

Summer Celebration 2025

THURSDAY, JULY 10 | 8:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.
WEST TENNESSEE AgRESEARCH
AND EDUCATION CENTER
605 Airways Blvd., Jackson, TN 38301



SHOWTIME 9:00 A.M.

ROSE AVENGERS - ASSEMBLING AGAINST THE ROSE VILLAINS
Showtime: 9:00 A.M. | Room 150
Starring: Nar Ranhabat, Ornamental, Nursery and Turf Plant Pathology Specialist, UT Extension
Scout, camera, action! Detecting rose villains before they steal the show is crucial for protecting roses. This talk highlights the importance of early scouting and integrated approaches—assembling the “avengers” of plant protection—to implement effective disease management strategies to safeguard roses and other ornamental and nursery plants.

ANNUALS THAT WALK THE RED CARPET
Showtimes: 9:00 A.M., 1:00 P.M. | Tent 3
Starring: Jason Reeves, Curator, UT Gardens, Jackson
A-listers that perform every year and newcomers destined for the walk of fame—come see your favorite actors, rising stars, and the B-listers that failed the audition.

CREATING A LAWN WORTHY OF THE LIMELIGHT
Showtimes: 9:00 A.M., 12:00 P.M. | Tent 1
Starring: Becky Grubbs Bowling, Assistant Professor and Turfgrass Specialist, UT Extension
Even the best lawns need a little direction. This session will highlight practical, science-based approaches to managing West Tennessee lawns with fewer inputs while still delivering show-stopping results. Whether you’re aiming for curb appeal or environmental impact, it’s time to roll out the green carpet.

RATED-R FOR RELIABILITY | Showtimes: 9:00 A.M., 1:00 P.M. | Room A
Starring: Andy Pulte, Distinguished Lecturer, UT Department of Plant Sciences
Join us as we journey through the cosmos of horticulture, where only the most legendary plants earn the title: Rated-R for Reliable.

THE MAIN ACT: CUT FLOWERS THAT STEAL THE SPOTLIGHT
Showtimes: 9:00 A.M., 2:00 P.M. | Tent 2
Starring: Celeste Scott, Western Region Horticulture Specialist, UT Extension
Step into the spotlight as we unveil cut flower varieties that are sure to steal the show! Discover blooms that outshine the rest and learn top tips for keeping your cutting garden performing all year long. Along the way, you’ll get a behind-the-scenes look at exciting research, dive into citizen science projects, and gather fresh ideas to make your own home cutting garden the star of every season.

ARTS & CRAFTS | Showtimes: 9:00 A.M.–3:00 P.M.
Directed by: Madison County Master Gardeners
Children and families are invited to a variety of crafts about the natural world.

WAGON TOURS | Showtimes: 9:00 A.M.–3:00 P.M. (Every half hour)
Directed by: Center Faculty and Staff
Enjoy a guided wagon tour of the West Tennessee AgResearch and Education Center to learn about on-site research projects in agriculture, horticulture, forestry, turf grass, and more.

SHOWTIME 10:00 A.M.

“THE BUG SHOW” - WHAT’S CHEWING AND SUCKING MY PLANTS
Showtime: 10:00 A.M. | Room 150
Starring: Midhula Gireesh, Turfgrass and Ornamental Entomology Specialist, UT Extension
Learn about major insect pests of gardens, their identification, damage symptoms, and management strategies, including the spotted lanternfly.

STARS, SUPPORTING CAST, AND UNDERSTUDIES
Showtimes: 10:00 A.M., 2:00 P.M. | Room A
Starring: Carol Reese, Retired UT Extension Horticulture Specialist
Good casting sets the stage for headliners, seasonal stars, and supporting actors. A layered ensemble of well-chosen plants can lessen mulching chores and draw an audience of diverse and desirable garden critters.

KITCHEN DIVAS | Showtimes: 10:00 A.M., 12:00 P.M., 2:00 P.M.
Tickets - \$5 | Kitchen
Starring: Sarah Poole, Tennille Short, Rebecca Serratt, and Joy Powell as FCS Extension Agents, UT Extension Western Region
The first act sets the tone for any production, so the appetizer must be memorable. Whether your main course is light and fun—or a bit mysterious—the Kitchen Divas can help you set the stage for an award-winning production.

“A BUG’S LIFE” - HOST PLANTS FOR POLLINATORS
Showtimes: 10:00 A.M. | Tent 3
Starring: Camille Newsom, Research Coordinator, UT Gardens, Jackson, and Mary Glenys Espey, Horticulture Extension Agent, UT-TSU Extension Madison County
Every butterfly has a backstory, and it all begins with the right host plant. Enjoy this walking tour spotlighting the host plants that turn an ordinary garden into a pollinator production studio. Learn how you can support the full life cycle of butterflies and other beneficial insects right at home!

A-LISTERS FOR THE TENNESSEE VEGETABLE GARDEN
Showtimes: 10:00 A.M., 1:00 P.M. | Tent 2
Starring: Natalie Bumgarner, Professor and Consumer Horticulture Specialist, UT Extension
We don’t need to settle for B-list actors in our gardens; we have reliable information from trials to enable us to select great A-list performers. Join Natalie for a fun review of vegetable actors for warm and cool season garden crops that perform well on both the large screen (backyards) and small screen (back porches).

FUR, FEATHERS, AND FRUSTRATION, OH MY: DEALING WITH WILDLIFE CONFLICTS
Showtimes: 10:00 A.M., 12:00 P.M. Tent 1, Tent 2
Starring: Jake Mallard, County Director, UT-TSU Extension Gibson County, and Chuck Casey, Officer, Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency
If unwanted wild animals are frequenting your home or garden, there is at least one source of food, water, and/or cover that is attracting them. Most wildlife, like humans, are creatures of habit. Learn steps to protect your landscape from these villains!

SHOWTIME 11:00 A.M.

TENNESSEE FORESTS - NO LONGER “BYE BYE BIRDIE”
Showtimes: 11:00 A.M., 3:00 P.M. | Room A, Room 150
Starring: David Mercker, Forestry Specialist, UT Extension
Tennessee is rich with 14 million acres of forestland. But in developing our state, the forests were severely abused. This presentation shares how professional foresters, through the educated caress of conservation, brought the forests back.

SETTING AN EXOTIC STAGE: BUILDING A LUSH TROPICAL FOREST IN TEMPERATE WEST TENNESSEE
Showtimes: 11:00 A.M., 1:00 P.M. | Room 150
Starring: Jill Maybry, Curator of Tropical Plants and Seasonal Displays, Memphis Botanic Garden
Memphis Botanic Garden’s new 3,200-square-foot Tropical Plant House just celebrated its first birthday! Learn about their vision for the space, the plant selection process, and some construction milestones along the way.

FOREVER GREEN, FOREVER GLAM | Showtime: 11:00 A.M. | Tent 1
Starring: Jason Reeves, Curator, UT Gardens, Jackson, and Andy Pulte, Distinguished Lecturer, UT Department of Plant Sciences
Conifers can offer a bonanza of opportunities to spruce up your homestead. Join this tour to learn more about evergreen superstars.

SETTING THE STAGE: BACKYARD GARDENING TO SUPPORT NATURE’S ALL-STAR CAST | Showtime: 11:00 A.M., 3:00 P.M. | Tent 3
Starring: Mary Glenys Espey, Horticulture Extension Agent, UT-TSU Extension Madison County
Learn how to create the perfect habitat for your garden’s shining stars: pollinators, birds, and more! Like every great production, it all begins with the right set—get your garden ready, and the wildlife will deliver a show that you don’t want to miss.

FAMILY PLOT ON THE SPOT - LIVE! | Showtime: 11:00 A.M. | Tent 2
Starring: Chris Cooper, County Director, UT-TSU Extension Shelby County
Join us for an engaging gardening Q&A session featuring Extension specialists who will answer all of your horticulture questions! Whether you are a seasoned gardener or just getting started, this interactive event is the perfect place to gain plant knowledge to help your garden thrive year-round.

SHOWTIME 12:00 P.M.

NATURE’S LEADING ROLE - NATIVE PLANTS
Showtimes: 12:00 P.M., 2:00 P.M. | Room 150
Starring: Andrea Ludwig, Professor and Storm Water Management Specialist, UT Extension
Mother Nature is the ultimate designer. Observing natural landscapes can help us better understand the vital functions that native plants provide and how we can mimic their beneficial role in our own yards. Come learn how to take tips from nature using native plants!

NIGHTMARE ON GARDEN STREET
Showtimes: 12:00 P.M., 3:00 P.M. | Room A
Starring: Lucas Holman, County Director, UT-TSU Extension Wilson County
Don’t let bad plants invade your dreams! Stay awake for this presentation and learn about challenging varieties and their alternatives.



SHOWTIME 1:00 P.M.

THE GREAT GREEN SCREEN - A WALKING ARBORETUM TOUR
Showtime: 1:00 P.M. | Tent 1
Starring: Camille Newsom, Research Coordinator, UT Gardens, Jackson, and David Mercker, Forestry Specialist, UT Extension
Trees are the great green screen of nature, providing the backdrop and setting the stage for a rich web of other plants and animals to thrive. Join us on a walking tour highlighting many of the diverse tree species that make up UT Gardens, Jackson’s Arboretum. Let’s learn how trees impact our lives!

RERUNS

*Missed the first showing?
See it again at one of the
following times.*

SHOWTIMES	EVENTS
12:00 P.M.	Kitchen Divas <i>Kitchen</i>
	Creating a Lawn Worthy of the Limelight <i>Tent 1</i>
	Fur, Feathers and Frustration, Oh My - Dealing With Wildlife Conflicts <i>Tent 2</i>
1:00 P.M.	Rated-R for Reliability <i>Room A</i>
	Setting An Exotic Stage: Building a Lush Tropical Forest in Temperate West TN <i>Room 150</i>
	Annuals That Walk the Red Carpet <i>Tent 3</i>
	A-Lister’s for the Tennessee Vegetable Garden <i>Tent 2</i>
2:00 P.M.	Nature’s Leading Role - Native Plants <i>Room 150</i>
	Stars, Supporting Cast, and Understudies <i>Room A</i>
	Kitchen Divas <i>Kitchen</i>
	The Main Act: Cut Flowers that Steal the Spotlight <i>Tent 2</i>
3:00 P.M.	Nightmare on Garden Street <i>Room A</i>
	Tennessee Forests - No Longer “Bye Bye Birdie” <i>Room 150</i>
	Setting the Stage: Backyard Gardening to Support Nature’s All-Star Cast <i>Tent 3</i>

Plant Sale, 8:00 A.M.–4:00 P.M.

Directed by UT Gardens, Jackson and Madison County Master Gardeners
Shop thousands of beautiful, hand-selected plants that perform well in Tennessee! Madison County Master Gardeners will be onsite to help you make selections to spruce up your lawn or garden this summer.



BECOME A MEMBER OF THE UT GARDENS

Did you enjoy your visit? If so, we can use your support. The UT Gardens, Jackson, is open and free to the public. This means the growth and development of our programs are almost entirely dependent upon private support from people like you. By becoming a member of UT Gardens, you provide us with the resources we need to coordinate events like Summer Celebration while further developing and maintaining ornamental and research trial programs.

To learn more about becoming a member of the UT Gardens, visit:

utgardens.tennessee.edu/support.

The UT Gardens in Knoxville, Jackson, and Crossville, known collectively as the State Botanical Garden of Tennessee, are part of the University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture. The mission of the Gardens is to foster appreciation, education, and stewardship of plants through garden displays, collections, educational programs, and research trials. All locations of the Gardens are open year-round and are free to visit, although some educational events are fee-based.

Visit utgardens.tennessee.edu for more information.

Follow the UT Gardens, Jackson, and the West Tennessee AgResearch and Education Center on Facebook.

West Tennessee AgResearch and Education Center
605 Airways Blvd., Jackson, TN 38301
731.424.1643

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