

For Immediate Release

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The Memphis Botanic Garden to Host a New Horticultural Speaker Series in 2023 Featuring Claudia West, Ellen Ecker Ogden, and Doug Tallamy

Memphis, TN — The Memphis Botanic Garden (MBG) is pleased to announce a new horticultural lecture series titled the *Urban Home Garden Speaker Series* which features topics about gardening with a purpose from horticultural experts. **Claudia West** will kick off the series on June 13 presenting *Rebuilding Abundance with Innovative and Rich Planting*, followed by **Ellen Ecker Ogden** on September 12 and her lecture *Rewilding the Kitchen Garden: How to grow a healthy organic garden for people and pollinators to flourish*, and concluding with **Doug Tallamy** on *The Nature of Oaks* on November 7.

Claudia West is the co-founder of Phyto Studio and a leading voice in the emerging field of ecological planting design. She is known for her passionate advocacy of plant-driven design and recently designed the Garden's Arboretum revitalization project as part of the *Rooted at Park & Cherry* capital campaign.

Ellen Ecker Ogden is an award-winning garden author and kitchen garden designer. She is the author of five books including *The Complete Kitchen Garden* and *The New Heirloom Garden*.

With *Bringing Nature Home*, Doug Tallamy changed the conversation about gardening in America. His second book, the New York Times bestseller *Nature's Best Hope*, urged homeowners to take conservation into their own hands. In his newest book, he turns his advocacy to one of the most important species of the plant kingdom—the mighty oak tree.

“For 70 years the Memphis Botanic Garden has been our community’s thought leader for all things horticulturally related. Our new speaker series builds on this history and offers three new opportunities for gardeners – novice and experienced – to add to their knowledge from renowned, national experts,” said Michael D. Allen, Executive Director.

Each evening will begin with an optional guided tour of a related Urban Home Garden space from 5-6 pm followed by the talk at 6:30 pm with a closing book signing and/or meet and greet with the speaker. A cash bar will be available from 6-8 pm.

The Urban Home Garden Speaker Series is made possible with support from the Memphis Horticultural Society.

Each lecture is \$10 MBG & Memphis Horticultural Society Members/\$15 Non-Members.

Visit membg.org/events/urban-home-garden-speaker-series/ to learn more and register to attend.

Lecture Descriptions:

June 13: Claudia West, *Rebuilding Abundance with Innovative and Rich Planting*

Our cities and suburbs desperately need more inspiring, ecologically rich planting. Yet budgets are tight and gardeners are often unfamiliar with more diverse, ecologically functional planting typologies. Claudia will share the scientific models and hands-on techniques her landscape architecture firm, Phyto Studio, applies to create beautiful, ecologically rich planting. You will walk away with a new understanding of planting design and its role in rebuilding nature where we need it the most. The guided tour preceding the talk will feature the newly revitalized Arboretum which Claudia designed.

September 12: Ellen Ecker Ogden, *Rewilding the Kitchen Garden: How to grow a healthy organic garden for people and pollinators to flourish*

I've been rethinking the kitchen garden, just as I have been planting more natives in my flower beds. In this new lecture, you will learn the six steps to design but also how to unwind our gardener's tendency to be too neat and tidy in the garden. We are trained to pull lettuce before it bolts or deadhead dill when it forms a seed head, but these are necessary for a wide range of pollinators to thrive. Let's look more closely at all the pollinators in our gardens, going beyond the honeybee to the wasps, flies, and moths. What can you plant in your kitchen garden that brings you good food, while nourishing the edible landscape with pollen-rich plants, and nectar? Take a fresh perspective and discover new ways to let your garden grow a little wild.

November 7: Doug Tallamy, *The Nature of Oaks*

Scary headlines about the decline of the natural world that serves as our life support have spurred homeowners across the country to take action by planting natives that will help reverse this trend. No plant will achieve this faster than one of our 91 species of oaks. Oaks support more species of animals, sequester more carbon, protect our watersheds, and nourish soil communities better than any other plant genus in North America. Tallamy will discuss these roles by following the many fascinating things that are happening on the oaks in his yard each month of the year. His hope is to supply the knowledge about oaks that will generate interest in them, and, with any luck, compassion for these magnificent trees.

The Memphis Botanic Garden is a not-for-profit 501(c) (3) organization dedicated to being an exemplary center for horticulture and environmental enrichment. Serving over 40,000 school-aged children annually, and hosting 260,000 visitors each year, Memphis Botanic Garden strives to enhance lives by connecting people with nature, increasing awareness and appreciation of our environment. For more information please visit membg.org.