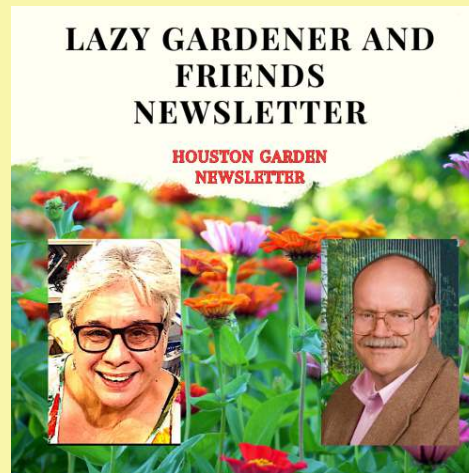


Nature's Way Resources is proud to bring you this free weekly newsletter. While we don't run ads, generous sponsors help support this project as a public service. Their names are listed below. Please consider showing your appreciation by supporting their businesses!

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 Receive Our Weekly Newsletter

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

<https://www.hillierfuneralhome.com/obituaries/William-Bill-Carlisle-Welch?obId=48655391>



**ONE THING FOR SURE: WE DON'T NEED
TO WATER -- RIGHT NOW, THAT IS!**
(But we may need extra help!)

By Brenda Beust Smith | The Lazy Gardener

From what I saw on weather reports and in my yard, all our gardens are getting a good soaking! What do we do now? First, don't worry about watering for a while! The conventional rule is to wait at least 2-3 days after a heavy rain to step onto garden soil. You'll just pack the soil down more, squeezing out more oxygen. Don't want to do that!. And, if you're new to the area, know that this is not unusual. Best to prepare for more.

Instead, it's a good time to take a good long look at your gardens as close as you can without further packing down the soil. Let's start with more "Don't," in case you're itching to get out there and see . . .

DON'T . . .

- ... be in a hurry to walk around close to plants during clear moments. Soaked soil packs tight very easily, squeezing out vital oxygen that soaked roots need even more now than usual.
- Ditto for grass areas, if you're trying to improve your lawn.

DO . . .

- If you have standing water, try to remove as much as possible and look for ways to prevent future flooding.
- Remove debris blown or floated into garden areas.
- Consider rain barrels if don't already have one. Collect rain for future use, and help reduce oversaturation of garden soils. Unfortunately, the City of Houston has already held its spring Rain Barrel sale. Get on list now for fall one. <https://www.houstonpublicworks.org/rain-barrel-program>. Check your local city/county agricultural agent/Master Gardener group to see if they have any upcoming sales. Almost all do.
- Consider a rain garden to help collection. *There's a plan for one in my free Lazy Gardener's Guide. (Emailed free on request)*
- Check plants carefully every few days. But wait for soil to dry slightly before working to avoid compaction
- Check for standing water and improve drainage if necessary.
- Remove debris or fallen branches.
- Avoid overwatering; rely on natural moisture for a few days.
- Consider adding mulch to retain soil moisture and prevent erosion
- Keep eye out for signs of mold or any damaged plants and replace dead ones.
- Postpone planting additional plants until things dry out. Digging in soaked soil pushes valuable oxygen out.

FUTURE SIGNS OF DANGEROUSLY FLOODED PLANTS ...

If a plant looks 'different' or like it's pouting, given our current weather, might be a good idea to review signs of overwatering! By the time you see yellowing leaves, especially on older plants, the stress might be fatal.

Of course, leaf wilt or dropped leaves is an instant clue. Keep an eye out. Root rot might smell (or might not). But mold or algae on your soil is a key clue. If root rot is setting in, you might be able to smell it. Watch closely for leaves starting to wilt. Keep an eye out for mold or algae, even vaguely yellowing leaves, wilting (root rot smells!), mold on soil surfaces, leaf drop, particularly in lower leaves, as a stress response.

What to do? In almost all cases, if you're seriously losing plants, they need higher ground. Don't just pour on more soil. Different plants have different needs. Research how to proceed before you do anything. Great resources are our many specialty plant groups. We have so many here.

LET THIS BE THE YEAR you take advantage of all free official advice available from our specialty plant societies. If links don't work, please let me know! (lazygardenerbrenda@gmail.com) (Websites are not linked to web!)

- **AZALEA** – River Oaks Garden Club Azalea Trail will be in 2026. riveroaksgc.org.
- **BEGONIA** – Astros Branch, Houston Begonia Society/ begoniahouston.org
- **BONSAI** – Houston Bonsai Society houstonbonsaisociety.org
- **BROMELIAD** – Bromeliad Society/Houston bromeliadsocietyhouston.org/
- **BULBS** – Garden Club of Houston Bulb & Plant Mart. October 2025 gchouston.org/
- **CACTUS & SUCCULENTS** – Houston Cactus & Succulent Society. hcsstex.org/
- **CAMELLIAS** – Couthatta Camellia Society. americancamellias.com/clubs-societies
- **DAYLILIES** – Houston Hemerocallis Society. ofts.com/hhs/
- **FERNS** – Gulf Coast Fern Society tgcfernsoc.org
- **GARDENING** – Urban Harvest urbanharvest.org
- **HIBISCUS** – Lone Star Chapter. lonestarahs.org; Space City Hibiscus Facebook Group [Space City Hibiscus Facebook group](https://www.facebook.com/SpaceCityHibiscusFacebookgroup)
- **MASTER GARDENERS / AGRICULTURAL AGENTS** txmg.org/contacts/by-county
- **NATIVE PLANTS** – Native Plant Society/Houston. npsot.org/houston
- **OLEANDERS** – International Oleander Society. oleander.org (based in Galveston!)
- **ORCHIDS** – Houston Orchid Society. houstonorchidsociety.org
- **PALMS** Palm Society of South Texas facebook.com/PalmSocietyOfSouthTexasPsst
- **PLUMERIA** – *The Plumeria Society of America (based in Houston!)* theplumeriasociety.org
- **ROSES:**
 - **HOUSTON ROSE SOCIETY** houstonrose.org
 - **TEXAS ROSE RUSTLERS** texasroserustlers.com
- **TREES** – Trees for Houston treesforhouston.org

These are all groups that have contributed to this column over the decades. Some groups prefer to stay small. Many, but not all, of these also have open Facebook pages. Just do a “__(plant name)__ GARDEN CLUB” search. If I'm missing any, please let me know!

- **IF YOU KNOW** I've missed any new or revived groups or others, or no longer active, PLEASE let me know! lazygardenerbrenda@gmail.com
- **LOOKING FOR A “NEIGHBORHOOD GARDEN CLUB”?** Many, but not all, may be members of the [*HOUSTON FEDERATION OF GARDEN CLUBS*](#)
- **LOCAL ADVICE IS ALWAYS THE BEST AND MOST RELIABLE!**
- **Other great sources: Facebook Page: [*HOUSTON GARDENING*](#)**
- And most of all (know your growing area best and have fabulous demonstration gardens) - your local [*Master Gardeners*](#)

* * *

Speaking of the “[*Texas Rose Rustlers*](#)”, a great time/place to join -- and see wonderful spring treasures of Mercer Botanic Garden:

SAT., JUL 11: TEXAS ROSE RUSTLERS SUMMER MEETING, 10am-1pm,
Mercer Botanic Gardens, Humble. Free with presentation by Deborah Birge, Ft
Bend Master Gardeners. www.texasroserustlers.com

* * *



SAD TIME FOR GARDENERS: LONGTIME HORTICULTURE ICON WILLIAM C. (BILL) WELCH has passed away. [Obituary](#). Huge loss to lovers of antique roses (one of first to bring these to public attention). Back in the late 1960s, I was "assigned" by editors (despite never having gardened in my entire life) to "temporarily" also write the Houston Chronicle's gardening column. (Editor moving out of town). Bill Welch quickly became one of my primary go-to horticulturists. His already famous local, national, and international gardening activities were as amazing to this clueless reporter as his willingness to take time to answer all my questions, even inviting me to join an informal keeping track of blooming antique roses in and around Navasota.

Bill was (always has been and still is) universally loved as much for his generosity, humor, and patience as his profound contributions to gardening in general, both locally and worldwide. He will be missed so much by so many! Details in Obituary link above.

* * *

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

*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*



John's Corner

NEWS FROM THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF SOIL AND PLANTS

This article has been condensed for clarity and ease of reading, find the link to the original article below.

Microplastics, Beneficial Fungi, and Better Gardening

Microplastics are becoming a growing problem in agriculture and gardening as plastic products slowly degrade. The world produces roughly 400 million tons of plastic waste each year, and much of it eventually finds its way into our soils. Sources include plastic mulches, sewage sludge (biosolids), fertilizers made from biosolids, personal care products, chicken manure, and landfill waste.

Research has found that as these plastics accumulate, they can reduce crop yields, decrease plant growth, increase water evaporation, reduce water infiltration, and limit nutrient availability. Even smaller nano-sized plastic particles have been shown to attach to root tips, interfering with beneficial biological and microbial processes that support healthy plant growth.

Scientists are also finding plastic fibers from clothing and textiles in agricultural soils. While the full impact on human health remains unknown, the outlook is concerning. Biodegradable plastic mulches are being developed, but studies suggest many still take well over a year to decompose. As one researcher noted: "Let the farmer and gardener beware!"

Another reason many gardeners choose to grow organically is to reduce exposure to synthetic chemicals. Recent research continues to examine the effects of herbicides such as glyphosate and their potential impacts on human and environmental health.

Many gardeners enjoy growing herbs, and cinnamon is receiving renewed attention from researchers. Long valued for its anti-inflammatory, antioxidant, and immune-supporting properties, new studies suggest cinnamon's bioactive compounds may also improve memory, learning, and overall brain function.

When most people think of fungi, they think of plant diseases. In reality, the overwhelming majority of fungal species are beneficial. Some break down organic matter and create humus, while mycorrhizal fungi colonize roots and help plants access water and nutrients.

Researchers at the University of Maryland recently found that the fungus *Metarhizium robertsii* can remove mercury from the soil surrounding plant roots, helping prevent plants from absorbing the contaminant. Previously, this same fungus was found to protect roots from insect pests. Clearly, it is a remarkable multitasker.

This is one reason broad-spectrum fungicides can create unintended problems. While they may suppress a targeted disease, they also eliminate many beneficial fungi that support healthy soil function.

A good example is Brown Patch (*Rhizoctonia solani*) in lawns. Top dressing with a quality fine-screened leaf mold compost introduces beneficial organisms that help suppress the disease naturally, often providing better long-term results than repeated fungicide applications.

For a healthier lawn with lower water requirements:

- Top dress with a quality fine-screened leaf mold compost.
- Use a quality organic fertilizer program.
- Apply remineralizer every 3–5 years.

- Mow St. Augustine grass high (4 inches or more) with a sharp blade.
- Water only when the grass begins to wilt.

Healthy soils create healthy plants, and nature often provides the best solutions when we learn to work with it rather than against it.

If you would like to read the original article, please click below.

[Click Here](#)

If you're enjoying these deeper soil insights, there's another way to stay connected to what's happening on the ground at **Nature's Way Resources**.

Soil Source is our ongoing update from NWR - sharing what's in stock, seasonal specials, upcoming events, and timely soil and planting tips based on what we're seeing in real time at the nursery.

It's not a separate philosophy from what we talk about here - it's the practical, "what's happening right now" layer that supports it.

No spam. No soliciting. Just real updates, soil insight, and what's happening at Nature's Way Resources.

Sign up anytime and stay in the loop.

[Sign-up](#)

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. 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.*

June

SAT. JUNE 20: Plumeria Society of America Sale. East Harris County Activity Center, 7340 Spencer Highway, Pasadena. Free Admission & Parking. 9 am - 1pm theplumeriasociety.org/

July

THU., JULY 9: WORM COMPOSTING by MONTGOMERY COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS, 6:30-8pm, Texas A&M Agrilife Extension, 9020 Airport Rd., Conroe 936-539-7824, mcmga.com

THU., JUL. 9: BEGINNER MUSHROOM HUNTING by MARK VORDERBRUGGEN, 6 - 7:30 pm, Visitor Center, Mercer Arboretum & Botanic Gardens, 22306 Aldine Westfield Rd. Free. <http://pct3.com/MBG>

FRI., JUL. 10: MERCER GARDEN TOUR by MERCER STAFF, 9-10am, Visitor Center, Mercer Arboretum & Botanic Gardens, 22306 Aldine Westfield Rd. Free. pct3.com/MBG

SAT. JULY 11: CONTAINER GARDENING by GALVESTON COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS, 9-11pm, AgriLife Extension Bldg., Carbide Park, 4102-B Main St. (FM519), La Marque. Free. txmg.org/galveston/events/

SAT. JULY 11: HEALTHY LAWNS by GALVESTON COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS, 1-3pm, AgriLife Extension Bldg., Carbide Park, 4102-B Main St. (FM519), La Marque. Free. Register: txmg.org/galveston/events/

SAT., JUL 11: TEXAS ROSE RUSTLERS SUMMER MEETING with **DEBORAH BIRGE**, 10am-1pm, Mercer Botanic Gardens, 22306 Aldine Westfield Rd, Humble. texasroserustlers.com

SAT. JULY 18 : Plumeria Society of America Sale. Bay Area Community Center , 5002 E NASA Parkway, Seabrook, TX, 77586. Free Admission & Parking. 9 am - 1pm theplumeriasociety.org/

SAT, JULY 25: LOVE OF TREES by TEXAS A&M FORESTRY SERVICE and MONTGOMERY COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS, 9:00am-11:am, Texas A&M Agrilife Extension, 9020 Airport Rd., Conroe 936-539-7824, mcmga.com

FRI., JUL. 31 – SUN., AUG. 2: CACTUS & SUCCULENT SHOWCASE, 8 am–5pm, Visitor Center, Mercer Arboretum & Botanic Gardens, 22306 Aldine Westfield Rd. Free. <http://pct3.com/MBG>

AUGUST

THURS, AUG 6: WEED MANAGEMENT by **MONTGOMERY COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS**, 6:30-8pm, Texas A&M Agrilife Extension, 9020 Airport Rd., Conroe 936-539-7824, mcmga.com

SAT, AUG 8: CARING FOR TURF by **MONTGOMERY COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS**, 9am-11am, Texas A&M Agrilife Extension, 9020 Airport Rd., Conroe 936-539-7824, mcmga.com

FRI., AUG. 14: MERCER GARDEN TOUR by **MERCER STAFF**, 9-10am, Visitor Center, Mercer Arboretum & Botanic Gardens, 22306 Aldine Westfield Rd. Free. <http://pct3.com/MBG>

SEPTEMBER

SAT, SEPT 12: SEED HARVESTING by **MONTGOMERY COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS**, 9am-11am, Texas A&M Agrilife Extension, 9020 Airport Rd., Conroe 936-539-7824, mcmga.com

SAT., SEPT. 19: FALL GARDEN FESTIVAL by **NATURE'S WAY RESOURCES**, 8AM-2PM, 101 Sherbrook Cir., Conroe. 936-273-1200. <https://www.natureswayresources.com/garden-events>

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





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.



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