Gardens (Fall/Winter 2013-2014)

UT Institute of Agriculture

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The UT Gardens includes plant collections located in Knoxville, Jackson and Crossville. Designated as the official botanical garden for the state of Tennessee, the collections are part of the UT Institute of Agriculture. The mission of the UT Gardens is to foster appreciation, education and stewardship of plants through garden displays, educational programs and research trials. The Gardens are open during all seasons and free to the public.

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SPECIAL THANKS

The faculty and staff of the UT Gardens would like to thank the hundreds of volunteers, members and supporters in Jackson, Crossville and Knoxville who continue to help our UT Gardens grow.

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ON THE COVER

Callicarpa japonica (Callicarpa (Japanese beautyberry) 0149)- The Botanical Photography of Alan S. Heilman, Copyright Alan S. Heilman, Copyright The University of Tennessee Libraries, 2011.
FROM THE DIRECTOR

FALL GREETINGS!

What an amazing year it has been for the UT Gardens. We’ve celebrated our 30th anniversary all year and in grand style, too. For starters, we expanded the UT Gardens’ statewide presence by adding the Plateau Discovery Gardens at the UT Plateau AgResearch and Education Center in Crossville as our third site. This garden joins our original UT Gardens, Knoxville, and the UT Gardens, Jackson, to make up the statewide UT Gardens system with a presence in all three grand divisions of Tennessee. I hope we will continue to grow.

In May, we had our first UT Gardens Gala in Knoxville where generous Gardens members, community advocates and partners helped us raise $40,000. With just 39 percent of our budget supported by state funding, this revenue is important to our growth and development as a public garden. However, I think the biggest highlight of our 30th year has to be the UT Gardens’ designation as the state botanical garden for Tennessee! Thanks to state Sen. Becky Duncan Massey and Rep. Jimmy Eldridge for sponsoring the bill, for which the Tennessee legislature voted unanimously, giving us this distinguished designation!

We’ve also had some exciting growth and expansion this year at all three UT Gardens sites. In Jackson, the installation of a new conifer collection and display bed with 40 plants makes for a great resource on the breadth of growth habit, foliage color and performance of these evergreens in West Tennessee. In Crossville, you’ll find the addition of a new “Kinder Garden” for teaching youngsters about plants and gardening while connecting this important audience to nature. In Knoxville, we unveiled the new HGTV HOME Showcase Garden, which displays their new plant collection in a garden setting for all to see and be inspired. We’ve also just completed a treehouse design competition among our community’s architects with the winning design slated to be built as the signature element of our new Children’s Garden. We’ve raised more than $20,000 for this new garden, which will support our environmental education programs for children of all ages. One other area in which we are expanding is our shade garden. A new 30-by-40-foot timber-frame pavilion will transform this garden area and will be used for various functions, such as teaching and education. With support from the Knoxville Green Association, we will be able to expand the plant collection in this garden and add gravel walks, ceramic containers and sitting areas.

All of these wonderful happenings make for a fabulous celebration of our 30 years! I look to the future with great optimism. If our past is an indication of things to come, we have a bright future. Gardening and the role of plants in our lives have never been so valued as they are today. More and more we discover how plants have the ability to teach, heal and nourish our body and soul. There are now more than 500 public gardens in the United States, and I’m proud that the UT Gardens is part of this green movement and is now recognized as our state’s botanical garden. I encourage you to make good use of the wonderful statewide resource that is the UT Gardens and to advocate for us among your family, friends and others.

Happy Gardening,

Sue Hamilton
Director, UT Gardens
TRAVEL
GARDENING INSPIRATIONS
By Troy B. Marden
Garden Designer and Horticulturist

For more than three decades and through three generations of family, Moore & Moore has been one of Nashville’s leading garden centers. It has been my go-to place for great plants, beautiful pottery and the day-to-day necessities I need for my garden for the 20 years that I have called Nashville home. Founded in 1980 by John and Nell Moore, their original location was in the Belle Meade area. Later, John and Nell’s son, Paul, built a second location on Highway 100 in Bellevue, which now serves as the sole location owned and operated by John and Nell’s grandson, Duncan Borders.

Moore & Moore is best known for its broad range of high-quality plant material. Spring is my favorite time of year to visit, when plants seem to fill every square inch of the 5,000-square-foot covered shopping area attached to the rear of the main building, as well as the outdoor perennial, tree and shrub lot. It is a gardener’s paradise, and when I’m trying to find the very best of new and unusual garden plants, I know I can count on Moore & Moore to have them. General manager Robyn Brown and nearly all of Moore & Moore’s employees are gardeners in their own right, so plants are selected with gardeners in mind. The staff’s wealth of knowledge and experience means that someone can answer almost any question a shopper might have. If they can’t, they’ll find someone who can!

In addition to great plants, Moore & Moore carries a wide range of beautiful pottery and decorative items in every price range, as well as one of the most complete selections of organic and earth-friendly gardening products in town. If you happen to be visiting Nashville during the holiday season, be sure to stop in and see the entire store decked out from top to bottom, front to back, with garden-themed Christmas and holiday décor.

By Ben Ford
UT Gardens Newsletter editor and HGTV graduate student

If you are looking for unique and choice trees and shrubs, Payne Nursery is the place to go. Located in Sparta, Payne Nursery was started in 1982 by Tony Payne and continues to be family owned and operated. The majority of their nursery stock is larger specimen trees and shrubs that will quickly help establish the “bones” of any garden. ‘The Blues’ weeping blue spruce (Picea pungens ‘The Blues’) is a great example of the not-so-easy-to-find plants available at Payne Nursery. This spruce was a great find for the UT Gardens in Knoxville, and I recently planted it in the rock garden there. You’ll be impressed with the knowledgeable staff at Payne’s as well. They are great at matching the perfect plants for your landscape needs. They take pride in offering excellent customer care and quality plants at affordable prices. Check out their website to get an idea of the many choice selections they offer. While the nursery is wholesale, they are open and sell to the public. I believe their choice selection, high quality and affordable prices make Payne Nursery well worth a visit.

By Faye Beck
UT Extension Tennessee Master Gardener, Knox County

While in Chattanooga recently, I visited The Barn Nursery and was taken aback at what an extensive garden center it is. The plant inventory is one of the largest in the area that I have seen. In addition to trees, shrubs, perennials, annuals and houseplants, they have fairy gardens, terrariums and the supplies and care sheets on how to make them. They also have a huge selection of beautiful ceramic pots available in numerous colors and sizes. A large gift shop was well-stocked with all types of interesting items and tools, and this fall they will be expanding their gift and Christmas selections. In the fall they also carry pumpkins and gourds.

I spent hours at The Barn Nursery and will be going back. Check out their website for directions; it is well worth a visit while in the Chattanooga area.
My FAVORITE THINGS

Sun-loving Evergreen Perennials, Part I
By Jason Reeves, UT Gardens, Jackson, research horticulturist
Photos by Jason Reeves
When most people think of extreme drought-tolerant plants, the first plant to typically come to mind is cactus. But there are many choice plant options without sharp cacti spines. This article is the first in a two-part series of my favorite drought-tolerant evergreen perennials, whose unique foliage and flower will add considerable interest to the garden. These plants will perform admirably in any sunny, well-draining location in the garden, even in the median or “interno strip” where other plants languish from the hot, dry conditions.

**Hesperaloe parviflora** *(Red False Yucca)*  
As the common name implies, *Hesperaloe* is not a yucca at all, though in the same family, Agavaceae. Its foliage somewhat resembles some species of yucca, but the flowers are what set it apart. Reddish-pink 1-inch tubular-shaped flowers are produced on 4- to 6-foot-tall, thin but strong stems, in early summer and may continue for several months. Rich in nectar, the flowers attract hummingbirds to the garden. One-inch multichambered seed capsules containing flat, black seeds mature in late summer. Seeds germinate readily when sown the following spring. The long and narrow dark green leaves have no spines and form an arching 2-foot-tall grasslike clump. Curly thread-like filaments along the leaf edge add to the appeal. Native to the Rio Grande area of Texas, *Hesperaloe* performs well in average to extremely dry soil where other plants may suffer. Hardy to zone 6.

**Santolina chamaecyparissus** and **S. virens** *(Gray and Green Lavender Cotton)*  
Both of these *Santolinas* have yellow, button-like flowers that appear in late spring above the foliage. Lavender cotton averages 1 to 2 feet tall and 2 feet wide. With age they become woody and are best sheared back by one-third soon after flowering to keep them tidy. Santolina can be useful in the garden where a small evergreen is needed. Green santolina complements the gray santolina as a symmetrical design element in a border or knot garden. It can be kept trimmed into a small hedge. The strongly scented foliage acts as an insect repellent. Native to the Mediterranean Region, *Santolina* thrives when grown in well-drained soil in a sunny site for long-term success. Lavender cotton can be propagated by taking terminal cuttings, or you may layer it by roughing up the bottom of a branch that is resting on the ground and tacking it in place until it roots.

*Santolina chamaecyparissus* — Gray-lavender cotton produces alternate, finely divided 1- to 1 1/2-inch woolly gray leaves. It is winter hardy to zone 6.

*Santolina virens* — Green-lavender cotton has fine-textured linear leaves that are medium to dark green even through winter. It is winter hardy to zone 7.

**Yucca recurvifolia** *(‘Hinargas’ (Margaritaville Yucca)) and Yucca filamentosa *(‘Color Guard’ (Adam’s Needle))*  
Natives of the eastern United States, both ‘Color Guard’ and Margaritaville yuccas look great year-round but particularly add a lot of color in an often bleak winter landscape. For bold, eye-catching architecture in your garden, they can’t be beat. Members of the Agavaceae family, yuccas tolerate a variety of soils from alkaline to acidic, sandy to loamy—anything but wet. They love full sun but can grow and thrive in partial shade as well. Their flower stalks can be quite impressive, and in early to midsummer thrust skyward to anywhere between 3 and 6 feet tall with pendulous, tulip-shaped white blooms that hold for weeks. If you find the flower spikes unattractive, you can cut the spike out as soon as you see it shooting up.

In some areas of Tennessee, yucca bugs and yucca worm can cause damage to the foliage. Yucca bugs are small, reddish black insects that pierce the leaves and suck out the plant’s chlorophyll, causing the leaf to have an unattractive speckled appearance. On the other hand, yucca worm damages foliage by chewing on the center leaves near the top. As the worm matures, it moves down and chews its way into the crown of the plant. Both insects can be controlled easily with organic or synthetic insecticide.

*Yucca filamentosa* is a non-trunk-forming species of yucca, commonly called Adam’s Needle. This species has tough, but flexible leaves whose margins display fine, threadlike filaments. Even though the common name contains the word needle, the point on the end of the leaf is nonlethal, unlike many species of yuccas. ‘Color Guard’ is an outstanding variegated cultivar that shines in any garden throughout the year. The yellow leaves with green margins really pop in winter and often take on pale pink or coral tones during the colder months. Other variegated cultivars worth considering include ‘Bright Edge,’ ‘Garland Gold’ and ‘Golden Sword.’ Hardy to zone 5.

Differing from ‘Color Guard,’ *Yucca recurvifolia* forms a trunk reaching 4 to 6 feet tall and with age eventually resembles a small palm. As the species name suggests, the foliage curves downward, giving it an overall weeping habit that adds a graceful touch to the garden. Margaritaville has creamy white and green variegation that makes it a real standout. It is cold hardy to zone 7.
Many years ago, my parents went with me to visit Plant Delights, Tony Avent’s place in North Carolina where he trials the plants that appear in his incredible catalog. My mother, always an admirer of beautiful trees, asked him about the towering Japanese crapemyrtle centered in a patio area of his garden.

“When did you plant that, Tony?” she asked.

“Mrs. Reese, it was seven years ago,” he replied.

My mother said, “Oh, it must have been a large specimen when you put it in the ground.”

“No, ma’am,” he said. “It was a little seedling.”

My mother and I exchanged looks, eyebrows raised in awe. I don’t recall what I wore, or what music was playing, but I know that my love affair with this plant began then and there.

The first thing you notice on a mature Japanese crapemyrtle (Lagerstroemia fauriei) is the bark. In fact, the bark is so mesmerizing that you remember little else about the plant. The flowers are white, and the panicles smaller than the colorful common crapemyrtles (Lagerstroemia indica) ubiquitous in the southern landscape, so the Japanese crapemyrtle was not thought to be a plant destined for widespread commercial appeal.

In fact, the most important contribution this plant has made to nursery commerce has been its genes.

It was John Creech of the U.S. National Arboretum who brought back the seeds of Lagerstroemia fauriei from the Yakushima Island in Japan in 1956. It wasn’t until the ’60s that the resulting plants were used in breeding programs at the arboretum to improve resistance to powdery mildew, often a problem in common crapemyrtle.

This resulted in the release of a large group of cultivars in the ’70s. These did have resistance to powdery mildew, and by and large were also endowed with beautiful bark, long bloom season, good to great fall color, and increased hardiness in some of the cultivars. The best known of them include ‘Natchez,’ ‘Acoma,’ ‘Sioux’ and ‘Tuskegee,’ but there are several others popular in the trade. Their flower colors may be white but for the most part are varying shades of pink and light purple.

Common thought was the buying public will always go for colorful blooms or larger white blooms if those options are available, and the straight L. fauriei species would not compete in the marketplace with these cultivars because of its small white flowers.

Most people who have seen mature specimens of this tree might beg to differ. Besides the incredible bark, it is the imposing stature that swells the gardener’s heart. This plant has gravitas.

Though we have a couple of young Japanese crapemyrtles here at the UT Gardens, Jackson, and a beautiful specimen in the Knoxville Gardens, it was only recently that I encountered mature specimens during their bloom season. On a visit to Athens, Ga., while admiring the hydrangea collection in the yard of Coach Vince Dooley, I got a whiff of fragrance and heard the humming of thousands of happy bees. My nose and ears led me to the beautiful specimen shown in the photograph. Later in the Athens visit, we parked our car in the shade of several large Japanese crapemyrtles at Flo Chaffin’s beautiful nursery, Specialty Ornamentals. She told us they were seedlings and pointed out some clonal differences among them, but all were fantastic. Flo remarked also on the speed of growth.

Sadly, it is not widely available in the trade, but a few growers do produce it in Tennessee. When we can find it, we carry it in our plant sales. Place it in full sun and well-drained soil, but otherwise Japanese crapemyrtle makes no demands and has no significant problems. It is winter hardy to zone 7, with carefully sited specimens hardy to zone 6.
UT GARDENS, JACKSON:
WEST TENNESSEE
AGRESEARCH AND
EDUCATION CENTER
By Bob Hayes, director, West
Tennessee AgResearch and
Education Center

The West Tennessee AgResearch and
Education Center is very grateful to
Duncan Massey and members of the
state House and Senate for including the
UT Gardens, Jackson, as part of the state
botanical garden. Being named a state
botanical garden has put the UT Gardens,
Jackson, “on the map” as a destination
on the Jackson Convention and Visitors
Bureau webpage, and hopefully by press
time, on the state visitor website.

We are very pleased with the support
the UT Gardens, Jackson, has had from
the UT Extension Tennessee Master
Gardeners in Madison County and Friends
of the Gardens. Master Gardeners have
volunteered thousands of hours of labor,
conducted plant sales with proceeds
benefiting the Gardens, and promoted the
UT Gardens to others. A portion of the
area Friends of UT Gardens membership
goes to support the UT Gardens, Jackson.

Jason Reeves, the Gardens curator,
provides the creativity and passion that
make the Gardens a “showplace” as noted
in a feature article in Southern Living
magazine. Carol Reese, UT Extension
ornamental horticulture specialist, also
contributes her expertise. While Summer
Celebration is held at the Gardens in
mid-July, the fall pumpkin display and fall
colors are also spectacular. The Gardens
are open to the public during daylight
hours, and many locals have made a habit
of visiting for their evening stroll.

UT GARDENS,
CROSSVILLE: THE PLATEAU
DISCOVERY GARDENS
By W. Gregg Upchurch, UT Extension
agent, Cumberland County

“model” partnership best
describes the relationship of UT
AgResearch, UT Extension and
Tennessee Master Gardeners
in Cumberland County. The Plateau
Discovery Gardens, the newest addition
to the UT Gardens, exemplifies what
can be accomplished when research is
partnered with outreach and volunteerism.
On any given day, Cumberland County’s
Tennessee Master Gardeners can be found
buzzing around the Gardens, primping,
pruning, planting, mulching and weeding.
However, it’s not general landscaping
maintenance of this public garden that
sets this partnership apart, but rather the
programs and education that all parties
involved provide.

Since its inception, thousands of people
have visited the Plateau Discovery
Gardens. Overwhelmingly, these visitors
come from more urban or residential
environments, unfamiliar with UT
AgResearch and its efforts. However,
these people and those from traditional
rural farm backgrounds in the Upper
Cumberland come together to learn
— on site, hands on — at the Plateau
AgResearch and Education Center.
Whether it’s training new or current
Master Gardeners, educating the public
at the annual Fall Gardeners’ Festival,
or enjoying the numerous weekend
landscaping seminars, Middle Tennessee
residents have an opportunity to visit
and learn. No audience is beyond
approach, as development of a “Kinder
Garden” targeting early childhood is well
underway. If you can’t get to the Gardens,
they will come to you via local public TV
broadcasts featuring lawn and landscape
topics where the Gardens serve as an
outdoor studio. College interns find the
Gardens to be an outdoor laboratory
and an opportunity to work side by side
with top research scientists. Furthermore,
these students gain exposure to UT
Extension and its Master Gardeners, and
work together educating the public. All
of these activities are coordinated and
conducted by a seamless blend of Master
Gardeners and UT Institute of Agriculture
personnel from AgResearch and Extension.
This partnership is further bolstered
by public and private support through
local businesses and city and county
government.

While thrilled to be the newest member
of the UT Gardens, excitement on the
Plateau continues to grow as programs
and demonstration plots evolve. Yet again,
the best lesson to be learned just may
be in what can be accomplished with
great partnerships.
1. Sharing our love of plants through fall and spring plant sales helps support the UT Gardens.

2. It was a perfect night for our first Gardens Gala in honor of our 30th anniversary. Good food + good auctions + good friends = great fun! (photo credit: Hurley Co Photography)

3. Blooms Days was filled with shopping, food, music, lectures and Brad Greenwood demonstrating iron forging.

4. The Insect Petting Zoo is always popular at Blooms Days, though some are more receptive than others.

5. Sen. Becky Duncan Massey congratulates Sue Hamilton after presenting her with the state botanical garden designation signed into law in April by Gov. Bill Haslam. (photo credit: Hurley Co Photography)

6. Several new garden inhabitants made their homes in tiny fairy gardens throughout the Gardens this year. Unfortunately, we never saw them in person.

7. Nothing brings a smile to a child’s face like finding a prize egg in the garden during our Eggstravaganza Egg Hunt. (photo credit: Hurley Co Photography)
8. The UT Gardens would not be so exceptional without the great help of our volunteers. Faye Beck and Mary Wigger help weed and renovate the rock garden.

9. Our educational programming throughout the summer was very well attended, including this weeklong camp of Garden Explorers. The camp, a cooperative effort of the UT Gardens, UT Extension and Tennessee Master Gardeners, nourishes our budding horticulturists and environmental stewards.

10. Mark Windham presents Sam and Mary Anne Beall with a ‘Good as Gold’ rose in appreciation of the couple serving as honorary chairs of the Gardens Gala. Johnson Nursery and Garden Center of Cookeville, a Gala sponsor, provided the rose, which is now growing in the UT Gardens, Knoxville, thanks to the generosity of the Beall family.

11. Derrick Stowell, education coordinator, led a horticultural therapy program with Breakthrough Inc. teaching good gardening practices to adults with autism.

12. Our Grands and Me program connects children, their grandparents and the Gardens in a day filled with fun outdoor and indoor nature activities.

13. One man’s trash can is another man’s planting paradise.

14. Gardens interns keep it all looking good. Scott Sherry and Francis Worley finish up after a long, hot day.
When gardeners talk about wildlife habitat, usually we are thinking about birds and butterflies, the small, beautiful, and free creatures we enjoy looking at. The birds may eat a few berries, the butterfly larva may nibble the parsley, but they bring much pleasure and sweet song. Wildlife can also be bears rampaging in the middle of the city and coyotes threatening our domestic pets. And then there are the deer, which often make gardening so “frustrating.” Make that “maddening.” What with the demise or control of natural predators and a limited season for hunting, the U.S. deer population has grown exponentially in recent decades, with a static food supply. Deer on the highways and byways, deer eating crops, deer causing havoc when they land indoors — deer are a problem throughout much of the country, whether rural, suburban, or, occasionally, urban.

Deer in the yard and garden are common in much of Tennessee. Special deer fencing, liquid repellents and adjustable height deer-repelling stakes are advertised widely, but there is another, hugely better way to discourage and, we hope, prevent those gorgeous four-footed creatures from devouring cultivated landscape. Ruth Rogers Clausen’s 50 Beautiful Deer-Resistant Plants: The Prettiest Annuals, Perennials, Bulbs, and Shrubs that Deer Don’t Eat (Portland: Timber Press, 2011) offers a common-sense solution: As you select plants for your terrain, soil and light, think about their deer resistance, too. Choose plants that deer avoid, their least choice morsels.

Most of the 224-page book is a description of the 50 recommended plants, with three pages devoted to each one, one of the three pages a full-color photograph by Alan L. Detrick. Plants are alphabetically arranged by common name within the categories annuals (5), perennials (15), shrubs (10), and five each of ferns, bulbs, herbs and grasses, in that order. Book design and format are admirable, and it would be hard, indeed, to improve on the presentation of information: there is an introductory paragraph on each plant; a “How to Grow” section which may include soil requirements, and planting and siting instructions; and design tips, with suggested companion plants. Cultivars are described, and in addition to plant hardness, height and spread dimensions highlighted in a quick look box, there is a deer resistance rating, with each plant rated on a sliding scale of 7 (“Deer sometimes nip off flowers but leave foliage alone”) to 10 (“Deer rarely browse foliage or flowers and usually avoid plant altogether”). Plants with 1-6 ratings are not in the book.

It’s always tempting to dive into the plant-by-plant listings of garden books, but the Introduction (pp. 10-16) and every word of the following chapter, “Help! Deer Are Destroying My Garden” (pp. 17-41), should be read at least once before you succumb. The author knows the deer problem inside and out, she writes clearly and succinctly, and you really can’t afford to skip her excellent advice. Worth noting on page 15: “… there is no such thing as a deer-proof plant.” The “Help!” chapter on deer behavior will give you a good idea of what to expect season by season, suggested measures for barriers and terrain, a list of 38 plants not to plant — “deer candy” that can turn your garden into an irresistible feast for deer, and more.

Additional features are resources for mail-order plants, a useful glossary, a further reading bibliography, and a very good index. “About the author” cites Clausen’s many leadership roles in contemporary gardening, including the award-winning, comprehensive Perennials for American Gardens (New York: Random House, 1989), with Nicolas H. Ekstrom.

50 Beautiful Deer-Resistant Plants is readily available for purchase and in libraries.
We have continued to see new growth and excitement around the variety of educational programming offered at the UT Gardens, Knoxville, this past year. There have been several new program offerings including our Home Grown program for home-school families. We also have begun to implement therapeutic horticulture programming through working with several organizations that serve adults with disabilities and other health issues. Check out all that the Gardens has to offer and come garden with us.

**UT GARDENS, KNOXVILLE**

### November

#### Growing Together: Thankful Tree
Saturday, Nov. 16, 10 a.m.–noon
This class will explore fall and why we celebrate Thanksgiving. We will create a thankful tree to decorate your dinner table and start a family tradition.

- Cost per family: $15/member, $20/nonmember

#### Adult Workshop: Garden Paper
Saturday, Nov. 16, 1-3 p.m.
Paper can be made from just about any plant fiber. Join us to explore the history of papermaking and create paper from garden materials. You will leave this class with several paper samples and tools to make more paper from your own garden.

- Cost: $20/member, $30/nonmember

### December

#### Winter Wonderland
Saturday Dec. 7, noon–3 p.m.
Celebrate winter at the UT Gardens. This fun festival will explore several winter holidays. Participants will make holiday crafts to take home.

- Cost: $5 per child

#### Adult Workshop: Wreath Making
Friday, Dec. 13, 10-11:30 a.m.
Deck the halls with your very own decorations. This class will take a look at how early settlers decorated their homes for the holidays. Make a few decorations to take home or give away as gifts this holiday season.

- Cost: $8/member, $12/nonmember

### January

#### Sunday Garden Talks: Green Gardening
Sunday, Jan. 12, 2-3:30 p.m.
“Organic” and “Sustainable” are two words you often hear in the news and around town. This class will show how to green your garden. Get advice on composting, water conservation and reducing the need for chemical fertilizers and pesticides in your home garden. See how being organic is not as difficult as you may think.

- Cost: free/member, $5/nonmember

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All classes require preregistration. Contact Derrick Stowell, HGTV-UT Gardens educator, at 865-974-7151 or dstowell@utk.edu for more information or to register.
**Event & Education Calendar**

**February**

- **Home Grown:** Indoor Gardening  
  Wednesday, Jan. 15, 1-3 p.m.  
  This class will teach you how to grow plants even during the winter. Take a potted herb home to grow and add flavor to your meals. Cost: $5 per student

- **Garden Sprouts:** Popcorn Play  
  Friday, Jan. 17, 10-11:30 a.m.  
  Celebrate national popcorn day and learn all about this tasty treat. Make your own popcorn as a snack and see what makes that corn pop. Then make a craft using popcorn.  
  Cost: $8/member, $12/nonmember

- **Growing Together:** Worm World  
  Saturday, Jan. 25, 10 a.m.-noon  
  Build your own worm bin to take home and learn how easy composting with worms can be. Each family will build its own worm bin to take home, worms and all.  
  Cost per family: $30/member, $40/nonmember

**March**

- **Home Grown:** Eat Your Flowers  
  Wednesday, March 5, 1-3 p.m.  
  You may have been eating flowers for years without even knowing it. This class will look at edible flowers found in our gardens. Participants will sample some flowers and take home an egg carton full of seeds and soil to plant in a garden.  
  Cost per family: $15/member, $20/nonmember

- **Garden Sprouts:** Sounds of Spring  
  Friday, March 7, 10-11:30 a.m.  
  Spring is almost here! As the weather warms up, many new sights and sounds come to life in the Gardens. See and hear what’s going on as the season changes.  
  Cost: $8/member, $12/nonmember

- **Sunday Garden Talks:** Spring Trees  
  Sunday, March 9, 2-3:30 p.m.  
  Dogwoods, magnolias and redbuds are all welcome signs of approaching spring. Take a walk through the Gardens, see what is blooming, and create a list of flowering trees you want to add to your garden this year.  
  Cost: free/member, $5/nonmember

**April**

- **Home Grown:** Eat Your Flowers  
  Wednesday, April 2, 1-3 p.m.  
  Learn science as we explore how plants can be used to dye fabrics. See what early settlers used to add a splash of color to their lives. Participants will get a T-shirt and will create natural dyes to add color to it.  
  Cost: $5 per student

- **Garden Sprouts:** Three Sisters Garden  
  Friday, April 4, 10-11:30 a.m.  
  Corn, beans and squash are three great vegetables. This class will look at the history behind these crops and explore why this trio works so well together. Get a few ideas for your own garden at home.  
  Cost: $8/member, $12/nonmember

- **Sunday Garden Talks:** Sounds of Spring  
  Sunday, March 16, 10 a.m.-noon  
  Spring is almost here! As the weather warms up, many new sights and sounds come to life in the Gardens. See and hear what’s going on as the season changes.  
  Cost: $8/member, $12/nonmember

- **Growing Together:** Fairy Gardening  
  Saturday, March 22, 10 a.m.-noon  
  Fairies like to garden, too. Bring your favorite garden container and learn how to turn it into a magical fairy garden. Participants will be provided with plants, soil and fairy garden accessories to decorate their containers.  
  Cost: $30/member, $40/nonmember

**May**

- **Blooms Days**  
  May 10 and 11  
  Get your mom the perfect gift for Mother’s Day at this garden marketplace. Enjoy education sessions, live music, great food, vendors, and UT Gardens plants for sale.
This series of drawing and painting classes at the Gardens is open to adults of all skill levels. Each class will begin with a short talk about plants, art history and gardens. Lessons are designed to be engaging and develop specific skills. This series of classes may be taken as a whole or individually. This first for the UT Gardens is initiated and led by an alumnus of the UT School of Art and current students in the Department of Plant Sciences public horticulture program. Join us as we make art and garden history!

Cost per session (includes materials): $35/member, $45/nonmember
Cost for the entire series (includes materials): $220/member, $300/nonmember

Saturday, Jan. 11, 1-4 p.m.

Drawing I: Trees, Lines and Charcoal. This class is an introduction to drawing. Beginning with charcoal gesture drawings, we will work to develop trust in individual hand-eye coordination through line drawings. The technique will be modeled after the principles of classical figure drawing from a living model.

Saturday, Jan. 25, 1-4 p.m.

Drawing II: Form, Texture and Evergreens. In this class we will work to develop interpretation and expression of texture, form and light. Using evergreen plants as models, we will explore techniques and principles that lead to dynamic drawings using charcoal, vine charcoal, pencils and erasers.

Saturday, Feb. 8, 1-4 p.m.

Drawing III: Colorful Drawings, Colorful Plants. This class will introduce color theory and application in art as well as gardens. We will explore the basic principles of color and color schemes as they relate to depth and contrast in space.

Saturday, Feb. 22, 1-4 p.m.

Drawing IV: Color: Illusion and Allusion. In this class we will test and break the boundaries of the color wheel while painting late winter and early-spring colorful plants. Introducing wet media (watercolor) in to our mark-making, we will further develop our color rendering skills. The full spectrum of the rainbow can be found in perceived “solid” colors, understanding this will make us better artists, designers and gardeners.

Saturday, March 15, 1-4 p.m.

Painting I: Introduction to Watercolor and Floral Paintings. In the tradition of 15th- and 16th-century Flemish and Dutch painters, we will explore floral painting. We will use watercolor on paper exploring the nuances, timing and limits of watercolor painting. Our models will be fresh spring flowers from the Gardens!

Saturday, March 29, 1-4 p.m.

Painting II: Watercolor Techniques, Floral and Garden Painting. This class will focus on developing our application and mixing of color through painting flowers and possibly specimen plants. We will work to understand the importance of timing, patience, and wet and dry brush techniques for blending and sharpness with watercolor on paper.

Saturday, April 12, 1-4 p.m.

Painting III: Introduction to Expressive Landscape Watercolor Painting. This class will allow us to further develop our understanding of color, brush techniques and editing in watercolor painting. We will begin with rapid gesture paintings designed to focus on and develop areas of importance, followed by a longer period to paint an area of the Gardens of your choice in the splendor of spring.

Saturday, April 26, 1-4 p.m.

Painting IV: Watercolor Painting en plein air. In this class we will enjoy the beauty of the UT Gardens while having fun with our paint, disassembling and reassembling paintings and working with found object collage.
VOLUNTEER AND MEMBERSHIP TIDBITS

By Beth Willis, trial and volunteer coordinator

Photos by Beth Willis

E-NEWSLETTER — If you aren’t receiving our monthly e-newsletter, you’re missing out! It’s packed full of interesting information including upcoming programs, the plant of the month, regional gardening tips and other information relevant to area gardeners. Visit our website (http://utgardens.tennessee.edu) and click on the yellow button in the right-hand column to subscribe. No membership is required to sign up for the e-newsletter, and we do not share, rent or sell email addresses. You may unsubscribe at any time.

MEMBERSHIP CARDS AND RECIPROCAL ADMISSIONS PROGRAM — Shortly after joining or renewing your UT Gardens membership, you will receive a membership card in the mail. This card will have your renewal date on it, as well as your level of membership. You can use this card throughout the year to receive your member discount at our plant sales, to access the member pricing for educational programming, or to provide proof of membership at other gardens participating in the American Horticultural Society’s Reciprocal Admission Program. Please allow four to six weeks to receive your card. If you have any questions about membership or would like further information, please contact Beth Willis at ewillis2@utk.edu.

VOLUNTEER REPORT FOR JANUARY-JUNE 2013 AND VOLUNTEER APPEAL — UT Gardens volunteers in Knoxville were busy this spring and summer! From sowing seeds in January; to helping with our spring plant sale; to helping prep and carry out our Blooms Days festival on Mother’s Day weekend; to simply showing up each Tuesday and Thursday morning to help out with creating the new HGTV Home Showcase Garden; to transplanting seedlings, labeling annuals, weeding, harvesting vegetables and greens from the Kitchen Garden; to any other tasks that we could throw at them — they have already contributed an impressive 1,377 hours to the Gardens this year. And they’re still going strong!

Consider joining in the fun! No matter where your gardening interests lie, the UT Gardens would love to have your help. We have opportunities throughout the year for volunteers in the gardens and the greenhouses, at educational programming and at other special events. For more information about our volunteer program at the Knoxville Gardens site, please contact Beth Willis, volunteer coordinator, at ewillis2@utk.edu.

UT Gardens volunteers work in the rock garden.
The innovative partnership between the UT Gardens and Knoxville-based HGTV continues to grow, making gardening education accessible for enthusiasts of all ages. A Gardens educator, a landscape design initiative and a collaboration to expand the HGTV HOME Plant Collection are already in place.

Earlier this year, Derrick Stowell became the HGTV-UT Gardens educator with the UT Gardens. Stowell will coordinate new educational programming aimed at the moderate-level gardener as well as encourage children to become active gardeners and landscapers.

“Derrick’s addition to the staff began with grant funding from the Stanley Smith Horticultural Trust,” said Sue Hamilton, director of the UT Gardens. “Now, with support from HGTV, we can continue our garden education programming. Not only does it benefit visitors to our gardens, but also visitors to HGTV’s home at Scripps Networks Interactive headquarters,” she said.

Recently, the UT Gardens became the showcase for the HGTV HOME Plant Collection. “It’s a beautifully designed garden which includes an arbor, garden benches, decorative ceramic containers and edged garden paths,” said Hamilton.

This fall visitors to the Showcase Gardens will see new perennials and shrubs from the HGTV HOME Plant Collection, which offers inspirational style, beauty and color for any home. The collection features coordinated plant and flower selections that take the guesswork out of which varieties work best together. Future plans include adding HGTV HOME Showcase Gardens to the other UT Gardens locations in Crossville and Jackson.

But this partnership is about more than creating beautiful outdoor spaces. Hamilton will be assisting in the identification of types of plants to expand the HGTV HOME Plant Collection, as well as helping to select new cultivars. In addition, Hamilton and the Gardens’ staff will blog and answer questions on HGTVGardens.com, HGTV’s gardening website.

“Our HOME Studio program is a unique opportunity for students to gain professional experience in the areas they’re studying, such as home design and landscaping.”

Hamilton also will provide plant care tips, design suggestions and gardening ideas as part of the HGTV Know How! program — the tips and ideas featured on retail plant tags, online and in participating retail stores.

Another component of the partnership is the addition of the HGTV Landscape Design Initiative for Student Success. The initiative will allow UT College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources students the opportunity to help design and implement projects for the HGTV HOME Studio program.

A group of graduate students, studying under associate professor Gary Menendez, have already completed a design project for the Scripps Networks Interactive headquarters. More design projects are planned for the future.

“HGTV is a locally based top national cable network and lifestyle brand,” said Sarah Cronan, HGTV senior vice president for brand management. “Our HOME Studio program is a unique opportunity for students to gain professional experience in the areas they’re studying, such as home design and landscaping.”

The educational component of the partnership will continue to flourish with HGTV’s continued support of an internship fund, as well as support for a graduate student in public horticulture. These opportunities provide students with valuable hands-on experience with one of the country’s most popular home and garden brands.
With three locations across the state, the UT Gardens plays an important role in horticulture education throughout Tennessee. Many people may think that the UT Gardens receives all of its funding from the state of Tennessee; however, the UT Gardens is state assisted. We rely on support from many funding sources to keep our gardens looking amazing year-round. One of the ways we are able to continue to offer free admission and maintain our grounds is through the support of businesses. This year the UT Gardens has developed a Community Partnership program to allow businesses to partner with the UT Gardens to reach our more than 100,000 visitors each year. We are grateful for our long-time supporters and welcome new partners. If you are interested in learning how your support can impact the visitors at our Gardens, contact Derrick Stowell, HGTV-UT Gardens educator, at 865-974-7151 or dstowell@utk.edu.
FOUR-SEASON TREES

One tree, four seasons of landscape beauty ... Isn’t that what you’re searching for? Beautiful flowers, no-mess ornamental fruits or seed pods, awesome foliage that changes seasonally, and year-round unique bark attributes. Flowers may be large and showy or small and fragrant. They may attract friendly hummingbirds, butterflies and other pollinators. Autumn leaf colors are a kaleidoscope of vibrant reds, oranges, yellows or coppery-browns. The deciduous tree may exhibit a striking silhouette, colorful exfoliating bark or both. Here is a list of just a few favorites.

Paperbark maple (Acer griseum) flaunts an awesome exfoliating cinnamon-colored papery bark all year long. The bark is especially striking in winter against a snowy background. Its unique trifoliate foliage is very different than other maples. In autumn, the leaves turn red, crimson or russet. It performs best in cooler parts of Tennessee. If you prefer a golden amber winter bark, plant three-flower maple (Acer triflorum). It grows faster than paperbark maple but shares many of the same ornamental features.

River birch (Betula nigra) starts out with new bright green foliage in spring. Unique tan-colored catkin flowers open in early spring. This Tennessee native has inner tan to cinnamon-colored papery bark during the winter. Leaves turn bright yellow in the autumn. Numerous cultivar choices include ‘Heritage’ or ‘Duraheat’ as 45- to 50-foot landscape trees or 15-foot-tall dwarf Fox Valley (‘Little King’) for small urban gardens. Summer foliage is dark green and glossy. All listed cultivars demonstrate better pest resistance compared to the species.

Upright-branched European hornbeam (Carpinus betulus ‘Fastigiata’) is a tough landscape tree that grows 40-45 feet tall and 20 feet wide. Its spring catkin flowers may appear different, but not memorable, to most gardeners. Their winged seed pods develop in late summer. Yellow to orangy fall foliage can be quite striking in some years. Its upright branched muscular wood and slender, zigzag twigs form a unique winter silhouette. The cultivar ‘Columnaris’ grows similar to ‘Fastigiata’; ‘Franz Fontaine’ grows to 35-by-15 feet.

Chinese or Kousa dogwood (Cornus kousa) blooms in late spring with 4- to 5-inch diameter, creamy white bracted flowers. Its May bloom period may last two weeks or longer. By late summer, the fleshy raspberry-like fruits are turning orangy red. Leaves turn reddish purple in fall before abscising. Its exfoliating bark is an outstanding winter feature and gets better with age.

Winter King hawthorn (Crataegus x viridis ‘Winter King’) has become the dominant hawthorn species planted in Tennessee. This 20- to 25-foot small tree flowers white in May, effective for two weeks. Summer foliage of this native hawthorn is dark green and is very disease resistant. Leaves turn yellow in the fall, revealing large clusters of red fruits that persist through the
winter until cedar wax wings and robins sweep the tree clean. The shaggy, light gray winter trunk wood is another plus.

Seven son flower (*Heptacodium miconioides*), a recent arrival from Korea and China, is becoming popular across Tennessee. It grows either as a large shrub or multibranched small tree, 15 to 20 feet in height and spread. Its fragrant white-petaled flowers open in August over three to four weeks. In late September the tiny green floral sepals have expanded and turned red, offering a second bloom period. Thin strips of bronze bark peel away in winter, exposing a chalky white inner bark.

Crape myrtle (*Lagerstroemia* spp.) have become both the quintessential flowering tree and shrub over the summer. The U.S. National Arboretum cultivars, identified by Native American tribe names, are highly aphid and mildew disease resistant. Select a crape myrtle cultivar by its mature size. There are four size classes: dwarf (shorter than 5 feet), semi-dwarf (5-12 feet), intermediate shrubs (13-20 feet) and tree (22-30 feet) forms. Crape myrtles flower for six to eight weeks in shades of white, purple, pink or red. Some of the best for winter bark (by mature size and flower color) include: ‘Natchez’ (26 feet, white), ‘Muskogee’ (22 feet, light lavender), ‘Sioux’ (15 feet, pink), ‘Acoma’ (10 feet, pure white), and ‘Hopi’ (8 feet, fuchsia).

Dawn redwood (*Metasequoia glyptostroboideos*) is a 70- to 90-foot-tall fast-growing deciduous conifer. New spring leaves emerge bright green and darken to medium green. In autumn the soft feathery foliage turns orange-brown before dropping. Its attractive shredded reddish brown bark clothes a straight tapered trunk and is a dominant winter feature. Gold Rush (‘Ogon’) *Metasequoia* is a gold-leaved form, slightly slower in growth and matures to 50-60 feet.

Parrotia (*Parrotia persica*), aka “Persian ironwood” is a lovely 25- to 40-foot medium-sized tree. Tiny reddish flowers open in February and March, which many gardeners tend to miss. In early spring its witchhazel-like foliage rolls out reddish-purple and develops into 3- to 5-inch-long leaves. Summer’s lustrous dark green foliage transitions to blends of yellow, orange and red. Once Parrotia hits its teen years, its smooth gray bark develops into a mosaic of green, white, tan and cinnamon, getting better with age. ‘Biltmore’ is the most popular cultivar; it grows large with a rounded habit and low branches.

Japanese stewartia (*Stewartia pseudocamellia*) is one of six stewartia species that grows in Tennessee and is the most reliable if properly sited. Its one-month-long bloom period starts in mid-June. White camellia-like white flowers are 3 inches across with yellow centers. Autumn foliage color is a blend of red, orange and gold. Its lovely exfoliating bark is a winter asset that improves with age. Stewartia prefers morning sun exposure, afternoon shade and a moist compost-rich soil. It performs better in the eastern region of the state.

1. *Lagerstroemia* ‘Tuskegee’ bark
2. Parrotia
3. *Carpinus betulus* ‘Fastigiata’
4. *Betula nigra* ‘Heritage’
GROWING THE NEXT GENERATION OF GARDENERS

By Derrick Stowell, HGTV-UT Gardens educator

Photos by Rich Maxey, UT Institute of Agriculture Marketing and Communications
Smart phones and tablets, portable media players, video games, high-definition big-screen televisions and other technologies have changed the world in many ways. They’ve had many positive impacts on society including better communication, faster access to valuable life-saving information, and the ability to enhance learning. Despite all the great advances, modern technology actually has had some significant negative effects. Richard Louv, a journalist and author of the award-winning book “Last Child in the Woods,” outlines the negative impacts of modern society’s technology on children. He directly links the lack of nature in the lives of today’s wired generation — he calls it nature-deficit — to some of the most disturbing childhood trends, such as the rises in obesity, attention disorders and depression. Gardening has the ability to help counteract “nature deficit disorder” in children and youth. We as gardeners have a unique opportunity to be on the forefront of changing the alarming trends mentioned by Louv.

Gardening is a powerful teacher about the natural world. It gives children the opportunity to see and learn the life cycles of plants, birds and insects. It provides the backdrop for learning about weather and seasonal changes. It teaches children about the environment, conservation and the vital role that plants play in our world: food, medicine, furniture, textiles, oxygen, and air and water purification.

Research has found that gardening has many benefits for children and youth including increased physical activity, improved self-esteem, better healthy eating habits, reduced obesity and reduced stress.

Gardening as well as a school garden can be excellent teaching tools for educators. Tools that are well-suited to support the hands-on, tactile or kinesthetic learning style that most children benefit from. Gardening can provide obvious teachable moments using life sciences. Garden-based education is a trend where teachers actually use gardening as a way to teach basic school subjects of math, social studies, science, art and literature. To learn more, see http://gardenbasededucation.org. As pressure increases on teachers to provide students with rigorous curriculum standards and achieve positive test scores, the use of nature and outdoors in teaching settings may be overlooked. But numerous research studies show that children who interact with nature have increased creativity and problem-solving skills, enhanced cognitive abilities and improved academic performance. It is therefore important to educate teachers about the value and use of gardening in their curriculum and the overall positive effect on their students. Children who experience nature also develop a lifelong love of it and are more likely to take actions to protect the environment. This concern for nature often translates into careers focused on the environment.

The UT Gardens recognizes the potential to impact children and youth through gardening. We currently offer many opportunities for families and schools to learn about gardening, all of which are listed in the event and educational calendar on pages 13-16.

START SMALL — Although children are often very energetic and eager to learn, plant a few small things for them to care for and take on as their plants. Don’t give them too much responsibility all at once. Starting small will help keep them from getting discouraged if what they are growing does not do well.

GROW VEGETABLES — They grow fast and research shows that children are more likely to eat what they grow. Be sure to let children pick what they have grown, as it is typically exciting and rewarding for them. What better way to encourage children to eat more fruits and veggies?

GROW FLOWERS — Children will learn to appreciate beauty and how butterflies and birds are attracted to a garden. Easy flowers for children to grow include zinnia, cosmos, sunflower and marigold. How exciting for a child to pick a fresh bouquet of flowers for the house!

GIVE SPACE — Consider setting aside a small area in your garden to have children make it their own. Let them pick out what to plant. Help them make labels for their plants and to even name their garden. Containers also work great for this because they are small and can be moved around your yard as needed.

SET BOUNDARIES — Setting a few rules and boundaries will help keep children from trampling or picking your prize plants. Let children know where they can walk, what they can touch, prize plants. Let children know where they can walk, what they can touch, pick and eat.

PRACTICE SAFETY — Always supervise children when gardening. Help them learn how to properly use tools. Also, think about proximity to roads and other hazards like thorns.

MAKE IT FUN — If gardening is not fun, children will quickly lose interest. Yes, a few seeds may get overwatered and washed away, planting rows and plant spacing may be crooked, and plants may get picked and smashed by little feet and hands. Don’t fret, the memories you and your children are making will outweigh any mishaps.

DO NOT FORGET TO CHECK OUT PAGES 13-16 FOR EDUCATIONAL EVENTS THAT ARE HAPPENING IN THE GARDENS.

READY TO GARDEN WITH CHILDREN? THESE TIPS WILL HELP YOU GET STARTED.
Mike Stansberry describes himself as a nurseryman, landscape designer and plant geek. And he admits he was a plant geek before geeks were cool. From the start of his career in 1981, he believed in using native plants before people became aware of their importance and beauty. Stansberry continues with that commitment today.

“In my work as a landscaper and at the nursery, I specialize in rare, hard-to-find and uncommon plants.” His Beaver Creek Nursery, in Powell, Tenn., knows its niche: growing and installing locally adapted plants for Tennessee landscapes. A delightful plus of his 6-acre nursery is a 3-acre display garden. This garden not only gives Stansberry a chance to trial his plants, but also provides customers with the opportunity to see what an actual, mature-sized plant looks like in the landscape.

Stansberry began propagating plants early on, using the training he received from professor John Day while a student in UT’s College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources. He graduated with a degree in ornamental horticulture and landscape design in 1981. Stansberry says he chose plants that he learned about from Day, Don Williams and Shannon Smith of UT, and a prized book by gardening giant Michael Dirr.

“For me, growing my own inventory was a matter of logistics. I can reproduce and grow stock easier than ordering two plants from Oregon or two from Rhode Island when I want particular species for an installation.”

Propagation and his use of different plants led to a spreading reputation in the region. Soon he was receiving calls from people in search of particular, unusual plants. From there, his nursery operation was born.

Stansberry’s propagation of plants also led to hybridizing them. He has introduced five varieties to market: a Japanese cornel dogwood *Cornus officinalis* ‘Sunsphere’; a cucumber magnolia *Magnolia acuminata* ‘Brenda’; a full moon maple *Acer shirasawanum* ‘Beaver Creek’; a silky camellia *Stewartia malocodendron* ‘Beaver Creek’; and a native ginger ground cover *Asarum arifolia* ‘Beaver Creek.’

The Brenda magnolia, which honors his wife, blooms yellow. Sunsphere, just like Knoxville’s World’s Fair icon, glimmers a golden yellow a month earlier than most dogwoods, flowering in February. Today some of the top mail-order nurseries sell these two varieties.

Jeanne Frett at Delaware’s acclaimed Mt. Cuba Center named Stansberry’s little ginger Beaver Creek in his honor.

The center is renowned for its study, conservation and appreciation of plants native to the Appalachian Piedmont region.

“It’s exciting to introduce a new plant, and you know you’ve done something when other people start growing and selling it,” Stansberry says.

Operating as a full-service design and installation company, he spends 70 percent of his time on designs, 10-15 percent on propagating, and the rest tending to the nursery.

Stansberry feels it’s crucial to match the plant material to the site and architecture. “My overall goal is to improve my clients’ quality of life in a very real way. I want to make a client’s home peaceful and serene and enchanting — somewhere they can go and relax and forget about their trials and tribulations.”

Stansberry’s resourcefulness in delivering those goals is what makes his reputation stellar in the region he serves.

You can see Stansberry’s ‘Brenda,’ magnolia and ‘Sunsphere,’ dogwood growing at the UT Gardens in Knoxville. Stansberry’s other introductions will be planted this fall. Learn more about Beaver Creek Nursery at http://www.beavercreeknursery.net.
It’s exciting to introduce a new plant, and you know you’ve done something when other people start growing and selling it.
-Mike Stansberry
In the 1962 expanded and revised edition of Harriet K. Morse’s 1939 classic gardening book Gardening in the Shade, she opens: “The shaded garden has character. It is cool and inviting on a warm day in midsummer. The gardener at work is grateful for shelter from the burning sun, while the stroller rejoices that flowers will prosper in all the tones and undertones of shade. The checkered patterns of sunlight and shadow play upon flowering shrub and herbaceous border, on path and pool and woodland walk.”

Those of us who live with shade in our gardens know that in many ways it’s a mixed blessing. Shade allows you to grow plants that would fry in full sun. However, it also can be limiting if you want to grow plants that demand full sun to thrive. If your garden is laden with shadows, embrace your space; many of the most beautiful gardens in the world are full of shade. Keep reading to find out how you can take control of your garden’s dark places.

THOUGHTFUL SHADOWS

The first step to a beautiful shade garden is truly understanding the types of shade. No two shady gardens are alike. Some gardeners deal with near darkness and some have dappled light. Many gardeners have patches of shade mixed with patches of blazing hot sun. A spot that is shady in the morning may be unwelcoming in the afternoon. Pay attention to your unique situation and find plants that thrive in those conditions. I define full sun as six or more continuous hours of direct sunlight. Defining shade is a little trickier. There is a huge difference between morning sun and afternoon sun. Often when a plant is recommended for partial shade, morning sun and afternoon shade are best. In fact, during hot summers in the Midsouth, morning sun and afternoon shade are the most coveted spots in the garden for some plants.

Step two is to determine if the shade in your garden leans to more dry shade or moist shade. Knowing this information goes a long way when trying to be successful with shade. Unfortunately, dry shade (which is very common in the Midsouth) is one of the trickiest spots to navigate in the garden. Many gardeners with large trees deal with this situation. Pay attention to how consistently moist your soil stays throughout the year to help determine planting needs.
TEXTURE PLUS COLOR

One of the top success strategies for a shade garden is to pick plants with different textures. Using big, bold leaves mixed with finer textures takes you one step closer to a beautiful shade garden. Next bring color into the shade garden. We need to remind ourselves that foliage color can vary greatly. Look for shade-loving plants with different hues of green, blue and mint tones or even bright gold plants to help you bring color into the shade. White is also a must for a shade garden. Shade plants that bloom white or those with variegated foliage bring light into the darkest of garden locations.

GARDEN DETAILS

For the most part, gardeners have little luck growing traditional turfgrass species in deep shade. Abandon dreams of lush lawns under dense canopies and atop the surface roots of trees. This situation creates an opportunity to expand gardening beds and create beautiful winding paths. A garden path on the surface is a means to an end. However, creating a path that holds your interest as you travel through the shade garden is important. One strategy is to create a rather wide garden lane that traverses the garden and acts as a promenade. This lane can wind or be straight depending on your taste but should culminate in a vista or main garden focal point. From this garden lane, create meandering paths that lead visitors to other areas of the garden. Adding additional elements like benches or whimsical touches along your garden paths can enhance the beauty of your garden.

CHECK THIS OUT

All of the plants pictured in this article thrive in moist, well-drained soils. The list below contains some ideas for selections for specific areas. Growing conditions in the Midsouth can vary widely, so it's best to consult personnel at an independent garden center or local university extension office to ensure the best plant picks.

DRY SHADE PLANTS

- Russian arborvitae (*Mircobiota decussata*)
- Silver archangel (*Lamiastrium galeobdolon*)
- Big-root geranium (*Geranium macrorrhizum*)
- Solomon’s seal (*Polygonatum hybridum*)
- Lenten rose (*Helleborus x hybridus*)
- Dwarf sweet box (*Sarcococca spp.*)
- Common foxglove (*Digitalis purpurea*)
- Robb’s Spurge (*Euphorbia robbiae*)

MOIST SHADE PLANTS

- Sweet flag (*Acorus gramineus*)
- American turkscap lily (*Lilium superbum*)
- Plantain lily (*Hosta spp.*)
- Elephant ear (*Colocasia spp.*)
- Ostrich fern (*Matteuccia struthiopteris*)
- Japanese painted fern (*Athyrium niponicum var. pictum*)
BEGINNINGS OF CUMBERLAND COUNTY’S PLATEAU DISCOVERY GARDENS

By Carol Burdett, founding member, UT Extension Tennessee Master Gardeners, Cumberland County

Photos by Nancy Christopherson

What started as a small undesignated portion of land within the UT Plateau AgResearch and Education Center has grown into a horticultural exhibit worthy to be identified as the newest addition to the UT Gardens. Walt Hitch, director of the center, and Gregg Upchurch, UT Extension agent in Cumberland County, proposed in 2004 the idea of a demonstration garden to Cumberland County’s Tennessee Master Gardeners. A committee of members volunteered to develop and oversee a plan that would encompass the dreams of these three organizations.

In 2005, the journey began. The spring class of Master Gardener interns dug into that first garden plot showcasing what can be done with plants, imagination and gumption. Now Master Gardener interns can be found annually with measuring tapes, computer readouts and the Tennessee Master Gardener course handbook taking ownership and responsibility for their group plot. Seasoned members can be found maintaining the gardens throughout the growing season.

In 2009, Mark Windham, distinguished professor of ornamental plant pathology in the Department of Plant Sciences, offered the placement of several of his ornamental trials within the demonstration garden. Not only have the redbud, ornamental grass and hydrangea trials added to the overall size and appeal of the Gardens, including this research allows visitors the opportunity to view varieties that are successful (and not so successful) when faced with the many challenges of gardening on the Plateau.

The Plateau Discovery Gardens has evolved over the years from a simple demonstration garden to a place that offers educational opportunities for all. In addition to the annual Tennessee Master Gardener training course, groups of seasoned gardeners have designed additional demonstration areas including a composting area, butterfly garden, birdhouses and, most recently, the beginning of a children’s garden. Nestled in and around the various themed gardens are memorial stone benches and an outdoor classroom area where monthly learning sessions are open to the public.

VISIT THE PLATEAU DISCOVERY GARDENS!

Please visit the Plateau Discovery Gardens within the UT Plateau AgResearch and Education Center on Highway 70N in Cumberland County. If you have a group that would enjoy a guided tour, call ahead to the office at 931-484-0034 and we’ll have someone meet you there.
The UT Gardens celebrated its 30th Anniversary Gala on Friday, May 3, to a great crowd and weather that cooperated for the entire evening. More than 200 people attended the gala and participated in the silent and live auctions raising more than $40,000 in support for the UT Gardens. Moneys raised will be used to support student internships in the Gardens, promote Gardens programming and maintain the grounds.

“I was really impressed with the amount of support we received at the gala since it was our first one,” said Sue Hamilton, director of the UT Gardens. “We plan to make this an annual event and this was a very good start.”

Tennessee state Sen. Becky Duncan Massey was in attendance and announced that the UT Gardens has been designated as the official botanical garden for the state of Tennessee. The legislation was sponsored by Massey and Rep. Jimmy Eldridge and signed by Gov. Bill Haslam on April 16, 2013. The UT Gardens now has a statewide presence with three locations including Jackson, Crossville and Knoxville.

The gala theme, “Sunset and Roses,” was inspired by a desire to recognize the support of Sam and Mary Anne Beall who have been the Gardens’ most generous donors to date. Their generosity provided for the construction of the Beall Family Rose Garden a few years ago along with an endowed student internship program to maintain the rose garden. Both Sam and Mary Anne served as honorary chairs for the event.

To recognize their support, the Bealls were given a new rose called ‘Good as Gold’ and “appropriately colored orange,” said Mark Windham, UT distinguished professor of ornamental pathology and resident rose specialist. The rose, which is not yet on the market, was provided by the Johnson Garden Center in Cookeville. Windham presented the rose to the Bealls who immediately donated it to the Gardens. “What a great way to show their appreciation for the Gardens,” Windham said. “The new rose has been planted in the rose garden and looks great.”

The Gala was made possible by generous community partners and event sponsors including HGTV HOME, Pilot Corp., UT Federal Credit Union, Oakes Daylilies and Dr. Joe and Pat Johnson. In-kind sponsors included Bandit Lites, Star Roses and Plants, Stephenson Realty and Auction, Reedy Creek Vineyards and Cellars, The Public House, Mort and Becky Massey, Hurley Co Photography, and Yazoo Brewing Company.

Next year’s gala is scheduled for Friday, April 25, and the Iris has been chosen as the flower to celebrate.

“As the state flower, it’s a perfect one to celebrate because we’ll also be celebrating our designation as the state botanical garden of Tennessee,” Hamilton said. “Mark your calendars and plan to join us.”
**Benefactor Friends ($1,000+)**
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**Thank You for Your Support**
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