

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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*Old favorites that bloom in hot sun, l to r, Crepe Myrtle 'Queen Lace'; Swamp Rosemallow (Hibiscus moscheutos); daylilies with giant white spider lilies and giant white butterflyweed (caution, grows higher than our 1-story house!)
Note, all these are so popular, they may have other names depending on who's got them for sale! Irritating, I know!*

***"This is not a time for wimpy plants . . .
Our landscapes can still be beautiful in summer
if we choose plants that can take the heat!"
- - "TEXAS MONTH-BY-MONTH GARDENING "
by ROBERT "SKIP" RICHTER***

By Brenda Beust Smith | The Lazy Gardener

This quote from Skip Richter (*hugely respected Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service agent for 32 years in Montgomery, Travis, Harris, and Brazos Counties, and host of Gardenline Radio*) pretty much says it all! If you buy willy-nilly, with no pre-research on tolerance of OUR HEAT, then I hope your bets pay off. But odds are, they may not.

We mentioned before the use of umbrellas (adult or child's) to protect outdoor plants from the afternoon sun. The added advice below may seem a little

strange given this week's predicted rain. But it's good advice all summer through (*what we delightfully call*) "Fall":

- (*Once we're past these welcome downpours*) Always water well at the base of important plants BEFORE it rains. Don't laugh! Heat quickly causes topsoil to "crust over," reducing amount of water that seeps downward. If that doesn't work into an early morning schedule, wait until night, so you'll lose less to evaporation.
- Don't remove sunburnt foliage. It'll shade growth below it.
- If you don't have mulch down, please consider it. It will make a difference in summer
- If you can, water outdoor plants earlier rather than later. Slightly moist soil is more absorbent than even-completely-bone-dry topsoil (which can even temporarily repel rainwater).
- Leave heat-burnt leaves on to 1. provide shade for healthy inside leaves, and 2. add nutrients to the soil.
- Water as early as can before soil heats up (and before evaporation reduces how much reaches plants!)
- Most importantly, if you haven't mulched treasured plants yet, better get to it! Brown is recommended over black in our area, but black is better than no mulch at all. I'm determined to get back to asking neighbors for their leaves -- my favorite mulch. Life has just gotten in the way lately.

Don't overlook heat's effects on inside plants! Rainwater's better than our additives-heavy city water. Make sure indoor plants aren't exposed to mid-day sun (usually west/south-facing windows -- but check other glass areas too). Even inside, even indirect rays may quickly dry the air.

Any other indoor/outdoor plant tips you'd like to add will be welcome . . . especially for folks new to our area who aren't used to our extreme heat from reflected sun even inside the house! Do share!

Lazygardenerbrenda@gmail.com.

Once our rains stop, plants will appreciate a little extra watering in the morning. The closer to soil the watering, the less would be evaporated away before it hits soil. During very hot sunny periods, experts advise setting small-medium plant pots in larger pots full of water (for a short while only) and leaving inside and outside fans on to keep the room/area's air from heating up. Don't set plants near AC vents. That's too drying.

This next tip, overheard in a nursery, was new to me. A customer was advised to wrap her dark-colored decorative pots (outdoor and even indoor-near-windows) with white paper or cloth so less heat will be absorbed around the roots!

If you lose any plants just from a lack of time to take heat-protective measures, keep a record. If you must replace now, consider these usually very hardy choices (be sure you mulch WELL) :

Anything not mentioned that you do to protect your plants? How about which of your plants laugh at our heat? PLEASE DO SHARE to help our newcomers from less-sun-baked areas! lazygardenerbrenda@gmail.com.

* * *

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 week's issue of John's Corner will consist of a guest article from Jeani Tuttle with Custom Inspirations Home & Landscape. Originally published for Facebook, we have gotten Jeani's permission to reuse it for our readers here.



*CHINESE CROWN ORCHID, Eulophia graminea,
Custom Inspirations Home & Landscape*

Chinese Crown Orchid PSA Together, we can stem the tide!

Jeani Tuttle

Custom Inspirations Home & Landscape

I am sharing some **IMPORTANT INFORMATION** regarding an **INVASIVE PLANT SPECIES**, the **CHINESE CROWN ORCHID**, *Eulophia graminea*, that was recently located in Montgomery County. We need everyone's help to stem the tide of this invasive species before it becomes a costly issue for all of us.

See the photos to assist in identifying and locating, and please read the following.

I recently found a few of these volunteer plants in a landscape, and was almost entertained by it. I properly ID'd the plant, quickly finding that it is an Invasive Species that has just recently been naturalized in Texas as of this year, 2026. (You can look up and read how it has affected Florida since its naturalization there since 2008).



This information led to a quick action to reach out to TAMU, Texas Invasives, and our local Montgomery County AgriLife Extension Office to report this matter and gather more information. My contact informed me that he had not found any publication specifically for Texas, but Florida extension does have some good information:

<https://plant-directory.ifas.ufl.edu/.../eulophia-graminea/>

The lack of information for Texas is in part due to its newness and lack of knowledge among homeowners and gardeners across Texas. Because of this, we need everyone's help to stem the tide of this invasive species before it becomes a costly issue to all of us.

We can all be a saving part to stop the Spread before it becomes a very costly issue in our own Community, to our gardens, and our neighboring communities.

To stop the spread, we need everyone's help.

1. Keep an eye out for these new sprouts and volunteers. Invasive plants can come from anywhere and spread very quickly.
2. If needed, use a Plant ID app, i.e., Seek by iNaturalist, to properly identify the volunteers.
3. Report your findings:
 - Montgomery County Extension Office:
Phone: (936) 539-7822
Email: montgomery-tx@ag.tamu.edu
Or: mpotter@ag.tamu.edu
(Or contact your local Extension Office in your county).
 - **[TexasInvasives.org](https://www.texasinvasives.org)**, Take Action, Report, and use the form:
The form will ask for photos of your findings as well as coordinates.

https://www.texasinvasives.org/action/report_detail.php?error=recaptcha&alert_id=#form

- Also, contact your Community Manager's Office and share this information.
4. If you find and identify this particular Invasive Species, and if you find stems coming up, especially ones that have flowered already, cut the stems off at the base, place in plastic bag, and seal it before placing it in your trash receptacle.

- Proceed to dig up the rest of the plant, being very careful not to leave any parts of the plant in the soil.
- When disposing of invasive plant material, consider whether any seeds, fruits, or cuttings could re-sprout.
- At a minimum, bag these materials to help prevent their spread, and Please Dispose of these invasive plants carefully.
- Keep an eye on your property.
- Inform your neighbors and friends.

Thank you for your attention to this matter and for everyone's help to stop this unwanted plant from spreading in our beloved communities!

Please feel free to share this message with your Community, Landscape and Lawn Maintenance Crews, Friends, and Family.

Together, we can stem the tide!



[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.*

July

SAT. JULY 18 : Plumeria Society of America Sale, 9am-1pm, East Harris County Activity Center, 7340 Spencer Highway, Pasadena, Texas. Free Admission & Parking. 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: COOL SEASON VEGETABLES & HERBS, by **FORT BEND COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS**, 9am, 1330 Band Rd, Rosenberg. Free. eventbrite.com/e/1835370756339?aff=oddtcreator

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>

FRI., AUG. 21. FALL LANDSCAPE MAINTENANCE, by **FORT BEND COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS**, 1pm. Virtual (Zoom), Free. [Landscape Success 2026](#)

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>

SAT. SEPTEMBER 26: GARDEN WALK: ESCAPE INTO THE GARDEN by **LEAGUE CITY GARDEN CLUB**, League City, 10-4 pm, Tickets \$20,
www.leaguecitygardenclub.org.

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.



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

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