because in our area, we want roots to grow downward. The more we move into summer, the hotter soil becomes and the more packed solid. Most hand watering (or even sprinkler water) soaks only the top soil layers.

The more water you can get down deep, the healthier those lower levels will be, filled with life to make it more beneficial to plant roots when you get around to actually planting. Be sure you know where your underground lines are laid!

Want to try something different this year? Not a bad technique if you have lots of fallen limbs.

Hugelkultur is a type of gardening that advocates digging trenches and filling them with compost layered with wood, branches, and compost. The decaying natural elements will retain moisture, adding lots of valuable nutrients to the soil. *Good photos:* <https://www.facebook.com/HoustonHugelkultur/>

Of course, neighbors will probably think you're strange, but then, most obsessive gardeners probably are!

**SPEAKING OF 'STRANGE'** -- In honor of the Artemis II launch, Garden for Wildlife released Intergalactic Habitat Collection (*including shipping service to lunar surface and Red Plant (Mars)*). (Note: since the amazing growth of "native gardening for wildlife," it's often difficult to tell for-profit nature/flower businesses from volunteer groups. Research. But know many, if not most, are working hand-in-hand on shared concerns.)

Sharing this April Fool's Day promotion may be just to make you smile today. But gotta give them a nod for stressing the importance of "ensuring that the Martian ecosystem remains as pristine as the day the rovers arrived." feff

\* \* \*

## 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!



- **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)*

\* \* \*

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

---

*Continuing with this month's theme, we will be continuing to explore what healthy soil is, how to build and maintain it, and more. Please read on to enjoy the writings and teachings of our late founder, John Ferguson.*

---

### **Subject: What Is A Healthy Soil – Part 3 (continued), Part 4**

How important are these other minerals?

Studies have shown that people who live in igneous areas with highly mineralized soil and water, the Hunzas, the Vilcabambas, etc., have life spans averaging 127 years old, without the aid of medical technology.

Current theory, confirmed by animal tests, indicates the presence of all the trace minerals in the water and soil where they live, which allows the human body to work more efficiently to repair itself, prevent disease, and slow down the aging process.

**The message I want to leave with you is:**

*"We as scientists do not really know for sure what is important and what's not".*

As a result, modern soil scientists researching organic and biological methods take the position of having all the possible minerals present in the soil and then let the plants and microbes take what they want and need.

Sort of like when we go to the cafeteria to eat, we have dozens of items to choose from, but we only take a few, and different people take different things based on what they need (what they are hungry for).

***What Is A Healthy Soil – Part 4***

Continuing our discussion of what a healthy soil is, we are going to discuss item #3 below: Soil life.

Organic matter from almost fresh to totally decomposed in the form of humus (humins, humic, fulvic acids)

Minerals (nutrients, sand, silt, and clay)

Soil life (microbes and macrobes)

Air & water

Plant choices

Care for and do not destroy the health of the soil one has

3) Soil life – This is the 3rd major portion of a healthy soil and the most frequently neglected and most easily destroyed. One pound of healthy soil, barely a double handful, will contain over 9 billion microbes. Not a million but a billion, and some studies are now suggesting trillions of microbes in a pound of real healthy soil! As these microbes live and grow, they break down silicate minerals, releasing the nutrients. Many of these have the ability to obtain nitrogen from the air, which is assimilated into their bodies in the form of proteins, enzymes, amino acids, vitamins, etc., all beneficial to plants, wildlife, and ultimately humans.

The microbes consist of bacteria, fungi, protozoa, nematodes, microarthropods, and many others. Microbes turn dirt into soil. They give body and texture as well as the feel and smell of healthy soil. Microorganisms break down detritus into useful soil products like humus. Microorganisms help hold soil aggregates together, creating channels through which plant roots grow, soil animals move, and water percolates.

Microbes protect roots from pathogens; mycorrhizal fungi have been shown to benefit plants by enhanced nutrient absorption, increased drought tolerance, improved transplant survival, and reduced susceptibility to root diseases. Mycorrhizal fungi increase the length and mass of root systems, enabling the plant to absorb nutrients better. They also convert nutrients into a form easier for plants to use and absorb. As the root mass and size increase, moisture can be absorbed from a much larger area, giving plants greater drought resistance. Several species of fungus trap, attack, and destroy parasitic nematodes.

Over 1,400 species of nematodes have been identified, and only 20 are bad for plants. Most species of nematodes are beneficial; some species attack and feed on pest larvae in the soil, such as grub worms, fleas, ticks, and even fire ants, while others help cycle nutrients.

Researchers have discovered a group of fungi that protects lawn grasses from pests. The fungus is called an endophyte and lives in a symbiotic relationship that benefits both the plant and the fungus. The fungi produce toxins that are harmless to the grass (and humans) but repel chinch bugs, sod webworms, and other surface-feeding insects. Research at Rutgers University indicates that grass plants inoculated with endophytes are more vigorous and better able to withstand drought and weed invasions.

In addition to the army of microbial workers, macrobes (earthworms, beetles, centipedes, ants, arthropods, burrowing frogs, etc.) churn and till soil, increasing porosity and tilth. This burrowing action stimulates root growth in most plants. Of this group, earthworms are the most valuable, a gardener's best friend.

**- Coming Next Week: What Is A Healthy Soil – Part 5**

To learn more, read on by clicking below

[Click Here](#)



## 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 NEWSGROUP 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.

---

## April

---

**WED., APR. 1: ANNUAL PLANT SALE** by **Gardeners by the Bay**  
9am-12pm, rear of Webster Presbyterian Church, 201 W NASA Pkwy,  
Webster: [gibt.org](http://gibt.org)

**THURS., APR. 2: LEARN TO PLANT AND CARE FOR YOUR TREES** by  
**BEN PUNKETT**, 11am-noon, 846 6th S, Free. 979-826-7651.  
[txmg.org/wallermgwallermgardener@gmail.com](http://txmg.org/wallermgwallermgardener@gmail.com)

**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. 11: TEXAS SUPERSTAR® TRAIL & TOUR**, by **GALVESTON**  
**COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS**. 9-noon, Discovery Garden in Carbide Park,  
4102 Main St. (FM 519), La Marque. FREE. Register: [txmg.org/](http://txmg.org/)

**SAT., APR. 11: HERB FESTIVAL AT THE WYNNE HOME** by **HERB SOCIETY**  
**OF AMERICA, TEXAS THYME UNIT**, 8am-1pm., 1428 Eleventh St.,  
Huntsville. Free. 936-891-5024. [www.texasthymeunit.org](http://www.texasthymeunit.org)

**SAT., APR 11: LONE STAR DAYLILY SOCIETY PLANT SALE**, 9am-4pm;  
Pearland Lumber & Ace Hardware, 2027 N Main St.,  
Pearland. [lonestardaylilysociety.org](http://lonestardaylilysociety.org), 281-331-0162.

**SAT., Apr 11: Felco Maintenance Workshop** by **Jennifer Thomson**, 2pm,  
Free. In person (limit 25) registration email to [eeickhoff17@gmail.com](mailto:eeickhoff17@gmail.com) and  
Facebook Live. <https://www.houstonrose.org/hrsmeet.htm>

**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/](http://fbmg.org/grow-your-own-2026/)

**SAT., APR 18: PRESENT PETALS AND PATHWAYS GARDEN TOUR** by **SJC Master Gardeners**, 10am-3pm. Coldspring. <https://txmg.org/sjmg>

**SAT., APRIL 18: OPEN GARDEN DAY** by **MONTGOMERY COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS**, 9am-noon, Texas A&M Agrilife Extension, 9020 Airport Rd. 936-539-7824, [mcmga.com](http://mcmga.com)

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

**TUES., APR. 21: 'Edible Weeds in Sugar Land'** by **DR. MARK VORDERBRUGGEN**. 10am. 702 Burney Rd., Sugar Land, Free, [sugarlandgardenclub.org](http://sugarlandgardenclub.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/](http://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](http://pct3.com/MBG)

---

## May

---

**SAT., MAY 2: LONE STAR DAYLILY SOCIETY ANNUAL FLOWER SHOW AND PLANT SALE**, Sale: 8am-3pm; Show 1-3pm, Alvin Senior Citizens Building, 309 W Sealy, Alvin. Free. [lonestardaylilysociety.org](http://lonestardaylilysociety.org), 281-331-0162.

**SAT. MAY 9: PLUMERIA** by **GALVESTON COUNTY MASTER GARDENER**. AgriLife Extension Bldg., 1-3PM. Carbide Park, 4102-B Main St (FM519), La Marque. FREE. Register: <https://txmg.org/galveston/events/>

**SAT. MAY 9: GROWING TOMATOES: STRESS MANAGEMENT**, 9-11AM, by **GCMG**. AgriLife Extension Bldg., Carbide Park, 4102-B Main St (FM519), La Marque. FREE. Register: <https://txmg.org/galveston/events/>

**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)

**THURS., MAY 14: POLLINATORS TO ATTRACT BENEFICIALS** by **MONTGOMERY COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS**, 6:30- pm, Texas A&M Agrilife Extension, 9020 Airport Rd. Contra 936-539-7824, [mcmga.com](http://mcmga.com)

**FRI.-SAT., MAY 15-16: HOUSTON CACTUS & SUCCULENT SOCIETY SPRING SALE**, Fri. 9am-5pm, Sat. 9am-3pm, Metropolitan Multi-Service

Center.[hcsstex.com/](https://hcsstex.com/)

**SAT. MAY 16: NATIVE PLANTS & BENEFICIAL INSECTS**, 9-11AM, by **GCMG**. Discovery Garden in Carbide Park, 4102 Main St (FM519), La Marque. FREE. Register: <https://txmg.org/galveston/events/>

**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/)

See more

*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!

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)



## 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)

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!