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UT Gardens Magazine

UT Gardens

2009

Gardens (Fall/Winter 2009-10)

UT Institute of Agriculture

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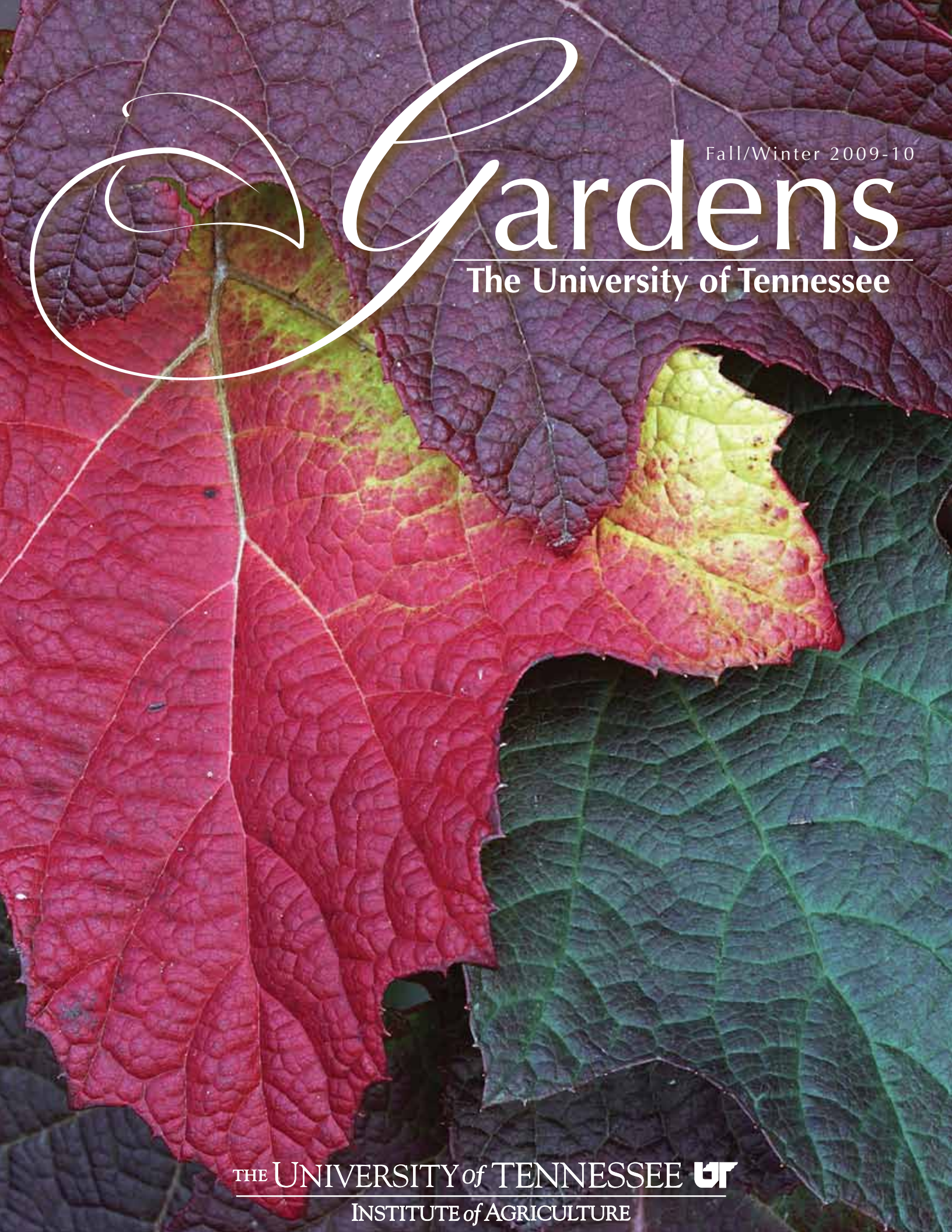
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Gardens

Fall/Winter 2009-10

The University of Tennessee

THE UNIVERSITY of TENNESSEE **UT**

INSTITUTE of AGRICULTURE

The University of Tennessee Gardens located in Knoxville and Jackson are part of the UT Institute of Agriculture. Their mission is to foster appreciation, education and stewardship of plants through garden displays, collections, educational programs and research trials. Some 4,000 annuals, perennials, herbs, tropicals, trees, shrubs, vegetables and ornamental grasses are evaluated each year. Both gardens are Tennessee Certified Arboreta and American Conifer Society Reference Gardens. The gardens are open during all seasons and free to the public. Visit <http://utgardens.tennessee.edu/> and <http://west.tennessee.edu/ornamentals> for more information.

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THE UNIVERSITY of
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INSTITUTE of
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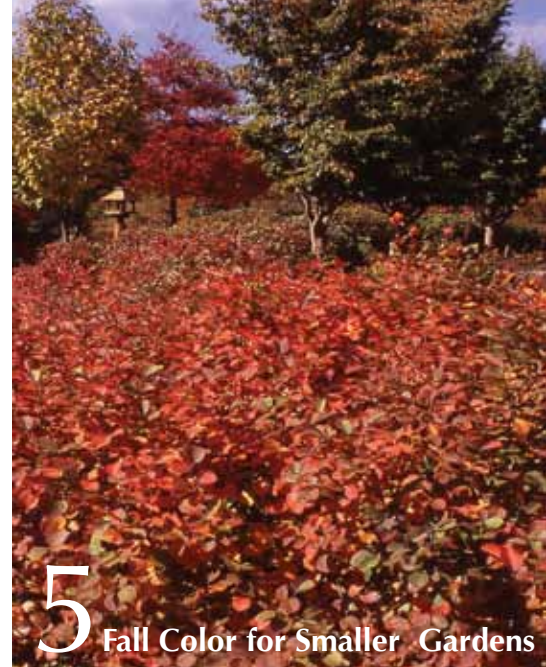
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On The Cover

Fall foliage of 'Snow Queen' Hydrangea quercifolia (Oakleaf hydrangea).

Photograph taken in the UT Gardens by Dr. Alan S. Heilman, retired University of Tennessee Botany professor.



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From the Director

Greetings from the UT Gardens!

This past summer has been extremely busy for all of us here at the Gardens—lots of changes and progress have occurred.

One of the best things about summer was the abundant rainfall that sustained our plant collections without the need for regular irrigation. As a result, I've seen extraordinary growth on many of our trees and shrubs, making for many striking and healthy specimens in the gardens.

We started the season with a grant from the UT Alliance of Women Philanthropists toward the construction of our Kitchen Garden. We look forward to providing educational programming with this garden for the university, children, youth and adults.

Several very successful events took place this season, including the spring and fall plant sales, which netted more than \$20,000 for the Gardens. In addition, the seventh annual Blooms Days Festival and Marketplace drew more than 3,000 visitors. We had more botanically related vendors than ever before, and we operated on electricity (without generators) for the first time! The great music, food and shopping made for one of the best Blooms Days yet, but it would not have been possible without the help of our army of volunteers—more than 150 in all.

Our volunteer program has never been so active nor had so many participants as this past season. Volunteers helped with projects such as staining our kitchen garden fence, making hypertufa containers for our plant sales, planting and weeding, and removing brick pavers from old, unsafe garden paths. We could not accomplish all we do without these dedicated and passionate volunteers.

Speaking of garden paths, the ones in Knoxville are getting an upgrade. Landscape designer Jeanne Lane created a plan to ease navigation through the gardens and make the paths more accessible for disabled guests. Lane's plan calls for a perimeter walk that connects with the Third Creek Greenway as well as several secondary paths that take you through the heart of the Gardens. We hope to have the walk completed by next spring.

We added several new garden areas this past summer, including a wildflower meadow that proves some flowers can outperform East Tennessee weeds!

Finally, the most exciting summer garden effort was the Beall Family Rose Garden construction. We held a dedication in mid-September and I cannot thank the Beall family enough for making possible this beautiful and educational addition to the UT Gardens.

I continue to be amazed and proud of the role the UT Gardens play in supporting the research, teaching and outreach mission of the University of Tennessee and the Institute of Agriculture. It is such a valuable resource for our region and state. I am so honored to have been appointed director after having served as interim director. Thanks for your continued support. I look forward to seeing you in the Gardens!



Dr. Sue Hamilton, director
UT Gardens

UT Culinary Institute Welcomes its New Herb and Berry Garden

By Dr. Donetta Poisson, UT Culinary Institute assistant director



The Culinary Institute at the University of Tennessee is very pleased with the results of a new herb and berry garden planted by UT Gardens student interns. The garden is the result of collaboration between the Culinary Institute and the UT Gardens to provide hands-on learning for students in both programs.

The idea behind this garden was students working for students. The UT Gardens student interns learned about the cultural requirements in growing blueberries, raspberries, blackberries and culinary herbs. They studied the soil requirements for fruit—especially pH—as well as spacing, trellising and pruning. Culinary Institute students learned fresh herb identification, when and how to harvest, and how to use fresh herbs in food preparation and culinary arts. The availability of the fresh herbs in the Culinary Institute’s own “backyard” adds to the culinary experience and provides dynamic learning for students. Many of the culinary students have never experienced growing and using their own herbs in cooking.

Dr. Sue Hamilton, director of the UT Gardens, and Dr. John Antun, founding director of the Culinary Institute, worked together to design the garden and define the needs of students studying in each program. After careful deliberation, the Herb and Berry Garden is now in place and will continue to grow. The variety is vast and some of the herbs could be considered hard to come by. Currently, the garden includes blueberries; raspberries; blackberries; assorted varieties of basil, sage, thyme, rosemary, dill, fennel and chives; as well as unusual herbs used in the culinary arts.

Photography by Steve Chastain, Expressions Photography

Fall Color for Smaller Gardens



By Carol Reese, UT Extension area specialist in ornamental horticulture

Certainly, the brilliant colors of tree foliage dominate the autumn landscape, but there are many shrubs that color your fall garden. These shrubs are great alternatives for gardeners with little space or who do not want to sacrifice sunny areas.

One that should be struck from your list, however, is the shrub called burning bush, *Euonymus alata*. It has proven to be terribly invasive, and has made huge inroads into native areas. It's also quite susceptible to spider mite, so there's another black mark.

Fothergilla, on the other hand, would be all gold stars. Still uncommon in Tennessee landscapes, it deserves wider use for its many ornamental attributes and ease of culture. There are two species available in the green industry. *Fothergilla gardenii* grows about 5 feet to 6 feet tall and wide, though there is great variability in growth habits among the cultivars. *Fothergilla major* is larger, as the name would imply, but again, selections may range widely in size. 'Mount Airy' is easily found in the trade and is a particularly vigorous form selected for its handsome foliage; reliable fall colors of yellow, orange and red; and its plentiful spring flowers. The white flowers emerge in early spring, in fuzzy, fragrant, upright candles.

Another particularly nice form is 'Blue Shadow,' which was found as a sport of 'Mount Airy.' The leaves emerge typically green, but become a steely blue as they mature. Fall color is similar to 'Mount Airy,' but tends to have more wine and purple tones.

These native shrubs are tolerant of sun or shade, though sunny sites promote more flowers and better fall color.

Granted, sumac is a plant that suckers and will require vigilance to prevent it from taking over a large space, but some plants are worth the extra effort. Sumac provides unbeatable fall color. Though you don't often find straight species in the nursery trade, you may run across the laceleaf forms of *Rhus typhina* or *R. glabra*. The foliage texture on these is frilly and enticing, and fall colors flame with yellow, orange and red. A gold laceleaf form called 'Tiger Eyes' has stormed onto the scene in recent years and is undoubtedly a knockout. However, it has not yet been proven to tolerate the heat and humidity of West Tennessee and may appreciate a bit of afternoon shade even in the cooler parts of the state.

If you'd like to try some of the common roadside sumacs, they are propagated most easily from root cuttings. Be sure to note that there are males (no red berries) and females (spear-shaped clusters of red berries), so get both if you want this

plant for winter interest and for the birds. Bluebirds, cardinals, mockingbirds and thrashers are just a few of our feathered friends that use these native shrubs for winter forage.

Another fabulous native for the wild critters is spicebush, *Lindera benzoin*. Its red berries are beloved by the birds and were dried and ground in pioneer days for seasoning wild game. Spicebush foliage is fodder for the swallowtail butterfly that bears its name. The glowing yellow fall color is the attraction for gardeners, and is especially nice since the scarlet berries peak at the same time. Soft yellow late winter flowers are the other plus; they are not spectacular, but come at a time when little else is in flower.

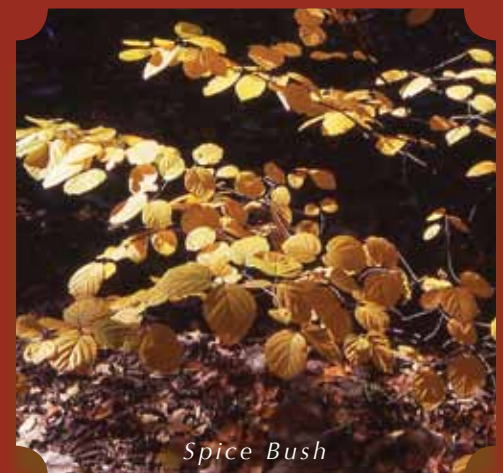
Spicebush occurs naturally in shady, damp habitats, but prospers in sun and drier soils—in fact, becoming a more dense and floriferous plant. This plant isn't commonly found in garden centers, but can be obtained from nurseries that specialize in native plants and is well worth the effort. Unfortunately, it is usually sold as a seed-grown selection so you will not know if you are purchasing male or female; you would need both to have the lovely red berries. Even so, its other qualities are delightful, such as the sweet-pungent scent of leaves and bark. Asian species of spicebush are occasionally found in the trade and are terrific plants for the Tennessee landscape.



Fothergilla



Sumac



Spice Bush

Fall and Winter Interest in the UT Gardens



By James Newburn, UT Gardens assistant director

Many of our deciduous trees and shrubs put on their best show in fall with brilliant foliage. Plan your garden and make appropriate choices that provide outstanding fall colors.

One of the best trees for brilliant yellow color is *Ginkgo biloba*. Typically, this tree can grow rather large, but there are now many dwarf varieties like 'Marieken' that only grow from 6 feet to 10 feet tall. An interesting fact about ginkgo is that it drops all its leaves at once. Other trees known for their outstanding fall color include the Japanese maples; the red maples; sweet gum; any of the sumacs, which can be more of a multi-stemmed shrub; and our native sourwood and black gum. Shrubs that provide brilliant fall color include sweet shrub; some of the oak-leaf hydrangeas; *Fothergilla*; and *Cornus stolonifera* and *Cornus sanguinea*—the redosier and bloodtwig dogwoods. Also, many of the barberries display bright fall foliage from deep crimsons to shimmering golds well into the season.

Many plants provide seasonal interest because of their texture. The crape myrtles come immediately to mind, and have wonderful, smooth mottled bark that dares you to reach out and touch it. The other extreme is the exfoliating bark of paperbark maple and river birch which add depth and texture to their forms in winter. Weeping and contorted trees do not really show off their true form until denuded of foliage. Our weeping katsura tree is stunning in midwinter as are the weeping willows and weeping beeches. Our contorted European filbert is quite showy in winter

as are the new contorted weeping redbud cultivars such as 'Lavender Twist,' 'Covey' and 'Traveller.'

Finally, look for plants that provide habitat and food for wildlife in the garden. Ornamental grasses fall in this category because in addition to graceful form and texture, they also provide seed heads that the birds love. Hollies in all their forms provide the same thing. The evergreen species provide a nice green color and retain their leaves, while the winterberry holly (*Ilex verticillata*) loses its foliage but retains its berries for a long time afterward. Birds flock to *Callicarpa*, or beautyberry, to feed on its bright purple or white berries while enjoying protection in its abundant drooping branches.

One category of plants that fit all of these positive aspects of planting with fall and winter in mind are the conifers. Many of the conifers change from a bright yellow-gold to a deep burgundy or bronze during winter. Several have cones that will turn fluorescent pink as the season progresses. In addition, most of the conifers, including the smallest, also provide protection to wildlife.

These plants and others will bring beauty to your fall and winter garden. If you need inspiration while planning, visit the UT Gardens to see all of these plants in their glory.

Muhly Grass



Paperbark Maple

Enliven Your Winter Landscape With Colorful Conifers

By Dr. Sue Hamilton

Do you think of evergreen trees and shrubs as dull green pyramids? I've discovered that evergreens, specifically conifers, come in a wide array of colors, shapes and textures. I've also learned that they are some of the best plants to enliven the winter garden. When you can have such colors as plum, blue, copper and yellow brightening up your winter landscape, why settle for one that is dull and dreary? Best of all, many newer cultivars are bred to grow slowly or to mature at heights that stay in proportion to the average house and surrounding plants.

Be sure to visit the UT Gardens in Knoxville and Jackson where you'll find more than 400 different selections of conifers in collection. Both gardens are American Conifer Society Reference Gardens, making them a great resource for our region of the country. Following are a few of my favorite selections that are sure to brighten your winter landscape. The late fall through winter months are a perfect time to plant conifers in your garden.

Bronze

'Morgan' Oriental Arborvitae (*Platycladus orientalis*)—Turns from bright lime-yellow to bronze. Grows up to 4 feet tall and 3 feet wide and tolerates a range of soil conditions. Full sun to part shade.

'Mushroom' Japanese Cedar (*Cryptomeria japonica*)—Turns from green to bronze. Grows 3 feet tall and just as wide. Full sun to part shade.

Yellow

'Verdoni' Hinoki Cypress (*Chamaecyparis obtusa*)—Tolerant of full sun without foliage burn. Bright yellow year-round. Grows 4 feet tall and 3 feet wide.

'Gold Cone' Juniper (*Juniperus communis*)—A great vertical and slender form. Grows 10 feet tall and 2 feet wide.

'Mother Lode' Juniper (*J. horizontalis*)—A prostrate, creeping habit Juniper for the hot sun growing just 6 inches tall and 3 feet wide.





Mushroom Cryptomeria

'Gold Lace' Juniper (*J. chinensis*)—Among the best of the semi-prostrate selections growing 3 feet tall and 5 feet wide.

'Limelight' Cypress (*Cupressus arizonica*)—Touted as being one of the most yellow conifers available. This striking vertical plant can reach 16 feet tall and 5 feet wide and is fast growing.

Plum

'Rubicon' White False Cypress (*Chamaecyparis thyoides*)—An upright, dense form with blue-green, star-like foliage which turns a beautiful soft plum color in winter. Grows to just 6 feet tall and 2 feet wide.

'Berkshire' Juniper (*J. communis*)—Grows 2 feet tall and 2 feet wide and forms a dense bun-shaped mound.

Blue

Colorado Blue Spruce (*Picea pungens*)—Better suited for the cooler temperatures of the Eastern region of the state, but one of the best blue conifers you'll find. 'Fat Albert' is a great selection with a conical shape growing 15 feet tall and 10 feet wide. 'Hoopsii' is a little shorter and more slender, growing to 8 feet tall by 3 feet wide, and 'Globosa' is a great, round dwarf form growing 3 feet by 3 feet.

'Blue Ice' Cypress (*Cupressus arizonica*)—One of the most blue conifers available. This striking vertical plant can reach 12 feet tall by 3 feet wide and thrives in heat and sun.

Cedar (*Cedrus*)—A variety of colors, forms and sizes provide lots of choices with this conifer. *C. atlantic* 'Glauca Pendula' has brilliant silver-blue foliage and a weeping, cascading form which can be quite striking. It can be easily trained to various heights then allowed to weep into distinct forms. For a soft, vertical form, you can't go wrong with *C. deodara*. The deodara cedar has a graceful and elegant look with blue-gray foliage. In addition, the soft texture, blue color and prostrate form of *C. deodara* 'Feelin Blue' and 'Glacier Blue' are outstanding. These are nice compact selections that only grow to 2 feet tall and 4 feet wide.

See the calendar of events for information on UT Gardens' upcoming Conifer Conference. For more information on conifers, visit the American Conifer Society Web site at www.conifersociety.org.

For local availability of choice conifer selections in your region of Tennessee, be sure to visit the following locations:

Beaver Creek Nursery, Knoxville
www.beavercreeknursery.net

Stanley's Greenhouses, Knoxville
www.stanleysgreenhouses.com

Long Hollow Gardens and Nursery, Gallatin
www.longhollownursery.com

Bate's Nursery and Garden Center, Nashville
www.batesnursery.com

Moore & Moore Garden Center, Nashville
www.mooreandmoore.com

Dutch Garden Center, Jackson
www.dutchgardencenter.com

Morris Nursery & Landscapes Inc., Jackson
www.morrisnursery.net



Planting for Winter Interest

By Dr. Sue Hamilton

Winter can be an exciting time in the landscape with careful planning and plant selection. This is the season where the real 'bones' and architecture of your garden stand out. Plants that have striking forms and growth habits become living sculptures in the landscape.

As you plan your garden for this season, there are five categories of plants from which to use to create a sensational and dynamic landscape. These categories include plants valued for their form or architecture, colorful foliage, winter flowers, showy fruit, and unique bark color and patterns. Also, a great winter garden will comprise a blend of all different types of plants to include trees, shrubs, perennials, hardy annuals, herbs, ground covers and ornamental grasses.

If you seek inspiration for great winter interest plants and how they can be used in the landscape, the UT Gardens in Knoxville and Jackson are both valuable resources where you will find most of the following plants in the different winter interest categories.

Winter-flowering Plants

Hybrid Witchhazel
Sweetbox
Camellia
Cornelian Cherry Dogwood
Carolina Jessamine Vine
Lenten Rose
Hydrangea (dried flowers left on plants)
Winter Jasmine
Galanthus—Snow Drops
Pansies and Violas
Dianthus chinensis

Architectural Plants

Japanese Maple
Flowering Dogwood
Contorted Filbert
Revenna Grass
'North Wind' Switch Grass
Pampas Grass
Muhly Grass
Mexican Hair Grass

Trifoliolate Orange
'Thunderhead' Japanese Black Pine
'Dacrydioides' Japanese Cedar
Hardy Rosemary

Showy Fruit Plants

Washington Hawthorn
Crabapple
Winterberry Holly
American Beautyberry
Pyracantha
Ichang Viburnum
Holly
Flowering Dogwood
'Striebs Findling,' 'Tom Thumb' Cotoneaster
Sacred Lily, Nippon Lily (Rohdea)
Common Nandina

Interesting Bark Plants

River Birch
Paperbark Birch
Crape Myrtle
Paperbark Maple
'Fiona Sunrise' Hardy Golden Jasmine
Lacebark Elm
Japanese Dogwood
Yellow-twig Dogwood
Red-twig Dogwood
Daphniphyllum (red petioles)
Cherry
Coralbark Maple

Colorful Foliage Plants

Little Blue Stem Grass
'Nana Aurescens' Yew
Blue Spruce
'Aurea' Japanese Elkhorn Cypress
Variegated Holly
'Lemon Drop' Japanese Holly
Variegated Boxwood
'Goshiki' False Holly
'Ogon' False Holly
'Bright Edge,' 'Color Guard' Yucca
Red Yucca
'Filamentosa' Nandina
'Fire Power' Nandina
Oakleaf Hydrangea
Azalea
Loropetulum
'Scarlet Leader' Cotoneaster
'Kaleidoscope,' 'Canyon Creek' Abelia

'Tricolor' Hypericum
Coralbells, Alumroot (Heuchera)
Dianthus gratianopolitanus
Dianthus plumarius
Thyme
'Golden' Feverfew
Bloody Dock
Red Mustard
Parsley
Italian Arum
Alexandrian Laurel, Poet's Laurel
Ornamental Cabbage, Kale
Creeping Raspberry
'Burgundy Glow' Ajuga
'Sooty' Sweet William
'Angelina' Sedum
'Blackbird' Euphorbia
'Moonshadow,' 'Emerald 'n Gold' Winter-creeper
'Tricolor' Cleyera
Variegated Mock Orange
'Rokujo' Japanese Euonymous
'Wilma Goldcrest' Monterey Cypress
'Feelin Blue,' 'Glacier Blue' Deodar Cedar
'Devon Cream,' 'Monstrosa' Sawara Cypress
'Van Hoey Smith' Oriental Arborvitae
'Elegans Nana' Japanese Cedar
Gold Rider,' 'Golconda' Leyland Cypress
'Black Dragon' Japanese Cedar
'Compressa' Japanese Cedar
'Sekkan Sugi' Japanese Cedar
'Blue Ice,' 'Limelight' Cypress
'Sudsworth Gold,' 'Yellow Ribbon' Arborvitae
'Berkshire' Juniper
'Blue Star' Juniper
'Gold Fever,' 'Lime Glow' Juniper
'Daubs Frosted' Juniper
'Rubicon' White Cedar
'Verdoni,' 'Spirited' Golden Hinoki Cypress
'Treasure,' 'Spring Time' Port Orford Cedar
'Copper Kettle' Western Red Cedar
'Gold Coin' Scotch Pine
'Carstens Gold' Mugo Pine
'Aurea' Japanese Red Pine



Large Insects Create Big Buzz in UT Gardens

Next time you visit the UT Gardens be sure to wander down to the Wildflower Meadow Garden for a look at the gigantic insects that have made a home there. Artisan and craftsman Ron Hamilton used the inspiration of Mother Nature and several visits to the salvage lot to create some unique garden whimsy sculptures.



Fueling the Future: Power Plant Garden Explores Energy Options

Plants are the stars of the show in the Power Plant Garden, but you won't help but notice their costars: a rusted 1953 Chevy Pickup (with sunflowers growing in the bed) and a gas pump from days gone by. These garden objects are there to bring home the message that we need to think outside the box and think green when coming up with new fuel resources.

With assistance from the UT Office of Bioenergy Programs, the UT Gardens established the Power Plant Garden to showcase plants that are being used for energy production in the United States. Switchgrass, a native perennial grass is but one of many plants on which research is being conducted to determine feasibility and effectiveness of conversion to renewable fuel resources. Some of the other plants include castor bean, sugarcane, sunflower, soybeans, a fast-growing hybrid poplar, willow and even algae. All these plants are on display now or will be in by next spring in the Power Plant Garden.



UT Gardens Pumpkin Harvest Display

Every October, University of Tennessee Research Horticulturist Jason Reeves and his talented team build a monument to the harvest season. Created purely from the fruits of the field, it is both a symbol and a celebration of hard work, accomplishment and another year coming to a close.

This monument, otherwise known as the Pumpkin Harvest Display, graces the grounds of the UT West Tennessee AgResearch and Education Center. More than 5,000 pumpkins grown at the center for research purposes are converted to art as the studies are completed. In all, 70 varieties of pumpkins, gourds and winter squash make up the display, which takes several days to complete. Past creations have included a house of pumpkins as well as a horse made of corn stalks. The display draws hundreds of visitors to the center, and UT specialists take full advantage of the outreach opportunity by sharing with guests the importance of fruit and vegetable research.

Learn more by visiting <http://west.tennessee.edu/events/PumpkinHarvestDisplay.asp>.

UT Gardens Event Calendar for 2009-2010

December 2009

Saturday, December 5
10 a.m.–12 p.m.
UT Gardens Greenhouse Classroom
Holiday Wreath and Decoration Making Workshop
Instructors: Sue Williams and Ellen Barker

Learn from two gifted and talented decorators how to make your own beautiful holiday wreath. Everyone will make a wreath to take home. Sue and Ellen will also demonstrate how to make other novel holiday decorations. Bring a wreath form of the size wreath you would like to make (foam, grapevine, metal, etc.), ribbon to make your bow, and any decorative items you want (ornaments, pinecones, berries). Mixed holiday greens, florist wire and pins will be provided. Limited to the first 45 people to sign up. To register, call 865-974-8265. Pay at the workshop with either cash or check, \$35 for *Friends of the Gardens* and \$45 for all others.

Saturday, December 5
Dogwood Arts Festival Bazillion Blooms Community Dogwood Planting Day
UT Gardens Friendship Plaza

Bazillion Blooms is a dogwood tree planting program to beautify East Tennessee communities, improve the health of our environment and foster community support and pride in our beloved native dogwood. The goal is to restore

dogwoods to their former vitality in Knox and surrounding counties. Over the years, dogwoods have died out due to disease, development and neglect. With the Dogwood Arts Festival's Bazillion Blooms campaign, and you, dogwoods will thrive again. Call 865-637-4561 or visit www.dogwoodarts.com/bazillion_blooms.html to donate or volunteer.

February 2010

Saturday, February 27
8:30 a.m.–5 p.m.
Conifers for Gardeners
A one-day symposium on how to grow and use Conifers in the mid-south
UT Gardens Greenhouse Classroom
Members \$40, Nonmembers \$45

Come and learn about some of the most beautiful and low maintenance plants you can have in your garden. The day includes educational seminars teaching you how to grow and design your garden with conifers and a guided walk through the UT Gardens conifer collection. This exciting symposium will conclude with an exclusive conifer plant sale of some of the most beautiful and choice selections for the mid-south.

Call 865-974-7324 or e-mail sueham@utk.edu.

February 19–21
Dogwood Arts Festival House & Garden Show
Friday, February 19 and Saturday, February 20, 10 a.m.–8 p.m.
Sunday, February 21, 11 a.m.–5 p.m.
Knoxville Convention Center

UT Gardens featuring winter interest landscape plants for sale.

April 2010

Noon & Twilight Tours resumes

May 2010

Friday, May 7 and 8
UT Gardens Spring Plant Sale
UT Gardens Friendship Plaza
Friday May 7; 4-6 p.m., Friends of the Gardens, volunteers and UT employees only
Saturday, May 8, 9 a.m.–2 p.m.
Open to the public

Thursdays, May 20, 2010 through July 30, 2010
Books and Blooms resumes

June 2010

June 4–6
KMA Artists on Location in the UT Gardens

June 26–27
Blooms Days Garden Festival and Marketplace

Tour Gardens of South Africa

Save up to \$250 with your UT Gardens membership

Andy Pulte and Jason Reeves from UT Gardens Knoxville and Jackson invite you to join them October 13–24, 2010, for the ultimate garden lovers experience in South Africa! On this tour, you'll explore the lush gardens of Johannesburg, South Africa's stunning national parks and the "springtime" gardens of Cape Town. In addition, you'll discover the dramatic landscape of the Cape of Good Hope, visit South Africa's premier wine region and stay in the Dutch colonial town of Stellenbosch. From the Bakubung Bush Lodge in the Pilanesberg National Park, you'll venture into the bush in an open 4x4 safari vehicle with African rangers to view South Africa's lions, leopards, rhinos and elephants. Post-tour adventures to Botswana and Victoria Falls are also available. This 12-day, 11-night adventure offer is limited to 24 garden lovers. Receive up to \$250 off with a current UT Gardens membership. For trip details and costs, contact Andy Pulte at pulte@utk.edu or 865-974-8820.

The Holiday Express

Wednesday, November 25, 2009 through Friday, January 3, 2010

The Holiday Express returns to the UT Gardens again this year with extended days (including Christmas Day), appearances by Santa, and musical performances by community choral groups.

The garden-scale train display decorated for the holidays will open with a sneak preview for UT faculty and staff, sponsors and Friends of the Gardens on Tuesday, November 24. It will open to the public the following day.

Last year 9,300 people visited Holiday Express at the UT Gardens, and even more are expected this year. Bring the kids, grandkids and kids at heart to help make Holiday Express a continuing holiday tradition that will benefit the UT Gardens.

Thanksgiving week:
November 25-28, 12-8 p.m.
Sunday, November 29, 12-6 p.m.

Weekends December 4-January 3:
Friday and Saturdays, 12-8 p.m.
Sundays, 12-6 p.m.

Christmas Day, 2-6 p.m.

Monday, December 28 and Tuesday, December 29: 12-8 p.m.

Admission is \$5, free for children age 4 and under. Large group viewings can be scheduled by calling 865-584-7666.



Hardy Camellias for Tennessee Gardens

By Hugh Conlon, UT Extension area specialist in ornamental horticulture

Growing camellias in Tennessee is no longer a dream. Through the efforts of several plant breeders, particularly Dr. William L. Ackerman of the U.S. National Arboretum (retired) and Dr. Clifford Parks of Camellia Forest Nursery, as many as 40 cultivars of winter-hardy camellias to 15 degrees below zero are now available in nursery commerce. Flower colors range from white to many shades from pink to red.

A great camellia possesses big bloom size, long flowering time and dark green evergreen foliage. Beginners should start with a few outstanding cultivars. 'Pink Icicle' (pink semi-double), 'April Tryst' (dark red anemone) and 'April Remembered' (pink semi-double) begin blooming from late winter through mid-April. The 'winter' series, with cultivar names such as 'Winter's Star' (pale pink single) and 'Winter's Interlude' (pink anemone), blooms in early autumn. Currently, the spring-flowering cultivars stand out as possessing the best foliage quality year round. Fall-flowering cultivars have proven to be more dependable in northeast Tennessee where spring frosts are very common.

Balled and burlapped (b&b) camellias are best planted during late winter to early spring and again from late summer through mid-October. Container-grown plants may be planted from late winter to mid-October. Add a generous amount of organic matter when planting. The crown of the shrub should be planted slightly higher than the surrounding soil. Follow up with the addition of 2 to 3 inches of mulch to help retain soil moisture and to minimize ground freezing and thawing over the winter months. Adequately water over the first two years, particularly during periods when natural rainfall is low.

In general, the cultural practices for growing camellias are similar to those for azaleas, rhododendrons and hollies. Camellias prefer a soil pH between 5.5 and 6.5. They are best planted in a filtered sunlight site from nearby shade trees rather than from direct sunlight in the afternoon.

Camellias are light, constant feeders. A six-month slow-release fertilizer applied in late March should properly feed plants through late summer. An alternative strategy is to nourish plants with an acidifying fertilizer such as Hollytone™, Miracid™ or equivalent once in the months of March, May and July.

April Tryst

Many cultivars grow 9 to 10 feet in height and 6 to 8 feet in width. Timely pruning shapes shrubs to fit within their garden spot. Camellias generally need minimal pruning to remove weak or dead branches; to control shrub size; to develop dense, fuller branched plants; and to renew the vigor of older plants. Renewal pruning for older camellias is best performed in spring before the plants have broken vegetative buds. Taller cultivars like 'Pink Icicle' and 'Winter Star' may demand more rigorous cutting back to achieve better plant spread and compactness.

Camellias enjoy relief from most of the pest problems that plague them further south. Disease problems are best avoided by planting camellias in a site with proper sun, good soil drainage and air movement, and supplemental irrigations during extremely dry weather periods. The leading pest of camellias is scale. Plants should be inspected prior to purchase from garden centers which buy camellias from nurseries further south.

Master Gardeners Educate through Public Gardens

By Beth Babbit, Tennessee Master Gardener Program director

When the term “Master Gardener” was first coined in early 1970 to describe a new Cooperative Extension program in Washington State, few could have predicted it would spread across the United States and blossom into one of the most effective volunteer organizations in the country.

The Master Gardener program was created by Extension to meet an enormous increase in requests from home gardeners for unbiased, research-based horticultural information. Gardening has grown to now be the number one hobby in America, and as a result, there is an incredible demand upon Extension for reliable and sound horticulture information.

The program, conducted by the Cooperative Extension System throughout the United States and Canada, is a two-part educational effort in which avid gardeners are provided many hours of intense home horticulture training. In return they “pay back” local university extension agents through volunteerism. Master Gardeners assist with garden lectures, exhibits, demonstrations, school and community gardening, phone diagnostic service, research, and many other projects.

The Tennessee Extension Master Gardener Program trains volunteers with 40 hours of horticultural classes. Volunteers give 40 hours of community service through

their county’s UT Extension office. State-wide there are approximately 3,000 active Master Gardeners in 46 counties. Master Gardeners who continue to participate in the program return at least 25 hours of service with a minimum of eight continuing education hours annually.

In Crossville, for example, the Cumberland County Master Gardeners developed the Plateau Discovery Gardens to trial and evaluate plants with UT researchers—much like the UT Gardens. The Cumberland Plateau tends to have more rainfall, cooler temperatures and later frost dates, making it a challenging environment for gardeners.

In Shelby and Madison counties Master Gardeners are cultivating food for the community with Plant a Row for the Hungry and community gardens. These groups also support local botanical gardens and the UT Gardens in Jackson at the West Tennessee Research and Education Center Gardens as volunteers. Master Gardeners also volunteer for the UT Gardens in Knoxville.

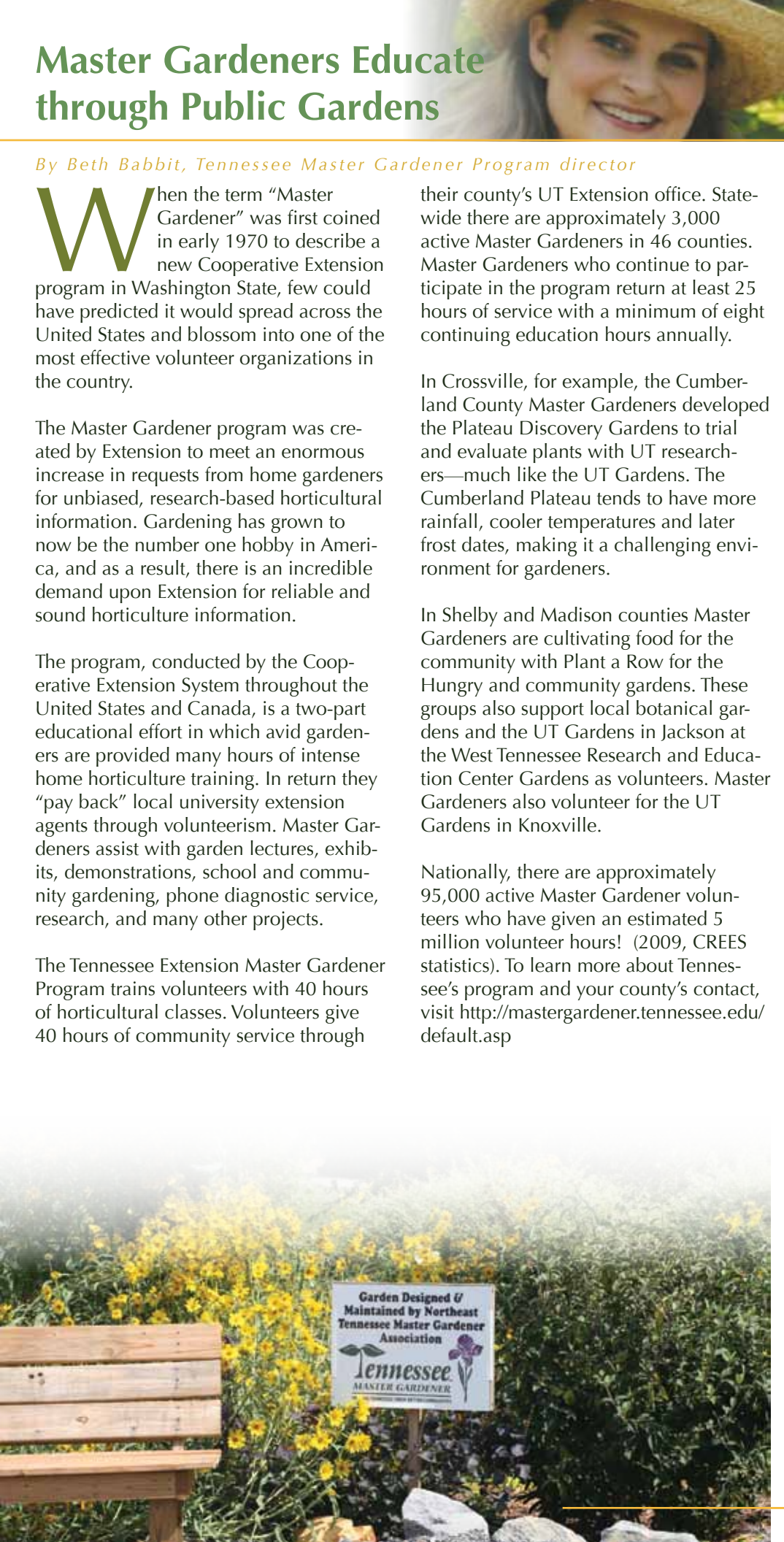
Nationally, there are approximately 95,000 active Master Gardener volunteers who have given an estimated 5 million volunteer hours! (2009, CREES statistics). To learn more about Tennessee’s program and your county’s contact, visit <http://mastergardener.tennessee.edu/default.asp>

Books and Blooms

This year marked the sixth season of the popular children’s event Books and Blooms. Started in 2004 by then graduate student Emily Smith, the program has grown from a twice-monthly summer event to a weekly event held in the UT Knoxville gardens throughout the summer and fall. Books and Blooms is free and open to the public. More than 750 children—accompanied by more than 500 parents—attended this year and heard area storytellers share books and stories with environmental education themes. Children listened to the stories and then participated in a related craft activity. Each session ended with ‘sprinkler time’—the perfect way to beat our summer heat!

As always, the UT Gardens owes many thanks to the talented storytellers who volunteered their time and energy; their passion and enthusiasm is invaluable to the program’s success. Allison Roberts, Elin Johnson, Dottie Stamper, Ellie Gardner, Glenna Julian, Lois English, Beth Babbit, Kelli Burns, Jeremy Nix, Jay Price, Brenda Adair and Carol Avery all took a turn (or two) entertaining the audience this year. Thanks to Karen Armsey of Human-Animal Bond in Tennessee (HABIT) who brought her therapy dog, Nash, to visit. Thanks go as well to Carol LaCava, coordinator of the Educational Interpreting Program, and to her students who provided interpretation for the deaf during our fall sessions. This feature, added last year, proved to be very popular with young and old alike and we are delighted that we can continue to offer it. Finally, thanks go to Katheryne Nix, garden intern, who took over Books and Blooms for the fall sessions, and to all the garden interns who helped with this program throughout the year.

Books and Blooms will return next year. If you would like to learn more about Books and Blooms or wish to be added to the e-mail list for periodic updates, contact Beth Willis at ewillis2@utk.edu or 865-974-2712.



Public Horticulture Program Update



"I decided on UTK for a number of reasons. First, I was looking for a school that had a dedicated Public Horticulture program, which narrowed down my choices. Next, I looked into the programs and courses themselves and was really impressed with UTK and one other school. I was able to visit in the spring and was impressed with the facilities, faculty and especially the UT Gardens."

– Public Horticulture student Joe Cope



By Andy Pulte, Public Horticulture Lecturer, Plant Sciences

What an exciting time it is to be involved with public horticulture! Many new and enthusiastic students joined us this fall, and we look forward to seeing their future successes.

As with all programs, ours continues to change and evolve. This year Beth Willis has taken the reigns of one of our most popular courses, Garden Photography. In this class students don't just learn how to use a lens cap and photograph plants. Instead, they discover how to look at plants in a whole new way, including finding the beauty not only in the spring, summer and fall garden but winter as well. Additionally, they learn how to document different aspects of a garden as a whole. Willis is an accomplished photographer herself and I'm excited to see the work her students will produce. For many of us who are in the field of public horticulture, knowing how to produce high-quality photos is a must. I'm so pleased she will be teaching this very important class.

Some of our new public horticulture students have hit the ground running by pairing their education with work in the UT Gardens. One such student is Joe Cope. Cope received his associate's degree in horticulture at Trident Technical College in Charleston, South Carolina. He then gained several years of valuable industry experience before moving to Boston to take an internship at the Arnold Arboretum. After his internship, and before coming to UT, Cope did a year-long apprenticeship at the Arnold. He has already made valuable contributions at the UT Gardens and we are excited to have him on board.

For more information on the Department of Plant Sciences and Public Horticulture contact Andy Pulte, Department of Plant Sciences, at 865-974-7324 or pulte@utk.edu. You can also visit the Web site at <http://plantsciences.utk.edu/publichort>

Book Review

By Joan Worley, Blount County Master Gardener

"If this book entertains, alarms, and enlightens you, I've done my job," writes author Amy Stewart in her introduction to "Wicked Plants: The Weed That Killed Lincoln's Mother & Other Botanical Atrocities" (Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill, 2009). She bids us to wear gloves in the garden and warns against eating the odd, unfamiliar berry seen out on the trail. Plants hold hidden dangers. Hemlock, monkshood, foxglove and rhubarb leaves we know, but there may be just as many we don't know—the peacock flower, for one. *Wicked Plants* is a catalog of sorts, in prose, with colorful stories, solid horticultural information and remedies, if known.

First off, I liked the book. It's hard not to like a book that tells you things you didn't know in an easily read, compact form (236 pages, approximately 5 inches by 7 inches). The text is lively without being cutesy; more than 60 plants are described in full, with etchings of each. At least a hundred more are mentioned in brief without illustrations (see item 2, below). Each short essay is followed by "Meet the Relatives," a sentence about other plants in the family. A list of Poison Gardens, a recommended Web site, and a good bibliography are also included.

I did find a few things disconcerting.

(1) No working definition of *wicked*, thus no criteria for what's in and what's out. Kudzu and purple loosestrife are in, but wisteria, bamboo and other invasives on my list are not. On what basis were plants chosen for inclusion? Moreover, I kept looking for some recognition and discussion of regional differences in wickedness, without success. The introduction should have addressed both points.

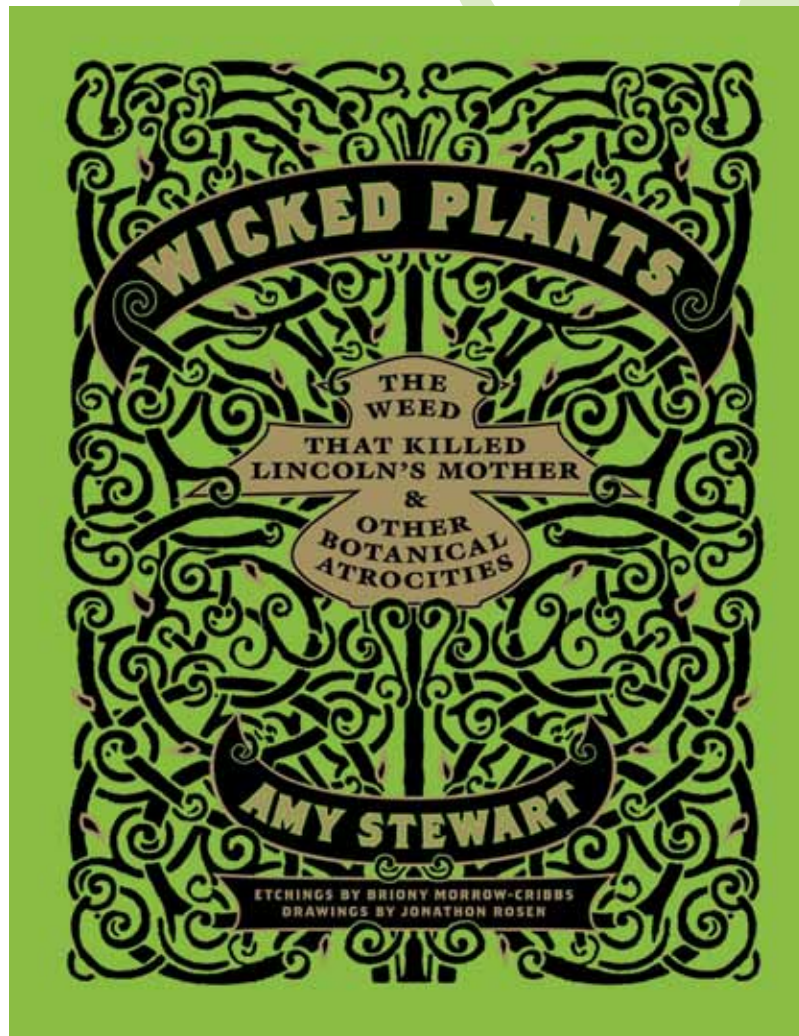
(2) No index, which means that there is no complete list of the plants mentioned in the book. There may be a nonfiction book that doesn't require an index, but this isn't it. For starters, you want to know which weed killed Lincoln's mother, don't you, without reading every word in the book? And where was that interesting bit about death and lantana? Lantana is not one of the major plants listed alphabetically. It's one of 10 plants briefly discussed in *Forbidden Garden*, one of more than 20 "punctuation points" or interruptions in the catalog of plants, but without an index, you'll need to rummage about among them to find it. Is this confusing? Yes, it's confusing here and it's confusing in the book.

(3) Nomenclature and alphabetizing. Botanical names are given in the text, but you need to know the common name to find a particular plant; and although the major plants are alphabetized, two-word common names, such as poison hemlock and rosary pea, are alphabetized under "p" for poison and "r" for rosary, respectively.

(4) One-word descriptive adjectives set off by a colored block at the top of each plant page. I mistook these for organizing principles or categories, which they are not. The words—Deadly, Offensive, Painful, Stinky, Dangerous, Destructive, Intoxicating and Illegal—are meaningless, as they are both subjective and vague. The Painfuls, the Destructives, etc., are not grouped together, but scattered throughout the book, and many plants are wicked for more than one reason, in any case. I'm guessing these were added by the book's designer at the publishing house, since they don't serve any informational purpose.

Wicked Plants is not comprehensive, and it has limited utility for reference. But enough fussing: it's a fun book to read.

P.S. Abraham Lincoln's mother was poisoned by white snake-root, ingested via cow's milk.



Volunteer Update

By Beth Willis, UT Gardens Volunteer and Trial Coordinator

Every year I think our volunteers couldn't possibly do more for the UT Gardens, and every year I'm proven wrong! This year's total volunteer hours are on track to be a record-setting amount: 2,392 hours to date at an estimated value of \$50,434. Our volunteers are invaluable in helping us plant, grow and maintain our annual trial beds and other areas of the gardens. Our two annual plant sales are largely staffed by volunteers—from preparation, to clean-up. Volunteers are the backbone of making Blooms Day and the Holiday Express a success. They even provide their expertise at monthly lunch and learn educational programs. In short, we couldn't do it without them!

Our annual Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon, which was held on October 20, was a wonderful opportunity to celebrate all the hard work our volunteers have accomplished and to express our gratitude that they choose to donate their time, energy and skills to helping our garden grow.

This September marked the UT Gardens first participation in the Scripps Networks Volunteer Days. Over the course of three days, 12 Scripps employees reported for work at the UT Gardens. And put them to work we did! They helped us to prepare for our fall plant sale by laminating and mounting information sheets, folding and sorting T-shirts, and painting and sealing leaf cast ornaments. They also began removing brick from existing pathways and surfaces so that we can move forward with the creation of a perimeter path linking all areas of the gardens. We really enjoyed getting to know this great group of Scripps employees. Many of them had never been to the UT Gardens before, but we hope they will come back to visit!

Below: Volunteers from Scripps Networks Fine Living Department remove brick from existing pathways and surfaces to make way for the creation of a perimeter path linking all areas of the gardens.



Alumni Update

To Eric Delvin, the UT Gardens “felt like a natural trajectory, coming from my farming background to working in the greenhouses. It reinforced the idea that working with the environment was something important and felt natural for me.

“I appreciated the ‘hands on’ aspect of the gardens. My work there was a valuable component of my horticulture degree at UT. I was able to practice what I was learning.”

He joined the Peace Corps after graduating from UT Knoxville in 1993. In Nepal, he worked with farmers to improve agricultural production and taught beekeeping and other alternate income methods. In villages all over western Nepal, he taught health projects such as latrine construction and how to build smokeless stoves to improve women's health.

Later he taught English in South Korea. He met his wife, Rain, at a nonprofit in Pennsylvania. Together they did community service work in indigenous communities in the Caribbean, Alaska and Montana and worked in Taiwan. Delvin returned to Nashville to help convert Delvin Family Farms from conventional vegetable production to an organic, community-supported agriculture enterprise. Master's study in environmental science led him to Washington State. His thesis probed the political ecology of tourism development in a giant panda reserve in western China.

Delvin has worked for the Nature Conservancy for more than five years doing ecological restoration work to preserve and enhance western Washington's ecosystem of prairies, oak woodlands and oak savannahs. “They're very rare and quite endangered,” he says. “I do a lot of work to enhance them and control exotic species and reintroduce rare species and work closely with the conservancy's many partners.

“Work in the UT Gardens reinforced my desire to work outdoors and be engaged with the environment. My career has shifted from horticultural pursuits to conservation and environmental; however the path is very much a part of a continuum.”

Delvin is beginning his second year of graduate school, pursuing a PhD in ecology at the University of Washington in Seattle. His research is focused on the restoration of grasslands primarily in the context of habitat for several rare butterfly species.

Beall Family Rose Garden Dedication

The dedication of the Beall Family Rose Garden, the first endowed garden in the UT Gardens, was attended by more than 100 friends of the Bealls and the Gardens to honor Sam and Mary Anne Beall and their family's generosity. The beautiful garden features a 22-foot single-tiered gazebo with an open framed cupola; 60 tons of Tennessee sandstone forming two cascading waterfalls which flow into Japanese koi ponds; and more than 100 varieties of roses including hybrid-teas, miniatures and disease-resistant shrub types. The beautiful rose garden will provide additional opportunities for education, student training and horticulture research.



Pictured left to right: Sam Beall; Karen and Mark Windham, professor of Entomology and Plant Pathology; Mary Anne Beall; and Caula Beyl, dean of the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources.

Photography by Margot Emery



American Garden Awards

It was such an honor to be one of only 17 gardens in the entire country chosen to participate in the first ever American Garden Awards this year! Six competing flowers were on display at the UT Gardens along with signage to guide people through the voting process. Garden visitors picked their favorites by text messaging or by calling a toll-free number to cast their vote. Votes from all participating gardens were tabulated and posted “live” online.

Although it was a stiff competition, Rudbeckia ‘Tiger Eye Gold’ edged out the win with its prolific display of brilliant golden blooms. Its compact habit and tolerance to heat and humidity only added to its value. This incredible annual guarantees fantastic season-long color in the garden or in containers. The first runner-up, Petunia ‘Baby Duck Yellow,’ won voters over with its bright blankets of soft yellow blooms which stood up to heat, humidity and rain. This fast-growing annual rapidly fills in gardens or containers. Last but not least, second runner-up Pentas ‘Northern Lights Lavender’ attracted voters just like hummingbirds and butterflies to its large, lacy clusters of lavender flowers. Each of these winners will be available to the public next spring, so take the advice of your fellow gardeners and choose these award-winning varieties for your own garden.

If your favorite flower didn’t win this year, don’t let that happen again! Watch next summer for your chance to vote in the second American Garden Awards competition.



Rudbeckia ‘Tiger Eye Gold’

Friends’ Generosity Makes All Things Possible

By Mark Clark, development officer, UT Gardens

A year ago, we celebrated the 25th anniversary of the UT Gardens and capped the occasion by officially dedicating the newly created Friendship Plaza. It was a tremendous opportunity for us to reflect upon our past and recognize how far we have come. Like all great public gardens, it would not be what it is today without the support and efforts of many, many people.

Fast-forward to today and we are very fortunate to see that the Gardens continue to flourish. Support from our *Friends of the Gardens* has allowed us to add a new Power Plant Garden, a meadow garden, make plans for a new enabling kitchen garden, and most notably dedicate the new Beall Family Rose Garden. These are all resources and beauties to be enjoyed by the entire public that would not have been possible without the support of our friends.

As we head toward the end of the year, please think about what the Gardens mean to you. For those Friends of the Gardens who have already renewed their giving during 2009, thank you very much for your support. If you haven’t renewed your giving this year or haven’t ever made a gift to the gardens, I encourage you to do so. We have big plans for the future of the Gardens and we want you to be a part of them!

Friends of the Gardens

Gifts made in Memory of Joe Spengler:

Christine Hayworth
Sarah Stowers
William and Marian Broome Jr.
Harriette Spiegel

Searching for a Perfect Holiday Gift?

Consider honoring your friends and loved ones by giving the gift of friendship to the UT Gardens. Honorees will receive a gift card informing them of the gift that has been made on their behalf. In addition, honorees will receive the semi-annual UT Gardens magazine, the monthly gardens e-newsletter, invitations to special events hosted by the UT Gardens, discounts on educational programs, workshops, plant sales and a *Friends of the Gardens* 2010 window decal. Individuals will be recognized for gifts between \$35 and \$49. Families will be recognized for gifts of \$50 or more. Start your holiday giving now!

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You may join Friends of the Gardens or contribute online at utgardens.tennessee.edu/membership.html.

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2009 Best and Beautiful Plants from the UT Gardens

Watch for the complete guide in the Spring/Summer 2010 issue of this magazine

Annuals

Begonia 'Big Rose Bronze Leaf'
Capsicum annuum 'Sangria' Pepper
Celosia 'Fresh Look Yellow'
Coleus 'Red Head'
Coleus 'Blaze Royal Glissade'
Coleus 'Trusty Rusty'
Cyperus 'King Tut'
Gaillardia 'Mesa Yellow'
Geranium 'Daredevil Rosalita'
Geranium 'Tornado' Series
Geranium 'Caliente Coral'
Geranium 'Pinto' Series
Gomphrena 'Las Vegas' Series
Gomphrena 'Fireworks'
Lantana 'Lucky Gold'
Nierembergia 'Agusta Blue Skies'
Pennisetum setaceum 'Rubrum'
Pennisetum 'Jade Princess'
Petunia 'Debonair Rose Dusty'
Sweet Potato Vine 'Illusion Emerald Lace'
Vinca 'Pacifica XP Cranberry'
Vinca 'Viper Purple'
Zinnia 'Zahara Yellow'

Herbs

Abelmoschus esculentus—Star of David Okra
Basil 'Boxwood'
Ceratotheca triloba—African Foxglove
Hedychium coronarium—Hardy Ginger Lily
Philadelphus 'Snowbelle'—Mock Orange

Trees and Shrubs

Acer palmatum 'Peaches and Cream'
Cercis chinensis 'Don Egolf'
Chamaecyparis pisifera 'Devon Cream'
Chamaecyparis obtusa 'Spirited'
Chamaecyparis pisifera 'Snow'

Contoneaster glaucophyllus—Gray Leaf Cotoneaster
Egde worthia chrysantha—Paper Bush
Hydrangea quercifolia 'Vaughn's Lily'
Ilex verticillata 'Sparkleberry'
Juniperus x media 'Daub's Frosted'
Lagerstroemia indica 'Dynamite'
Metasequoia glyptostroboides 'Ogon'
Physocarpus opulifolius 'Summer Wine'
Picea abies 'Acrocona'
Psuedolarix amabilis—Golden Larch
Platyedus Thuja orientalis 'Morgan'
Tsuga canadensis 'La Bar White Tip'
Viburnum macrocephalum 'Tom Clark'
Viburnum 'Summer Snowflake'

Roses

'My Girl'
'Love and Peace'
'Black Cherry'

Tropicals

Agave americana var. *medio-picta* 'Alba'
Calotropis gigantea—Crown flower
Colocasia esculenta 'Coffee cups'
Colocasia esculenta 'Pink China'
Ensete *superbum*—Thai Banana
Furcraea foetida 'Mediopicta'—Mediterranean Hemp
Musa velutina Pink Velvet Banana
Sansevieria cylindrical—Spear Sansevieria

Top Perennials

Agave ovatifolia—Whale's Tongue Agave
Aster ericoides f. *prostratus* 'Snow Flurry'
Haconechloa 'All Gold'
Helianthus angustifolius 'First Light'
Heuchera 'Cirtronella'
Pennisetum alopecuroides 'Foxtrot'
Sedum kamshaticum
Yucca recurvifolia 'Margaritaville'