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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Dr. Sue Hamilton, director
James Newburn, assistant director
Jason Reeves, Jackson research horticulturist
Bobby Cook, assistant curator
Beth Willis, trial & volunteer coordinator
Carol Reese, UT Extension Western Region ornamental horticulture specialist
Andy Pulte, plant propagator and plant sale coordinator

STUDENT INTERNS
Ben Ford, Beall Family Rose Garden
Julie Jones, Knoxville Garden Club
Shianne Kaina, HGTV
Daniel Moriarty, Beall Family Rose Garden
Drew Patrick, Garden
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COVER Small wax particles scatter light, giving Picea pungens (blue spruce) its powdery blue color.
Photograph by Dr. Alan S. Heilman, University of Tennessee botany professor.
It's been an exciting spring and summer at the UT Gardens. From a new internship program, to great events, to wild weather, it's been a whirlwind year so far.

First, our new student internship partnership with Home and Garden Television (HGTV) and Scripps Networks is off to a great start. The HGTV UT Gardens Internship provides funds and hands-on experience not only to work in and learn from the UT Gardens but also on the grounds at the HGTV home studios in West Knoxville. I’m excited about this new venture and the incredible learning experiences it offers to our students and visitors and to the Scripps headquarters.

We had a tremendous loss in the spring with the departure of our wonderful garden educator, Emily Smith. However, thanks to several talented folks, we were able to provide the majority of educational classes and programs that Miss Emily had planned. I’d like to give a special thanks to Katheryne Nix who oversaw the successful Books and Blooms program this summer. Thanks as well to Ben Ford, one of our Beall Family Rose Garden interns, who oversaw and taught the children’s programs. And thanks to the talented Kim Ford, a 20-year veteran teacher, we were able to offer our Discovery Camps throughout the summer. I appreciate the time, effort and passion all three put into teaching and inspiring our program participants.

In June, we hit a home run with our hydrangea symposium and sale. Keynote speakers from the National Arboretum and Wilkerson Mill Nursery in Georgia touched on new hydrangea selections, and discussed how to grow and prune a variety of hydrangea species. Watch for details for next year’s symposium, which will focus on the edible landscape. Summer Celebration at the Jackson Gardens and Blooms Days in Knoxville were both great successes, too.

The weather definitely left its mark on the Jackson and Knoxville Gardens. The Knoxville Gardens lost 19 large trees during severe spring storms. Fortunately, no one was injured, and we had no structural damage. So, we made lemonade out of our tragedy, planted new selections, and took the opportunity for our students to learn about arboriculture and chainsaw safety. I appreciate Sam Adams and Cortese Tree Specialists, who instructed our students in these specialty topics. I want to thank our volunteers, too. Our staff was overwhelmed by the outpouring of volunteers who helped with storm damage cleanup to ensure the Gardens were ready for Blooms Days. The Jackson Gardens didn’t suffer storm damage, but it did endure serious heat and drought this past summer, testing the survival of its plants.

All in all, the Gardens enjoyed a great spring and summer. I hope you enjoy this issue of our Gardens magazine and can use the sound horticultural information we have assembled from our great staff of experts. I appreciate and thank you for your continued support as a friend, sponsor, volunteer and advocate of the Gardens. I hope to see you in the Gardens!

Dr. Sue Hamilton
Director, UT Gardens
Fall Brings Harvest

By Fiona McAnally, public horticulture graduate student
The end of summer doesn’t have to mean the end of fresh garden vegetables. Hot, humid summers that give way to cooler temperatures can make vegetable gardening during “shoulder” seasons very appealing.

Most of the cool-season vegetables that are planted in the spring can be revisited in fall, and a few summer vegetables can survive late plantings. Many cool-season vegetables can be directly seeded into the garden, but transplants are available at most garden centers. Check ahead and find out when fall transplants will be available since quantities are usually limited and will sell quickly. Some garden centers will have seed available for fall vegetables, but there are many additional resources available online.

The average fall frost date for Tennessee is around mid-October, so late summer and early fall are not too late to begin many vegetables and a new round of herbs such as parsley.

**Chard Sauté**

By Joan Worley, Blount County Master Gardener

This wonderful chard dish is quick and easy to make. Serve as a side dish, or as a main course over butternut squash ravioli or your choice of grains or pasta.

**INGREDIENTS:**
- 1-2 pieces thick-sliced, hickory-smoked bacon
- 1 medium onion
- 1 large red bell pepper
- 1 bunch Swiss chard (about 4-6 cups, roughly chopped into big pieces)
- 2-3 teaspoons Balsamic vinegar

**OPTIONAL INGREDIENTS:**
- salt
- pepper

Quarter and slice onion, and slice red pepper into medium-size chunks. Chop chard stems into 1-inch pieces. Set aside onion, pepper and stems.

Cut bacon into ½-inch to 1-inch pieces or lardons. Sauté in 10-inch skillet. Cook 1-2 minutes, then add onion, red pepper and chard stems. Sauté combined ingredients 2-3 minutes. Add pepper. (Salt will probably not be needed, with the bacon.) Then add chard leaves, broken or chopped roughly. Sauté a minute more, or until chard begins to lose its crisp appearance. Remove ingredients from pan. Drain on paper towel if desired, then plate.

Drizzle 1 teaspoon of Balsamic vinegar over each plated portion.

Yield: 2-3 servings

**Fresh greens** will continue to produce through the winter and can be direct seeded into the garden. While lettuces are tender and will diminish quickly with cooler weather, spinach and arugula are hardier and will continue to make fresh greens well into cool temperatures. Swiss chard, collard greens, mustard greens and kale will produce into early winter and can be sautéed or cooked in a variety of ways.

**Brassicas** thrive in cooler temperatures and most of them (such as cabbages) have varieties best suited to autumn. Bok choy and kohlrabi are gaining popularity in Southern gardens and can be used in a variety of dishes.

**Root vegetables** work well in Tennessee gardens in the fall due to cooler temperatures and rare hard freezes. Turnips were a staple to earlier generations and add flavor to stews in place of potatoes. Radishes germinate and ripen quickly and alternatives to raw should be considered such as roasting. Beet varieties that have done well at the UT Gardens include ‘Detroit Dark Red’ and ‘Bull’s Blood.’

is also the time to transplant garlic bulbs in your garden, clean up the end of the summer crops, and begin planning for spring. If you are worn out from fighting drought and weeds this summer and can’t envision a fall planting, remember that most local farmers markets will continue through the fall season and will have a variety of produce available.
When most people think perennial vine, perhaps the first plant to come to mind is the overly enthusiastic Chinese wisteria, but there are many that are well behaved.

Vines are many times the forgotten plants. Yet, their climbing habit adds significant dimension to the garden. Just as the lawn and ground covers are considered the floor of the garden and trees and shrubs are the walls and ceilings, vines are the drapes and swags. They can soften and enhance or hide and disguise architectural features. Vines can form a quick screen or extend limited garden space. Their unique foliage, flowers or fruit can move the focal point above eye level, adding considerable interest to the garden.

The following is the first in a two-part series of my favorite vines that you may wish to consider adding to you garden.
This form of our native Virginia creeper produces leaves that are each uniquely variegated. Some appear splashed while others are mottled or striped in creamy white. Foliage color is best in dappled shade or morning sun. This form is not as vigorous as the solid green found in the wild, but it can still cover a large area. It clings to most anything using gripping holdfasts. A friend of mine grows it beautifully on her masonry house near the door where its beauty takes visitors by surprise. Each year she cuts it down near the ground to prevent it from reaching the roof and to keep it full and dense from the ground up. If you’re looking for a maintenance-free vine, plant it at the base of a large tree and you won’t have to cut it back. ‘Monham’ may be a little difficult to find but well worth the hunt. Hardy to zone 4.

With the lovely pewter mottling on each heart-shaped leaf, ‘Moonlight’ is attractive from spring until fall when it loses its leaves. In midsummer, large shimmering lacy heads of fragrant flowers form along the stems. The flowers look very much like those of a white lacecap hydrangea. Considered a slow to medium grower, but when compared to the true hydrangea vine *Hydrangea anomala* ssp. *Petiolaris*, it grows fast and blooms at a young age. ‘Moonlight’ performs best when sited in a partially shaded or dappled sunlight location with fertile, moist, well-drained soil. It clings easily to masonry or wood, but is most charming scrambling up a large tree, clinging fast to the bark, but doing no harm. Hardy to zones 5-9.

Trumpet honeysuckle is a twining deciduous to semi-evergreen vine native to the Southeastern United States. It typically blooms in spring, drawing some of the first hummingbirds of the season. The 1- to 2-inch-long unscented orange-red to red trumpet-shaped flowers are produced in terminal whorls. The inside of the flowers is yellow to yellow-orange with long stamens that hang like earrings. New growth is reddish purple, maturing to a bluish green. Trumpet honeysuckle is easily grown in moist well-drained, average garden soil in full sun to part shade. Though(36,598),(556,894) more floriferous in full sun, it will appreciate a little afternoon shade in the sizzling South. It needs support and can mature to 10 to 15 feet if the structure allows. With age, its lower extremities can become bare. A hard pruning will force dense growth from the base. Mildew and leaf spots may occur on the foliage—particularly in hot, humid summer climates—but are not life threatening. A location with good air flow will aid in prevention. Aphids can sometimes be a problem on new growth in the spring. Hardy in zones 4-9.
The UT Gardens in Jackson and Knoxville have had a busy season since the last issue of this magazine. In keeping with UT’s missions of teaching, research and outreach, both Gardens have hosted many activities that help us reach those goals.
1. The season started off with severe storms in Knoxville. Nineteen trees were uprooted and many more plants were damaged by wind, hail and falling trees from a series of storms in April and May. Staff member Bobby Cook stands next to a large nutall oak that fell and took out a beautiful European hornbeam behind it. Lots of clean-up took place with staff, professional tree services, and many volunteers.

2. Each year the Blooms Days Garden Festival and Marketplace in Knoxville and Summer Celebration in Jackson attract thousands of visitors. Always great fun for all participants, there are vendors, informative lectures, plants for sale, music and food.

3. UT Gardens, Knoxville, held its first weekly Farmers Market this year from May through October. Local, farm-fresh produce, baked goods, plants and dairy products were available. UT’s own organic market farm had student interns growing vegetables to sell. Pictured are UT President Joe DiPietro and his wife, Deb, checking out the available produce.

4. With roughly 300 herbaceous ornamental plant trials on display, the UT Gardens are a great place to see the newest cultivars, including some as yet unnamed, which are being developed around the world for improved growth habit, disease resistance, and color. The results of our evaluations help determine what may be on the market in the coming years. Dr. Sue Hamilton is seen here discussing some of the new introductions.

5. It’s never too early to develop an interest in gardening and the UT Gardens, Knoxville, encourages that through many programs designed for children. All day summer camps, children’s workshops, and our Books and Blooms nature story time are just some of the activities that nourish the future stewards of the Earth. Little chefs seen here are picking cherry tomatoes for the fresh salad they are going to prepare.

6. The UT Gardens works cooperatively with horticulture, nursery and landscape professionals across the state. They lend their support through a variety of in-kind, sponsorship, research funding and other donations. The UT Gardens provides training on and off site on a variety of topics to disseminate research findings and best practices information. The Tennessee Nursery and Landscape Association held its summer field day at UT Gardens, Knoxville. Seen here are Dr. Amy Fulcher and Dr. Bill Klingeman explaining their latest nursery research.

7. UT hosts many summer camps to promote learning, reward and encourage high school students from across the state. These camps can last from a couple of days to several weeks. Whether they are 4-H campers, promising inner-city students, or college-bound students from rural counties, the UT Gardens often provides service-learning projects for these groups. This group of Anderson County students in the Upward Bound program made rain barrels that will be sold throughout the year to support the gardens.

8. Our student interns gain valuable experience by working in the UT Gardens. Along with garden volunteers and staff, they are the primary human resource for maintenance in the gardens. But their education goes beyond the sweat and toil in the heat of summer. This year the student interns took a trip to the Biltmore Gardens and the North Carolina Arboretum in Asheville for “backstage” tours of these outstanding public garden institutions.
The writer Vita Sackville-West (1892-1962) is probably most famous in the U.S. for two things: her relationship with Virginia Woolf and her White Garden, one of 10 garden rooms at Sissinghurst, the dilapidated castle in Kent, England, that she and her husband, Harold Nicolson, bought in 1930. Comparatively few people know that she wrote a weekly gardening column for the newspaper The Observer from 1947-1961. Vita’s unusual, perhaps outrageous life story has been told in several biographies to date, and so, too, the story of house and garden: Adam Nicolson’s “Sissinghurst: An Unfinished History” is the latest of at least 10 Sissinghurst books. The book jacket of the American edition (New York: Viking, 2010) has an epigraph under the title— “The Quest to Restore a Working Farm at Vita Sackville-West’s Legendary Garden.”

The return to traditional farming is but one of several major themes in the book. Adam Nicolson, grandson of VSW, lived at Sissinghurst as a child and returned to live there with his family in 2004, when his father, Nigel Nicolson, fell ill. Nigel gave Sissinghurst to the National Trust in 1962 when Vita died, in lieu of death duties he could not pay; the Nicolsons live there now as a “donor family.”

Today Sissinghurst is the most visited of all the National Trust properties, chiefly for its garden. “Although the garden had been open to the public since 1938, it wasn’t treated with the sense of exquisite preciousness it is today.” And there is no Vita there digging plants up, on the spot, to give to visitors, leaving holes that made the garden homey, if a bit untidy, in her day.

Within a few months of his return, Adam realized that farming at Sissinghurst, then part of a global industrialized agriculture, could return to some semblance of traditional farming, raising food for Sissinghurst’s public restaurant. It took him three years to convince the trust that the scheme might work, and the self-sufficient restaurant idea was given a five-year trial period, until 2012.

This book is the fruit of the author’s love of place—the land, the people, the castle and the garden. It is part memoir of a bucolic boyhood, part homage to his grandparents, and part paean to the ancient land. In essence, it is a book of histories: of his own and other families connected with the 500-year-old “Cessyngherst;” of farming as practiced then and now in Kent; of the castle and lands pertaining thereto; and of his more recent adventures dealing with the National Trust, England’s premier conservation society, founded in 1895. The author comes of generations of writers, and he unites these into one seamless tapestry, a first-person story of his life as it connects to Sissinghurst. It’s a tale well told, a study in one man’s response to change. Maybe you can go home again.
Fall and winter are exciting times in the life of a garden. Join us for a variety of educational programs and special events that explore the natural world around us.

This fall we will begin Home Grown, our new home-school series. This monthly enrichment program is designed to teach your home-schoolers about science, social studies and other school-related topics.

In addition to Home Grown, we are excited to continue the Garden Sprouts, Garden Buds and Grandkids Growing series. Spend time with your children and grandchildren and enjoy nature. We are also introducing Growing Together, our family garden series.

The garden encompasses every part of our lives—science, nutrition, education, physical activity. We hope to partner with other local organizations to continue to expand the reach of the Gardens and illustrate how interconnected gardening is with your everyday life.

For more information, call 865-974-7151 or email utgardens@utk.edu.

### Home Grown Series

These fun and educational activities are designed to enrich lesson plans for your home-schoolers.

Cost is $50 per child for the entire series of six classes or $10 per child per class.

All classes are scheduled for 1:30-4 p.m. on the second Thursday of the month.

#### Why Do They Call It Fall?

**November 10**

This session will explore the reason why leaves fall in the fall. Learn about the changing seasons and how plants and animals prepare for winter.

#### Fine Feathered Friends

**December 8**

Even in winter you can find birds and other creatures in and around the Gardens. This session will explore some of the native birds in the East Tennessee area. Learn how to identify birds by their feathers and their sounds, then build a birdfeeder so you can observe these fine feathered friends throughout the year.

#### Sleepy Time in the Gardens

**January 12**

Shh … it’s sleepy time in the Gardens! See what creatures and plants are taking a long nap during the cold winter months. Learn what hibernation is and how it helps animals survive cold weather.

#### Rain, Rain Go Away!

**February 9**

Learn what makes rain, wind and other weather. This activity will cover how clouds form and other fun facts about weather. Come prepared to get out in the weather as we take a walk through the Gardens on this cold winter day.

#### Can You Dig It?

**March 8**

This session will focus on learning how something as small as a seed can turn into a giant tree. Learn the parts of plants and the amazing life cycle of a seed. We will take a look at our vegetable garden. This activity will also include a fun craft that you can take home and plant in your garden.

#### The Gardens Are ABUZZ!

**April 12**

Why are flowers so colorful? How do we get such great tasting fruits and vegetables from plants? What is honey made of? This session will explore the exciting world of pollination and how bees and other critters help plants survive. We will also be looking at how honey is made and why it tastes so good.
NINTH ANNUAL PUMPKIN HARVEST DISPLAY
UT Gardens, Jackson
Through Sunday, November 27
Open daily from sunrise to sunset. This breathtaking display features more than 5,000 pumpkins, gourds and squash in what is believed to be the largest pumpkin display in the South. Beautiful backdrop for fall photos. Free admission.

ADULT WORKSHOP: HARVEST COOKING
Saturday, November 12
2-4 p.m.
Come and see what’s cooking in the Gardens. Learn how to take the fall harvest and prepare it to last through the winter. Gather a few ideas about what to cook with the things that you worked so hard to produce this year.
$10/member, $14/nonmember (or free with the Gobble in the Gardens entry fee)

GROWING TOGETHER: Gobble in the Gardens
Saturday, November 12
1-4 p.m.
Don’t be a turkey and miss out on this fun-filled family event! Come relax in the gardens before the start of the busy holiday season. Learn about the history behind the first Thanksgiving. Create your own cornucopia to decorate your holiday table. Enjoy a twist on some traditional culinary creations at a cooking seminar. Learn how to keep the kids busy while the turkey is in the oven. Finally, create a thankful tree. This project makes a wonderful annual tradition that your family can really grow into.
$20/member family,
$25/nonmember family.

ADULT WORKSHOP: DECK THE HALLS
Saturday, December 3
2-4 p.m.
Join us for our annual wreath-making event. Create a beautiful holiday wreath for your front door or mantel using evergreens, holly, berries and other winter and holiday materials.

GARDEN BUDS: HOLIDAY CARDS
Friday, December 9, or Saturday, December 10
10-11:30 a.m.
Do you have lots of tissue paper left over from last year’s holiday season? Come to this fun class as we reuse the tissue paper to make textured envelopes. We will also recycle holiday cards for you to take home and give to your friends and family. This program is designed for children ages 3 to 5 and one accompanying adult.
$10/member, $14/nonmember

GRANDKIDS GROWING: GINGERBREAD DECORATING
Saturday, December 10
2-4 p.m.
Let’s make a cookie from a root! Learn how a little root can pack so many flavors into our favorite holiday cookies. See how other plants are also used in the foods we eat. Enjoy a gingerbread cookie to eat and decorate one to take home and hang on your tree.
$10/member, $14/nonmember

GROWING TOGETHER: SANTA HUNT
Saturday, December 17
2-4 p.m.
Visit the Holiday Express and learn what happens at the Gardens during winter. Take part in our first-ever Santa hunt. Follow the clues left by Santa’s elves and go on a search for Santa hiding in the Gardens. Hot chocolate and prizes will be available for the best Santa hunters around.
$10/member, $14/nonmember
(Price includes entrance to the Holiday Express.)

GRANDKIDS GROWING: WAKE UP, WAKE UP, SLEEPYHEAD!
Saturday, January 28
2-4 p.m.
Bring your grandkids for storytime and explore the Gardens in winter. See what critters are sleeping and learn how plants and animals survive the East Tennessee winters. Learn what adaptations plants make to live and grow again another day.
$10/member, $14/nonmember

GARDEN BUDS: WHO GROWS THERE?
Saturday, January 21
2-4 p.m.
Winter is the perfect time to start seeds indoors! Discover how a tiny seed can grow into a big plant. Explore the smallest to the largest seed, and learn what seeds need to grow. Garden Buds will plant their own flat of seeds to grow at home. This program is designed for children ages 6 to 9.
$10/member, $14/nonmember

GARDEN SPROUTS: WINTER COATS
Friday, February 10, or Saturday, February 11
10-11:30 a.m.
Put on your winter coat and visit the Gardens to learn what plants and animals have their own winter coats. Lean why some trees stay green year round, while others lose their leaves. See what evergreens are growing in the Gardens. Discover how animals stay warm in the winter. This program is designed for children ages 3 to 5 and one accompanying adult.
$10/member, $14/nonmember
FEB '12

GROWING TOGETHER:
ROSES ARE RED
Saturday, February 11
2-4 p.m.
Celebrate the season of love with the ones you love. Learn why roses are the choice flower for Valentine’s Day, and make a fun floral arrangement for the entire family to take home and enjoy. Materials will be included.
$30/member family, $35/nonmember family

GARDEN BUDS:
WINTER WONDERLAND
Saturday, February 25
10-11:30 a.m.
Fight cabin fever by getting outside at the Gardens. Enjoy a wintertime story. Take a walk in the Gardens to explore the wonders of winter. Sit back and enjoy a nice hot chocolate. Learn how snowflakes are created and craft a snowflake of your own to take home. This program is designed for children ages 6 to 9.
$10/member, $14/nonmember

ADULT WORKSHOP:
COMPOSTING
Saturday, February 25
2-4 p.m.
This workshop teaches basics of composting. Learn what to put in your compost bin and what to leave out, how to maintain your bin, and what to do with that nutrient-rich compost once it’s finished cooking. This workshop will also give you some basic building plans and tips for creating your home compost bin.
$10/member, $14/nonmember

MARCH '12

GARDEN SPROUTS:
COLOR HUNT
Friday, March 9, or Saturday, March 10
10-11:30 a.m.
This activity teaches you why colors are so important for plants and animals. We will learn the colors of the Gardens and then go on a color hunt ourselves. This program is designed for children ages 3 to 5 and one accompanying adult.
$10/member, $14/nonmember

ADULT WORKSHOP:
MINIGARDENING
Saturday March 10
2-4 p.m.
Short on space? No problem! This workshop will explore using containers to grow vegetables. See how to plant some of your favorite veggies in 5-gallon buckets and other containers. Materials will be provided.
$20/member, $25/nonmember

GRANDKIDS GROWING:
ART IN THE GARDENS
Saturday, March 17
2-4 p.m.
This activity will give grandkids a chance to observe the gardens as spring nears. Grandkids can paint a picture for grandparents to take home and display on the fridge.
$10/member, $14/nonmember

GARDEN BUDS:
FROGS, BUGS, BIRDS, OH MY!
Saturday March 24
10-11:30 a.m.
As spring is in the air, come and see all the critters waking up and enjoying the warmer weather in the Gardens. Learn about the life cycle of frogs, and see what bugs and birds are up to. This program is designed for children ages 6 to 9.
$10/member, $14/nonmember

APR '12

GARDEN SPROUTS:
RAIN RAIN DON’T GO AWAY!
Saturday, March 24
2-4 p.m.
Rain is a vital part of a garden. With this program you will learn ways to conserve water and keep those plants hydrated. You also will build your very own rain barrel to collect that valuable water to use on a dry day.
$30/member family, $35/nonmember family

ADULT WORKSHOP:
PLANTING FOR PLEASURE
Saturday, April 7
2-4 p.m.
This workshop will give you lots of ideas to attract butterflies and birds to your garden. See which plants bring butterflies. Learn what flowers hummingbirds like to snack on. These tips and lessons will give you plenty of planting ideas to attract the most colorful and friendly garden friends this summer.
$10/member, $14/nonmember

MAY '12

HYDRANGEA SYMPOSIUM
UT Gardens, Jackson
Saturday, June 2
8 a.m.-5 p.m.
A hydrangea lover’s dream come true! A full day of hydrangea workshops, guided tours of the UT Gardens, Jackson, and a special plant sale featuring more than 30 cultivars of hydrangeas. Plus, visitors will get to tour three rarely seen private gardens containing more than 70 cultivars of hydrangeas. For more information, including cost, visit http://west.tennessee.edu.
In each issue of our Gardens magazine we share favorite “horticultural hot spots” that you must check out. Following are four hot spots worthy of a road trip this gardening season.

Stanley’s Greenhouses & Plant Farm
Location: 3029 Davenport Road, Knoxville, Tennessee 37920
Contact: Lisa Stanley, info@stanleysgreenhouses.com, 865-573-9591
http://stanleysgreenhouses.com

This is one of my favorite garden centers in the Knoxville area. I love horticulture and history, and you’ll find both with Stanley’s Greenhouses. Located five minutes from downtown in South Knoxville, three generations of the Davenport-Stanley family continue traditions on land once called the Davenport Farm. A portion of the land was deeded to the family by Tennessee Governor William Blount’s half-brother, Willie Blount, in the early 1800s. Jump forward to today and Stanley’s has more than 190,000 square feet in greenhouse production where they produce more than 60 percent of the plants they retail—making your plant purchases tax free. I love to shop at Stanley’s because you are always assured a great selection of new and top-performing cultivars. Whether you’re looking for the most unusual annuals to use in a summer container, vibrant-colored pansies for your fall landscape, or an incredible assortment of poinsettia varieties for the holidays, you’ll find it at Stanley’s. They also have a great selection of garden accent, pottery and novelty pieces as well. —Faye Beck

Signal Mountain Nursery
Location: 1100 Hubbard Road, Signal Mountain, Tennessee 37377
Contact: David and Laurel Steele, laurel.steele@signalmtnnursery.com, 423-886-3174
www.signalmtnnursery.com

If you’ve never been to this nursery, you are missing out. First off, it’s cooler in the summer by at least 10 degrees than the lower Chattanooga elevation. Secondly, the view alone from atop Signal Mountain is worth the trip. But add to these every flower and plant imaginable and you have an incredible garden center. It’s pretty cool, too, that this third-generation of horticulturists grow the majority of what they retail. Not only will you find a vast assortment of trees, shrubs, vines, annuals, perennials and herbs, but also a wide assortment of seasonal plants like poinsettias, chrysanthemums and pansies. During my recent visit I was introduced to the new gardening hobby of Fairy Gardening. I’d never seen a Fairy Garden but quickly saw lots of different examples, ideas and accessories to help you indulge this new hobby. Signal Mountain Nursery is a full-service garden center, too, offering services in landscape design, installation, maintenance and hardscapes. I guarantee that this nursery is worth your time for plants and garden accent pieces. —Sue Hamilton

The Dabney Nursery
Location: 5576 Hacks Cross Road, Memphis, Tennessee 38125
Contact: Dabney Turley, sales@thedabneynursery.com, 901-755-4037
www.thedabneynursery.com

The Dabney Nursery is one of my favorite nurseries in the Memphis area for its wide selection of annuals, perennials, trees and shrubs. They grow and sell one of the largest selections of perennials in West Tennessee, including more than 200 cultivars of Hosta. You’ll also find a big selection of camellias, Encore azalea and Japanese maples. With 36 greenhouses and 150 acres, they produce almost everything on site with the exception of some container grown shrubs. Their field-grown trees are grown in West Tennessee clay soil, so they are ready for planting in similar soils. —Jason Reeves

Dixon Gallery & Gardens
Location: 4339 Park Avenue, Memphis, Tennessee 38117
Contact: Dale Skaggs, dskaggs@dixon.org, 901-761-5250
www.dixon.org

I had the opportunity to tour the Dixon Gardens this past summer with their director of horticulture, Dale Skaggs. What a gem of a garden and worth your time to visit! Dale is an impressive horticulturist and landscape architect and, boy, has he got an eye for design. The gardens are not huge and are easily enjoyed over the course of just an hour or so. They are composed of four distinct areas—the South Lawn, Formal Gardens, Cutting Gardens and Woodland Gardens—with each having its own sculptures and accent pieces. Dale has created some amazing and beautiful plant combinations and displays in each area that makes Dixon worth your time. Hugo Dixon left to his community his home and a landscaped garden created in an urban forest. Today the Dixon strives to maintain that same urban forest while presenting a garden for everyone’s enjoyment. Oh, and if you are into art, you don’t want to miss the gallery either! —Sue Hamilton
One early morning this past summer a bee landed on an unassuming green shrub. She set about her day, moving from flower to flower and carrying baskets of golden pollen. In a short time, her work was done, and she had pollinated many plants. The result: fall and winter displays of beautiful fruit.

Adding a few well-chosen plants to your garden can bring you an extended season of beauty. Additionally, many of the best and most beautiful, heavy-fruiting shrubs can be a boon to wildlife. Two of the best for the fall and winter fruit show are Callicarpa spp. — Beautyberry and Ilex verticillata — Winterberry Holly.
Beautyberry

**Callicarpa spp. – Beautyberry**

Beautyberry is a relaxed looking, open shrub valued for its spectacular fruits. During the growing season, this unassuming beauty keeps mostly to itself until it explodes with colorful fruit as weather cools. Different species of beautyberries (Callicarpa) grow throughout the world, with many calling Asia, North America and Australia home. One of the easiest beautyberries to find commercially is *Callicarpa americana*. Native from Tennessee southward to Texas and across to Florida, this plant is tough and very adaptable to any part of the state.

**Family:** Verbenaceae  
**Genus:** Callicarpa (cal-i-CAR-puh) – In Greek, kallos means beauty, carpos means fruit.

**Size:** In their native habitats, some beautyberries can grow to be small trees. American beautyberry most often grows 3 to 5 feet tall and usually just as wide.

**Culture:** Plant in full sun for optimum fruit production and fall color. Too much shade will inhibit berry production. Grows best in well-drained soil.

**Problems:** Usually trouble-free with only the chance of minor leaf spot. *Callicarpa* can get gangly over time; rejuvenate by pruning low to the ground in late winter.

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**Ilex verticillata – Common Winterberry**

If you are walking through a neighborhood during the late fall and you notice huge groups of red or orange berries, you may have stumbled upon winterberry holly. Spikes of tightly held fruit pressed on bare stems become beacons in the garden. Many people are surprised to find out hollies exist that are not evergreen. But losing your leaves in the winter gives you an advantage. Not having foliage is a great advertisement to hungry birds fighting to put on weight before winter. Feasting birds then deposit seeds elsewhere, giving way to spring promises of new life. Native to the Eastern and Central United States and parts of Canada, winterberry holly is more than worthy of some of your garden real estate.

**Family:** Aquifoliaceae – Holly Family  
**Genus:** Ilex (I-lex)

**Size:** Winterberry holly is a deciduous, multi-stemmed shrub generally 6 feet to 10 feet tall, but it can grow larger. Some smaller cultivars are available.

**Culture:** Winterberry hollies are dioecious, with separate male and female plants. Only female plants will fruit, so you will need at least one male to produce berries. Better nurseries and garden centers should be able to help you pick out the right mix of male and females plants for optimal fruiting.

**Problems:** Chlorosis on high pH soils

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**Other late fall- and winter-fruiting favorites:**

- Crab apples (*Malus* cvs.)
- Bayberry (*Myrica* spp. and cvs.)
- Chokeberry (*Aronia* spp. and cvs.)
- Cotoneaster (*Cotoneaster* spp. and cvs.)
- Heavenly bamboo (*Nandina domestica*)
My mother often said that you didn’t really know a tree until you’d lived under it. I repeat her statement each time I teach a class on woody landscape plants to the Master Gardener interns.

Her point was that sometimes the bad traits aren’t apparent until you’ve spent four seasons under a particular species of tree. Any tree is going to rain a certain amount of detritus throughout the year—after all, it’s a living thing—but some trees are less troublesome than others.

My mother’s favorite tree was the common bald cypress, which is the more proper common name for the beautiful native tree often found in southern swamps. Many people just call them cypress trees, but my need for horticultural precision forces me to clear up any potential for botanical confusion. True cypress belong to the genus Cupressus, while common bald cypress is Taxodium. While both are conifers (cone bearing plants), Cupressus are evergreen, and Taxodium are deciduous. Now that’s clear, for the sake of brevity, I’ll refer to common bald cypress, Taxodium distichum, as cypress for the rest of this column.

It was the deciduous character that won over my mother. She wanted cooling shade on the house in the summer, but the warming sunshine in winter months. In her opinion, the best thing about cypress were the tiny leaves that simply blew away in the fall, or sifted down into the grass, so she never had to rake.
Still, it seems that someone can find fault with any tree. A woman took issue with me, saying that the cypress tree in her yard left enormous drifts of the fine leaves. Upon further questioning, it turned out she had a tiny courtyard style landscape and a truly huge cypress.

Cypress have other endearing qualities. They are long-lived and rarely troubled with disease or insects. Most importantly for homeowners afraid of storm damage from falling trees, cypress are extremely wind firm. The strongly buttressed root system resists throw, and the wood is quite strong. The tree’s growth habit is excurrent, meaning that there is a strong central trunk, with smaller limbs radiating from this trunk. This structure presents less surface to catch the wind, plus these smaller limbs, should they break from the tree, are not likely to cause much damage. Compare this to the large heavy limbs of a mature oak with a decurrent (or deliquescent) growth habit, where there is no dominant central trunk. Sometimes these limbs are massive enough to be extremely damaging when they drop.

You aren’t likely to find cypress on a list of plants for fall color, and it does not flame with bright red, orange or yellow. Still, the foliage turns a warm cinnamon in autumn, with its own rich appeal.

While cypress is found in the wild growing in the shallow waters of swamp, lake or stream, it actually performs better in drier soils, and will not form the “knees” it does in wet areas, which would present obstacles to the lawn mower. In fact, its reputation for being a slow grower has proven undeserved. In good soil and generously watered, the rate of growth will surprise you.
AUTUMN:
THE OTHER SIDE OF SPRING

SHRUBS AND TREES THAT BLOOM LATE IN THE YEAR

By Hugh P. Conlon, UT Extension area specialist (retired)
Autumn is nature’s second spring, when a number of trees and shrubs get their turn to show off. August through October is the natural period to flower and also coincides with a great time for planting. Cropemyrtles (Lagerstroemia x spp.), hydrangeas (Hydrangea spp.), althea (Hibiscus syriacus) and chaste tree (Vitex agnus-castus) dominate the summer landscape, yet several other woodies are readying their opportunity to shine.

Harlequin glorybower (Clerodendron trichotomum) is another demanding 15-foot-tall shrub. It belongs in the hands of a master pruner to repair any winter woes. Most Clerodendron species live in the tropical areas of the world, with the exception of harlequin glorybower. Its northernmost hardiness range happens to be Tennessee (USDA zone 6-b). It’s worth a spot in your garden. From August to October, the 6- to 9-inch-wide, flat, white, panicled flowers and topaz-colored fruits put on quite a show.

Encore Azaleas (Rhododendron x) bloom well in the spring and return for an additional show in September and October. Their autumn flowering habit will have you taking notice. Encores offer quite a color range—UT rated 19 cultivars hardy in Tennessee (USDA zones 6-b and 7). The list can be found at tinyurl.com/44238rn. Their culture is similar to most evergreen azaleas, and lacebugs do not mar the foliage. Two caveats: irrigate Encores during dry summer periods, and fertilize them in late June for summer growth. Cease applying nitrogen containing fertilizers after mid-August.

Chinese flametree (Koelreuteria bipinnata) also blooms in August, a full month later than the more popular golden raintree (K. paniculata). The species is borderline hardy in zone 6 areas of Tennessee. It thrives in the summer heat and humidity of Nashville, Memphis and Chattanooga. Large, dense panicles of small fragrant yellow flowers are terminal on most branches. The showy rose-colored lantern pods soon follow in late September. Flametree is a low-branched, 25-to-30 foot tree.

Franklinia (Franklinia alatamaha) is admittedly a very finicky small tree. It is extinct in nature. Pure white, five-petal flowers appear sporadically from August to October. Franklinia displays a red autumn leaf color that you’ll remember. I’ve learned, through years of trial and error, that franklinia grows best planted with eastern exposure in full morning sun and sheltered from the afternoon sun. Franklinia may not be for you.

Zone 6 hardy camellias (Camellia x) are new shrubs which Tennessee gardeners are becoming acquainted. More than 25 cultivars are fall bloomers that are rated as zone 6 hardy; another dozen bloom from late winter through early spring. The ‘Winter’ series from the U.S. National Arboretum never fails to thrill from mid-October through November. ‘Winter’s Star,’ ‘Winter’s Joy’ and ‘Snow Flurry’ have all performed well in the Tri-Cities region. ‘Cleopatra’ (pink) and ‘Yuletide’ (dark red) are two cultivars rated zone 7 that bloom dependably in the fall. Visit www.usna.usda.gov/Newintro/index.html for an extensive list of hardy camellia bred at the U.S. National Arboretum.

Our American witch hazel (Hamamelis virginiana) is a popcorn floral surprise. Witch hazel blooms for nearly a month while its foliage is turning bright yellow in the cool autumn air. American witch hazel is underutilized, probably because it grows an enormous 25 to 30 feet in height and spread. New compact forms, originally found here in Tennessee, are now marketed as ‘Green Thumb’ at 8 to 10 feet and ‘Little Suzie’ at 6 to 8 feet.

I start with an underutilized favorite, the deciduous plumleaf azalea (Rhododendron prinulatum). It is an Alabama native, but its orangey-red flowers seem more at home in Tennessee. Plumleaf handles our clay and mid-6.0 pH soils quite well. Flower time is nearly two weeks long in a partial sun location. Azalea-philes tell me that red-flowering forms are available for you Crimson Tide fans.

Franklinia (Franklinia alatamaha) is a popcorn floral surprise. Witch hazel blooms for nearly a month while its foliage is turning bright yellow in the cool autumn air. American witch hazel is underutilized, probably because it grows an enormous 25 to 30 feet in height and spread. New compact forms, originally found here in Tennessee, are now marketed as ‘Green Thumb’ at 8 to 10 feet and ‘Little Suzie’ at 6 to 8 feet.
HGTV Partners with UT Gardens

By Tom Looney, director of development

Home and Garden Television (HGTV) and Scripps Networks located in Knoxville, Tennessee, recently committed $25,000 to establish the HGTV UT Gardens Internship Fund, which provides support for public horticulture students working in the UT Gardens. As part of the agreement, HGTV offered to provide a student the opportunity to landscape the grounds at the front entrance to the HGTV home studios on Sherrill Boulevard in West Knoxville. The partnership gives students the opportunity to create state-of-the-art, sustainable garden spaces in two of the most premier learning laboratories in East Tennessee.

This year’s intern, Shianne Kaina, is a junior in public horticulture from Byron, Michigan. She has been splitting time working in the UT Gardens, Knoxville, and at the HGTV home studios gaining real-world experience to complete a project for the nation’s largest network dedicated to home and gardening.

“I have not had a lot of experience landscaping except for working with mom at home,” Kaina said. “This has given me an opportunity to get some real hands-on experience.”

The work she does in the UT Gardens provides valuable insight to her project at the HGTV home studios—particularly the soils, which have shown to be more difficult to get the plant material established and stabilized, Kaina said. “Fellow students and faculty with the UT Gardens have been very helpful.”

And the employees at HGTV have taken notice, Kaina said. “I get to bring the ambience to the area and I can tell they are enjoying the new design when they are sitting outside or looking out the window.”

Kaina also plans to do some gardening writing for HGTV. “There’s not a better name out there than HGTV as far as gardening is concerned, and the contacts and networking have been great for me,” Kaina said.

After graduation Kaina has aspirations to work at a place like the Knoxville Zoo in its horticulture department. “I would love the opportunity to work with plants and animals,” she said.

Sarah Cronan, senior vice president of brand management for HGTV, said she saw this partnership as a way to add to HGTV’s Green LEED certification established by the U.S. Green Building Council, which was achieved when the building was built. Many of the plants used on the grounds of the HGTV home studio require less frequent watering, which results in less water consumption, Cronan said.

The HGTV UT partnership is a first step in providing more student opportunities in public horticulture, Sue Hamilton, director of the UT Gardens said. In the near future, HGTV and the UT Gardens will negotiate phase two that will provide more opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students to design a landscape and gardening plan for HGTV and the UT Gardens and to participate first-hand in the implementation.

“UT has one of only three public horticulture programs in the country and this partnership will help shape the future leaders of this exciting field,” Hamilton said.
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It couldn’t be easier! Come join a fantastic group of people who volunteer their time, energy and enthusiasm (not to mention their expertise) to help out the UT Gardens. Volunteer sessions are held twice each week – Tuesday mornings from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. and Thursday afternoons from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. We meet in Room 119 of the South Greenhouse before moving out into the Gardens to tackle the day’s tasks. Dress in your gardening clothes, and don’t forget sunscreen and a water bottle. Tools are provided or you can bring your own. Contact Beth Willis at ewillis2@utk.edu or 865-974-2712, if you have any questions.

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