



UT Gardens 2013 Best & Beautiful Plants

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Information is also posted on:

UT Gardens website at <http://utgardens.tennessee.edu/>

UT Gardens Jackson at <http://west.tennessee.edu/ornamentals/>

Note: A 'K' for Knoxville or 'J' for Jackson at the end of each plant description indicates that it is growing only at that test garden. No symbol indicates it is growing at both gardens.

Top Annuals of 2013

Best in Show – *Dahlia 'XXL Hidalgo'* Large peachy-pink blooms popped above lush dark green foliage. This and other varieties in the XXL series provided a long season of interest, blooming well into the fall. (Dummen)

Best New Variety – *Petunia 'Tidal Wave Silver'* One of the few seed grown petunias that withstood our excessive rainfall last year. Vigorous mounding plants were covered in blooms of white with pale lavender blushes. (BallSeed)

Best Repeat Variety – *Evolvulus Blue My Mind*TM The vibrant true-blue blooms on this variety were a standout against the silvery foliage all summer long. A trailing growth habit makes it well suited for borders or containers. (Proven Winners)

Top Twenty (alphabetical)

Agastache 'Astello Indigo' This variety doesn't offer the showiest bloom, but its consistent full foliage growth is well-suited for a mass or mid-border planting. (Fleuroselect) K

Angelonia AngelMistTM **Spreading Dark Purple** This vegetative variety bloomed profusely all season. Numerous dark purple blooms were a knockout on compact spreading plants. (BallFlora Plant)

Artemisia 'Parfum d'Ethiopia' Fringed silver foliage makes this a wonderful contrast to flowering plants. Looked fantastic all summer despite excessive rainfall. Suitable for containers or bed planting. (Dummen)

Begonia SurefireTM series (**Red and Rose**) Numerous blooms of red or rose against lush glossy foliage on mounding plants. (Proven Winners) **'Fire Balls'** Bright, frilly orange blooms glowed against glossy green foliage. Cascading habit is well-suited to containers. (BallFlora Plant)

Bidens 'Bidy Gonzalez BIG' Cheery yellow blooms are abundant on this mounding annual which reaches 1' tall. The delicate foliage texture provides additional interest. (HGTV HOME Plant Collection) K

Calibrachoa Superbells[®] **Pomegranate Punch** An interesting bloom color combination (hot coral-pink and burgundy) drives the interest in this vigorous annual with a groundcover habit Well-suited to containers. (Proven

Winners) **Mini Famous™ Double White** Intriguing small but double blooms liberally covered this cascading variety. Grown in containers. (Selecta)

Capsicum 'Black Olive' The shiny oblong peppers which mature from purple-black to red stand out beautifully against the dark foliage, all on a plant that can reach 2' in height. (AAS Winner) **'NuMex Twilight'** Small pointed fruits of cream, orange and purple cover the medium-sized mounding plants at the same time. (Johnny's Selected Seeds) **'Prairie Fire'** Dense compact plants profusely laden with cream, yellow and orange fruits. (Johnny's Selected Seeds)

Catharanthus 'Titan Burgundy Improved' and **'Titan Rose Halo'** Large, bright blooms cover tightly mounded plants with glossy dark green foliage. (Ball Seed)

Chamaesyce 'Stardust Super Flash' (Dummen) and **'Stardust White Flash'** Baby's breath type blooms dust compact mounded plants. Though individual blooms are not showy, these plants provide a wonderful contrast to flowering plants. (HGTV HOME Plant Collection) K

Cleome Senorita Blanca™ and **Senorita Rosalita®** This plant's cultivars normally don't perform well past mid-summer, but this year they were attractive into the fall. Large blooms on tall plants make this well-suited to plantings in the back of the bed. (Proven Winners)

Fragaria 'Toscana' This ornamental strawberry has showy blooms against large dark-green foliage. Cascading habit makes it well-suited for containers. (Fleuroselect)

Ipomoea 'Bright Ideas' series (Black and Rusty Red) You won't go wrong using either of these varieties. Both exhibit vigorous growth, with foliage colors that resist fading. Mounding-spreading habits can grow between 1 ½ - 2' tall. (HGTV HOME Plant Collection) K

Lobularia Blushing Princess™ and **Snow Princess®** A ground-hugging annual at only 8" tall, these vigorous growers are literally covered with masses of tiny lavender or white blooms so that it looks like a carpet. **Frosty Knight™** offered an interesting variegated foliage of creamy yellow and green, though it did not bloom as heavily as other cultivars. (Proven Winners)

Mecardonia 'Magic Carpet Yellow' This is another carpet-like groundcover which grows to 6" tall. Lush plants are dotted with bright and cheery golden blooms. (HGTV HOME Plant Collection) K

Pelargonium Timeless® Orange An intense bloom color contrasts with dark stems on this geranium which managed to beat our summer heat and humidity with season-long blooms and growth to just over 1' tall. (Proven Winners)

Pennisetum Graceful Grasses® series. Fireworks® This extremely showy, smaller grass boasts bright variegation of cream, pink, burgundy and green with the typical foxtail plumes of other pennisetums. **Vertigo®** The broad, burgundy blades of this tall grass (to 5' tall) provide a wonderful foliage contrast to neighboring flowers and also a nice sense of motion whenever there is a light breeze. (Proven Winners)

Petunia Supertunia® series (Flamingo, Orchid Charm, Pink Charm, Vista Silverberry) Many of our trialed petunias suffered from the season's excessive rainfall, but the varieties in this series were uniformly lush and

floriferous. (Proven Winners)

Torenia Catalina® series (**Midnight Blue** and **Pink**) These vegetative cultivars were covered in bright blooms throughout the summer. Low-growing plants formed a dense carpet. (Proven Winners)

Verbena Superbena® **Royale Iced Chambray** Many of our trialed verbenas suffered from the season's excessive rainfall, but this cultivar boasted numerous attractive blooms on consistent spreading plants. (Proven Winners)

Zinnia 'Zahara' series (**Cherry, Double Cherry, Double Fire**) The vibrant blooms of each variety in the series commanded attention. Numerous blooms on mounding plants that can grow to more than 1 ½' tall. (PanAmerican) **'Profusion Double Hot Cherry'** As with the Zahara varieties, this cultivar offered numerous vibrant blooms on mounding plants. (AAS Winners/Fleuroselect)

Top Perennials for 2013

Dasyliirion wheeleri – Common Sotol, Desert Spoon. An outstanding drought tolerant ornamental accent plant that cannot be overlooked. Quite tolerant to the extremes of weather whether it be dry to moist or hot to cold. Not easy to find. Would likely have to be mail-ordered. Hardy zone 6b to 10. Grows up to 4' tall and just as wide.

Dendranthema 'Fireworks Igloo' - 'Fireworks Igloo' Hardy Mum. What a standout for a mum in our trials. A perfect mound of flowers. These tidy deer resistant and butterfly attracting perennials will bloom in June and then again in September. The flowers last well into frost. Unlike other garden mums, these are hardy and will return year after year! Their domed habit creates a mound of 2' tall by 2.5' wide. Mass them in mixed borders with ornamental grasses, asters and stonecrops. In containers they look handsome when accessorized with a variety of gourds and small pumpkins.

Echinacea 'Cheyenne Spirit' Beautiful mix of warm color shades on sturdy plants. (AAS Winner/Fleuroselect) and **'PowWow Wildberry'** Bright magenta blooms on sturdy consistent plants. (AAS Winner)

Echinacea 'Southern Bell' - 'Southern Bell' Coneflower. A double-flowered coneflower that has performed great in our trials for three years now. It has a lot of *E. tennesensis* in it giving floriferous and a super long blooming period. The color saturation on each bloom of Southern Belle is quite unbelievable. The blooms of Southern Belle resemble a fancy party skirt and they last for weeks before fading to a softer pink. The blooming period of this plant may very well be the longest of any hybrid introduced yet. Grows 2'-3' tall and just as wide. Flowers may become top heavy and need a bit of support.

Gaillardia 'Mesa Yellow' Provided non-stop masses of large blooms in bright yellow on mounding plants that reached almost 1 ½' tall. (AAS Winner/Fleuroselect)

Gaura 'Sparkle White' Profuse wands of white blooms on compact plants. (AAS Winner/Fleuroselect)

Geranium 'Azure Rush' A first year perennial that really stepped up. Bright violet-blue blooms graced groundhugging plants. (Blooms of Bressingham)

***Hibiscus* 'Brandy Punch' and 'Peppermint Schnapps'** Showstoppers in the garden, both varieties boast enormous blooms, deep pink in the case of 'Brandy Punch' and white with pink streaks for 'Peppermint Schnapps'. Large leaves complete the tropical look. Both reached 3-4 feet in height in their second year of trialing. (Blooms of Bressingham)

***Rudbeckia subtomentosa* 'Little Henry' - 'Little Henry' Sweet Coneflower.** This distinctive selection is a narrow, upright compact grower with strong branching stems and attractive green foliage topped off with charming, brown-eyed daisies that have unusual narrow or quilled yellow petals, appearing midsummer. Similar to *R. 'Henry Eilers'* but one third shorter. Long-blooming. Flowers are attractive to butterflies and excellent for cutting. Grows in a variety of soil conditions from moist to fairly dry. Cut back to the ground in early spring. shorter and less likely to fall over than older cultivar 'Henry Eilers'.

Top Roses 2013

California Dreamin™ Hybrid Tea – Huge blooms up to 5” across and a lovely pink and white bi-color make this hybrid tea a winner. The cream center blends flawlessly to the pink edges. It also has a strong, citrus fragrance. If dead-headed in a timely manner this rose blooms in flushes throughout the season. Introduced in 209 by Conard-Pyle, this rose was bred by Jaques Mouchette of France.

Livin' Easy™ Floribunda – Double blooms and a beautiful apricot- orange color make this rose an outstanding choice for any garden. A repeat bloomer with dark green foliage, this rose also exhibits good black spot disease resistance.

Sentimental™ Floribunda - Rich burgundy with irregular white stripes make this a unique addition to any garden. One of our perennial favorites this rose has a strong fragrance as its name implies. Has so many petals per bloom it is reminiscent of old fashioned roses.

Sweet Drift® - Drift roses are a cross between groundcover roses and miniatures and are a great choice for small gardens, border plants, or mass plantings. Sweet Drift has clear pink double flowers on dark green, glossy foliage with abundant, continuous flowering and outstanding disease resistance.

Tahitian Treasure™- Rosa 'Radtresure' – A brand new rose from Star Roses, this is a breakthrough in breeding as it is a grandiflora that performs like a landscape rose. Tried as a potential introduction in the UT Garden, we have had our eye on this rose for a couple of years. It is truly amazing, and we're excited it has been introduced to the market. Outstanding re-blooming, beautiful rich pink color, great flowering density, good growth habit, and very disease resistant. This rose has it all.

Top Edibles for 2013

***Basella rubra* (Red Malabar spinach)** Pretty hot pink stems and fresh sturdy green leaves look lush all summer long. Leaves are mild tasting, slightly reminiscent of spinach but without the bite. Good fresh in salads, for snacking in the garden, and for stir-fry (do not overcook).

***Curcuma longa* (Turmeric)** Boasts attractive tropical-looking foliage with edible white flowers. Good performance in the high temps of late summer. The root has strong medicinal value as an anti-inflammatory.

Good for curries, teas and eating raw as medicine. For winter storage bring in a section of root and store it in a cool dry dark place, then simply throw it in the soil in late spring.

Cucumber 'Alibi' Produced lots of tasty small/medium cukes through a long season. Showed much greater resistance to powdery mildew than other varieties that were planted - all others died out, but this one did not.

Purple podded pole beans The deep purple podded beans had great ornamental appeal. Highly productive and tasty at all stages of development. Second planting in mid-summer continued producing until late October.

Sweet bell pepper 'Orange Blaze' Heavy production of peppers that turned orange relatively early in the season, unlike the red bells. No disease problems. Although some fruits were damaged by stink bugs, the high quantity of fruits meant that there were enough for the stink bugs to eat some and still end up with a good amount of unblemished peppers. Good flavor and thick flesh.

Top trees and shrubs for 2013

***Cercis canadensis* 'JNJ' - The Rising Sun™ Eastern Redbud.** The most brilliantly colored selection of the Redbud yet, this brand-new introduction offers spring foliage of deep apricot-orange, maturing to yellow and then speckled lime-green in summer, only to return to its rich golden tones for autumn. Abundant rosy-orchid blooms and vigorous that's reported to have a more compact growth habit though ultimate height is unknown as it may be a slow grower. Tolerant of light shade, it is very adaptable and easy to grow. Introduced by Ray Jackson of Jackson Nursery in Tennessee. Zones 5-9.

***Chaenomeles* Double Take™ Series - Japanese Quince.** This unique quince is thornless! It also features flowers which contain higher petal counts and resemble camellias more than classic quince. The deciduous shrub flowers before leaves appear, creating an eye-catching contrast of colorful blooms on bare wood which occasionally bloom again and again. Available in three flower colors - red, pink and orange hues. Cold hardy to zones 5-8 and likes part to full sun. It blooms February through April, depending on climate conditions.

***Hydrangea paniculata* Royal Majestics® - Baby Lace® Panicle Hydrangea.** A dwarf panicle hydrangea that is covered in petite, lacy white blooms against dark green foliage. Its smaller size of 4' by 4' makes it perfect for container plantings and small gardens. It makes a wonderful cut flower and dries beautifully for long lasting arrangements. Flowers later than 'Little Lime' extending the season for a "dwarf" and seems to have stronger stems.

***Juniperus conferta* 'All Gold' - All Gold Shore Juniper.** We've all known Shore Juniper for years...durable, good green or blue, salt tolerant, and drought tolerant. This selection is one better....bright yellow but just as tough and useful as the blue or green. Thrives in full sun and great in a container or used in the foreground of a landscape or as a groundcover. Excellent winter interest! Grows to 1' tall and can get 4-6' wide.

***Loropetalum chinense* var. *rubrum* 'Zhuzhou Fuchsia' - Chinese Fringe-flower.** A very dark cultivar with beautiful, persistent maroon foliage. An upright plant that could prove to be among the largest of the cultivars, easily reaching 15' tall. Flowers are deep pink. Wonderful in a mixed background border. Can be used for screening or as a standard or espaliered. Planting in spring is recommended.

***Magnolia grandiflora* 'Southern Charm' Teddy Bear® - Teddy Bear® Southern Magnolia.** Grows to a mature height of 20' x 12' spread with a compact upright habit. Its glossy green leaves are heavily felted and rust-colored on the reverse. Large lemon-scented white blooms prevail from May to November.

***Taxodium distichum* 'Peve Minaret' - Peve Minaret Baldcypress.** Our native baldcypress, *Taxodium distichum*, is one of our favorite plants at the UT Gardens. Our plants have flourished and the one at the Knoxville Garden is now about 20+' tall. Obviously it has not read any of the descriptions that still say it only grows to 6 feet tall in 10 years. At any rate, it is certainly much smaller than the species with a delightfully distinct texture and habit. The feathery, mint-green branchlets are held on somewhat upright branches in dense tufts. In fall these branchlets turn brilliant orange-russet and eventually drop revealing the densely branched form of this selection Which take pruning well after this foliage drop. It can be grown in dry soils once established but prefers rich, moist spots and can even be grown in a container in water that just covers the pot.

***Ulmus americana* 'Valley Forge' - Valley Forge American Elm.** A Dutch elm disease (DED) tolerant selection introduced by USDA. High levels of DED tolerance and superior horticultural characteristics including tolerance to air pollution, drought and poor soil conditions make this cultivar an ideal tree for the urban landscape. 'Valley Forge' presents a new opportunity to plant an old American favorite. Plant history. Plant a disease-tolerant American elm! Grows 26' tall by 30' wide. Growth habit is upright, arching, broadly vase-shaped with full, dense leaf canopy. Bright yellow fall foliage. Adaptable to a wide variety of soil conditions. American elms tolerate deicing salts, drought, poor soil conditions, air pollution and range of pH's.



Events to look forward to in 2014:

April 5, 9 a.m. – 2 p.m. Spring Spectacular Plant Sale - Knoxville

May 3, 7 a.m. – noon , Master Gardener Plant Sale - Jackson

May 10-11, 9 a.m. – 5 p.m., Blooms Days Garden Festival and Marketplace – Knoxville

May 17, Plateau Discovery Garden Plant Sale - Crossville

July 10, 9 a.m. – Summer Celebration – Jackson

Aug 5, Steak and Potatoes Field Day - Crossville

August 26, 9 a.m. – Fall Gardeners' Festival - Crossville