



**“Advocating for responsible stewardship  
of land and natural resources in  
landscaping and horticultural practices.”**

## December 2016

The longest nights of the year are upon us up here in the northern hemisphere. In spite of the cold and dark, ELA brightened the horticulture scene in Brooklyn, NY last week with a very enjoyable and productive first-time conference collaboration with Brooklyn Botanic Garden and Brooklyn Bridge Park. A special thanks to ELA Board Member Rebecca McMackin and her family for hosting a gathering of ELA members and conference speakers at their home. They provided a warm kickoff to the conference.

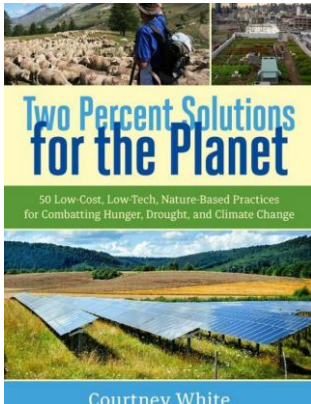
ELA has a couple of events that will brighten January and bring you in out of the cold. You'll have opportunities to view the film *Hometown Habitat, Stories of Bringing Nature Home* on January 18 and 21. Find out more about [the screenings](#) and read a recent [review of the film](#). Then on January 31, you can join a conversation on carbon sequestration and three potential [Landscape Heroes](#) in climate solutions: carbon, water, and biodiversity. In this issue of the newsletter, one conference expert, Courtney White, offers us an excerpt from his book *Two Percent Solutions for the Planet*, and we provide a review of the book. You'll also find an article for the newsletter archives that provides an overview of soil functions. And we have an update from Randy Rath on lessons learned from wetlands in upstate New York that have been treating stormwater through natural systems for four years.

ELA's 23rd Conference & Eco-Marketplace is gathering momentum and conference topics and speakers have been posted online. It's not too early to [investigate this year's lineup](#) and make your plans for March! Happy New Year to you all. *MS*



### **Lessons Learned from a Stormwater Wetland Treatment System** by Randy Rath

Four years after the West Brook Conservation Initiative went online and began treating stormwater through a wetland treatment system, we get an update on the project. The site experienced some growing pains as early problems were recognized and corrected. After completing the first round of regular maintenance, the system is cleaning water stormwater as planned. [Read the article.](#)



### **Book Review - Two Percent Solutions for the Planet** Written by Courtney White

Reviewed by Theresa Sprague

Two percent is a small amount compared against the large problem of climate change, but author Courtney White offers real-life examples in which sustainable and regenerative practices add up to make a big difference. [Read the review.](#)



### Two Percent Solutions for the Planet

by Courtney White

It's easy to be overwhelmed into inaction by the challenges of our era: increasing CO2 in the atmosphere, a rising population with increased demands for food, dwindling water supplies.... The problems are huge and the solutions equally huge. But what if we can find low-cost, low-tech, nature-based solutions? [Read the article.](#)

This excerpt is adapted from Courtney White's book [Two Percent Solutions for the Planet](#) (Chelsea Green Publishing, 2015) and is printed with permission from the publisher.



### Soil as a Living System

by Leslie Jones Sauer

From the newsletter archives, learn the basics of soil development and the soil food web. [Read the article.](#)

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large or small...

because land doesn't come with a manual.

Thank you for your [donation!](#)



### ELA News



#### Thanks for a great event in Brooklyn!

Over 200 horticulture enthusiasts gathered at Brooklyn Botanic Garden (BBG) on December 9<sup>th</sup> to Dig Deep into Creating Ecological Plant Communities. A very full day of presentations and a stellar panel discussion provided insight into specific plants and plant communities that the speakers had worked with and found to be successful.

ELA thanks **Melanie Sifton**, Vice President of Horticulture & Facilities and our BBG host, for providing the day's venue; our plant masters for the day: **Claudia West**, **Roy Diblik**, **Ian Caton**, **Heidi Hesselein**, and **Andrew Bunting**; our panelists: **Rebecca McMackin**, **Chris Roddick**, **Ronnitt Bendavid-Val**, and **Frances Reidy**; and our sponsor, [North Creek Nurseries](#).

A special thank you to **Rebecca McMackin** and **Chris Roddick** for hosting a warm and welcoming opportunity for ELA members to gather and mingle on a cold Brooklyn evening.



#### Winter Events

Educational opportunities continue in 2017 with a screening of [Hometown Habitat](#) and a one-day symposium in January and [ELA's Conference & Eco-Marketplace](#) in March. Be sure to take advantage of early registration discounts.

[Landscape Heroes: Carbon, Water, and Biodiversity](#) - Where do soil and climate intersect, and what are the implications for our land care practices? This wide-ranging program brings ELA together with Biodiversity for a Livable Climate, Northeast Organic Farming Association (NOFA Mass), and Organic Land Care of NOFA/CT for a full-day of presentation on January 31, Amherst, MA. Organic lunch included with registration.

**Sustaining the Living Landscape**, the 23rd Annual ELA Conference & Eco-Marketplace, puts ecological principles, practitioners, products, and providers together for two days of intense education. This year's sessions cover topics ranging from the aesthetics of stormwater design to promoting toxin-free landscapes. A series of Idea Exchange panels offer an opportunity for you to add your voice to the discussion. March 8 & 9 at the UMass Amherst Campus Center.

**Opportunities for Exhibiting, Sponsoring, and Advertising!**

Join the growing list of exhibitors in this year's Eco-Marketplace. Or, get your company's name in front of the hundreds of attendees by becoming a sponsor - several levels available. Prefer to have your information in print? Advertise in the conference program!

To exhibit or sponsor: <http://www.ecolandscaping.org/eco-marketplace-exhibitors/>

To advertise: Contact Michael Opton, [Michaelopton@gmail.com](mailto:Michaelopton@gmail.com)



**Four webinars remain** in the Season 4 webinar series: [A Focus on Sustainability](#). Remember that ELA members attend live webinars and access archived webinars for free!



**Put on a Smile When You Shop Online!**

If you are shopping online for gifts during the gift-giving season, shop through [AmazonSmile](#) and a portion of every eligible purchase will support ELA education. It's easy. Go to [www.smile.amazon.com](http://www.smile.amazon.com), enter your account as usual, specify Ecological Landscape Alliance as your preferred charity, and start shopping. It will put a smile on your face.



Enjoy the ELA Newsletter? [Become an ELA Member!](#)

**Gleanings**

**Grants!**

**Celebrate Urban Birds Mini-Grant Program:** This initiative of the Cornell Lab of Ornithology offers small grants to community organizations, educators, and youth throughout the U.S. that host bird-focused events in their neighborhoods. For more information, [click here](#). Deadline December 31, 2016.

**Community Forestry:** TD Green Streets supports innovative practices in community forestry with grants to municipalities in low- to moderate-income neighborhoods. To learn more and apply, [click here](#). Now open for 2017 program applications.

**Recreational Trails:** MA Department of Conservation and Recreation will award two to three grants focused on statewide trail education initiatives. To learn more and apply, [click here](#). Deadline February 1, 2017.



**NYBG Winter Lecture Series: *Great Gardens and Their Legacies* Starts in January**

Join The New York Botanical Garden for the 17th Annual Winter Lecture Series: *Great Gardens and Their Legacies* as three innovative gardeners, R. William Thomas, Cassian Schmidt, and Aaron Bertelsen share the challenges of maintaining - and expanding - the iconic gardens of Chanticleer, Hermannshof, and Great Dixter. Plantsmen as well as stewards, they must protect past, present, and future, while balancing art, nature, technology, and the expectations of an ever-growing public. The series takes place on three Thursdays: January 26, February 23, March 30, from 10-11:30 a.m. in Ross Hall. Learn more here: <http://www.nybg.org/adulted/winterlectureseries-2016.php>



## Handbook for a PRFCT Yard

The PRFCT EARTH PRJCT recently released a new publication: The PRFT Yard Handbook - a go-to, how-to guide for homeowners interested in maintaining their lawns and gardens without toxic chemicals. The guide is available to download, or order as a hardcopy. [Click here](#) for more information.



## Botany in Action Fellowship

Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens in Pittsburgh, Pa is accepting proposals for its 2017 Botany in Action (BIA) Fellowship program. The program fosters the development of the next generation of plant-based scientists who are committed first to excellent research and second to educational outreach. To learn more about Phipps, the BIA fellowship program, and how to apply, [click here](#). Application deadline January 13, 2017.



## How Warming Is Threatening the Genetic Diversity of Species

Research on stoneflies in Glacier National Park indicates that global warming is reducing the genetic diversity of some species, compromising their ability to evolve as conditions change. These findings have major implications for how biodiversity will be affected by climate change. [Read the full report in Yale environment360.](#)



## The Art of the Dry Garden

Discover 15 ways to conserve outdoor water use in the garden. Based on the "dry" gardens of Ruth Bancroft in Walnut Creek, CA. [Read more.](#)



## Call for Presenters & Exhibitors

The 2017 Massachusetts Sustainable Communities & Campuses Conference seeks presenters and exhibitors on a wide range of sustainability topics for their conference on March 17, 2017. Event takes place at Endicott College, Beverly, MA. [Click here](#) to find additional information.



## Events to Note (listings indicate local time unless otherwise noted)

January 5 **ELA Webinar**→[Evaluating Conservation Landscape Designs](#) (rescheduled); 7:00pm EST.

January 9-February 17 - [Winter School for Turf Managers](#); Amherst, MA.

January 11 **ELA Webinar**→[Keeping Invasive Plants Out of the Landscape](#); 1:00-2:00pm EST.

January 11 - [Naturalistic Gardening](#); Cambridge, MA; 7:00-8:30pm.

January 12-13 - [Analyzing the Wild, Designing the Garden](#); New London, CT.

January 14 - [NOFA/Mass Winter Conference](#); Worcester, MA.

January 18 **ELA Screening**→[Hometown Habitat, Stories of Bringing Nature Home](#); Framingham, MA; 2:00-3:30pm.

January 19-20 - [Analyzing the Wild, Designing the Garden](#); Blue Bell, PA.

January 20 - [Pine Barrens Regional Conservation Forum](#); West Barnstable, MA; 8:00am-4:00pm.

January 20-22 - [NOFA-NY Winter Conference - Long Live the Farmer: Diversity & Biodiversity](#); Saratoga Springs, NY.

January 21 **ELA Screening**→[Hometown Habitat, Stories of Bringing Nature Home](#); Framingham, MA; 4:00-5:30pm.

January 24-25 - [Building Profits for Life](#); Milford, MA.

January 25-26 - [CNLA Winter Symposium & Expo](#); Plantsville, CT.

January 26 - [The Art of Gardening at Chanticleer](#); NYC, NY; 10:00-11:30am.

January 28 - [NOFA-NH Winter Conference: Grow Well, Eat Well](#); Concord, NH.

January 28-29 - [NOFA-NJ Winter Conference: Food & Farming in the Garden State](#); New Brunswick, NJ.

January 31 **ELA Collaboration**→[Landscape Heroes: Carbon, Water, and Biodiversity](#); Amherst, MA; 8:00am-5:00pm.

February 1 **ELA Webinar**→[The Insider's Guide to Assessing SITES Viability](#) (rescheduled); 1:00-2:00pm EDT.  
February 2 - [The Characteristics, Impacts, and Costs of Invasive Insects](#); Amherst, MA; 9:00am.  
February 7 - [Dreams & Solutions: Green Industry Winter Forum](#); Sturbridge, MA; 8:00am-12:00pm.  
Early discounts available.  
February 16 - [Invasive Forest and Agricultural Insects in Massachusetts](#); Amherst, MA; 9:00am.  
February 18-20 - [NOFA-VT Winter Conference](#); Burlington, VT.  
February 21 - [Principles and Fundamentals of Weed Science](#); Milford, MA; 9:00am-2:30pm.  
February 23 - [The New Perennial Movement at Hermannshof Gardens](#); NYC, NY; 10:00-11:30am.  
February 24 - [SNEC Winter Conference](#) - save the date; Berlin, CT.  
February 25 **ELA Event**→[Design with Water in Mind](#); Framingham, MA; 9:00am-12:00pm.  
March 2 - [Movement and Biological Control of Invasive Forest Insect Pests and the Interface with Forests and Managed Landscapes in Invasive Insect Management](#); Hadley, MA; 9:00am-2:30pm.  
March 7 - [Community Tree Conference](#); Amherst, MA; 8:00am-3:30pm.  
March 8-9 **ELA Conference**→[Sustaining the Living Landscape](#); Amherst, MA.



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Whether you are located in the area of our upcoming events or in some distant landscape, you are invited to participate in ELA collaborations and discussions by joining the Ecological Landscape Alliance discussion group on LinkedIn. The ELA discussion group is open to both ELA members and non-members from around the world and participation is growing each week. Through these discussions you can share information, get answers to landscape problems, and learn new perspectives on challenging ecological issues. Joining LinkedIn is free and it is easy to join. [Join the ELA LinkedIn Discussion](#). We look forward to hearing from you soon!

We hope that you enjoy this edition of the ELA newsletter and welcome your comments at [ela.info@comcast.net](mailto:ela.info@comcast.net). *Maureen Sundberg, ELA Newsletter Editor*

