



2011 SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

“...advocating for environmentally responsible stewardship of land and natural resources in landscaping and horticultural practices...”

ECOLOGICAL LANDSCAPING ASSOCIATION

www.ecolandscaping.org

BACKGROUND

Who We Are

The Ecological Landscaping Association (ELA) began in **1991** with the mission of reducing the environmental impact of landscaping. Since then, ELA members have been at the forefront of **exploring and practicing ecological landscaping** and ELA continues to serve a network of professionals, businesses, and individual who value responsible and sustainable landscaping practices. As more businesses and consumers choose sustainable land care practices, ELA's educational programs and advocacy work can meet the demand.

Residing in over 22 states, ELA members are involved in **all aspects of land care** and include professionals, educators, homeowners, suppliers, and designers. Our membership includes those who practice organic land care; those who strive for the most ecological methods available while balancing industry and client demands; and those who simply want to learn more about creating a backyard native habitat. Our highly knowledgeable members are enthusiastic about **gaining and sharing information**, thus creating a dynamic, forward thinking organization.

During a time of economic decline, ELA's membership has continued to show growth. As more professionals come to appreciate the desirability of offering land care services with a sound ecological basis, ELA remains positioned to provide quality educational experiences in sustainable and ecological practices.

What We Do

In an industry where businesses are starting to discover both the economic and environmental benefits of moving to a sustainable landscaping model, ELA is a much needed **advocacy and educational partner**. Focusing on the growing number of professionals interested in sustainable practices, ELA is committed to delivering the **practical and informative education** needed to **help businesses learn and apply** the principles of sustainable landscaping and gardening.

ELA has a reputation for providing high-quality education across many disciplines with a focus on the practical application of sustainable practices in the landscape. At the same time, ELA provides venues that encourage the review of new and leading edge technologies not just the tried and tested. As a result, the educational events hosted by ELA go beyond the traditional to include topics such as Permaculture, Biochar, and Living Walls.

ELA is also focused on ensuring that its members are introduced to **new technologies , products, and services** that can help advance the profession and allow businesses to deliver better quality and more effective services while competing effectively.

2010 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Annual Conference

In February, ELA effectively delivered its 16th annual conference. Planned during an economic downturn, the conference shifted to a one-day event and was attended by **over 350** landscaping professionals, municipal and conservation leaders, and homeowners. This dynamic event featured innovative speakers and exhibitors.

Regional Eco-Tours

Throughout the year, ELA introduced more than **22 Eco-Tours** - events designed to get people into the field with experts in order to fully explore examples of sustainable landscaping. Tours included a broad range of venues and focuses such as:

- a walking tour through Mt. Auburn cemetery in Cambridge, Massachusetts to observe their sustainable practices
- a site visit at Harvard University to see how they manage lawns organically
- an investigation of over 13 rain gardens in Leominster.

In many cases, ELA partnered with other organization for the tours, expanding our cooperative efforts with other non-profit groups. In its introductory year, **more than 350 people** attended ELA's Eco-Tours.

Season's End Summit: Taking Stock and Looking Forward

On November 8th, ELA held its **first annual year-end summit** - a forum designed to provide land care professionals with an interactive opportunity to review the realities of the industry in 2010 and explore future developments. Morning and afternoon panels featured industry experts discussing the current state of ecological practices and what it takes to run an ecological business. Laura Solano, principal and landscape architect at Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates, Inc. presented the keynote. The event sold out and received enthusiastic support from attendees.

Online Presence

ELA expanded its online presence by updating its website to a new format and by increasing its exposure using social media, including LinkedIn, Facebook and Twitter. Participation by eco-professionals around the country and even around the globe continues to expand.

Transitioning to an **online newsletter** format has allowed ELA to expand its readership to over 3,250 while saving the organization thousands of dollars.

2010 ACCOMPLISHMENTS Continued

Partnerships

ELA partnered with over 30 groups and organizations with similar audiences and goals to extend outreach. Partners include:

Professional Organizations:

Association of Professional Landscape Designers (APLD)
CA Native Garden Tour Group
California Native Garden Foundation
California Native Plant Society
Central Coast Greywater Alliance
Central Coast Wilds
Desalinization and Alternatives Group
Division of Ecological Restoration,
Massachusetts Department of Fish & Game (DER)
Eco-Farm
Ecology Action
Greywater Action
Greywater Alliance
IPM Voice Committee in Washington, DC
Massachusetts Association of Conservation Commissions (MACC)
Midwestern Ecological Landscaping Association (MELA)
Massachusetts Watershed Coalition (MWC)
Mauby Naturals
New England Organic Farming Association (NOFA)
New England Wildflower Society (NEWFS)
Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC)
Rana Creek Restoration
Rincon-Vitova Insectaries
Society for Ecological Restoration (SER)
Soquel Creek Water District

The Arnold Arboretum
The Garden Faire
The Landscape Institute
Trustees of Reservation (TTOR)
University of New Hampshire Stormwater Center (UNHSC)
US Green Building Council

Consumer Outreach Groups:

Boston Flower & Garden Show
Green Decade
Grow Native Cambridge

Environmental Vision Award

ELA developed and presented the new **Environmental Vision Award** at the Boston Flower and Garden Show, the largest gardening consumer event in the region. ELA Board members served as judges.

Google Grants

ELA was accepted as a Google Grant participant. This will provide the organization with up to \$120,000 of free advertising every year. This tool will be used to draw people to our site and increase ELA's online exposure.

WHY YOU SHOULD SUPPORT ELA

In order for ELA to grow and have a greater impact on the adoption of responsible ecological and horticultural practices, we have outlined the following initiatives for 2011.

1) Expand existing educational programs

While ELA has been successful at running an annual conference as well as many Roundtable and Eco-Tour events in New England, there is a demand for education at a national level. ELA plans to extend our educational programs outside of New England in collaboration with community leaders striving to adopt more sustainable practices in their towns and counties.

In an effort to make training available to people around the country, ELA is exploring options for delivering distance education. Webinars and online classes afford great opportunities to reach a wider audience. Partners have already expressed an interest in the development of online curriculum; however, ELA will require additional resources to create and deliver this type of education.

2) Expand existing outreach and advocacy programs

Opportunities exist to increase our advocacy and outreach programs with consumer-focused, non-profit organizations that are aligned with our values and mission. There is a great need for demonstration projects showcasing sustainable and ecological practices in motion.

3) Increase staffing

ELA relies primarily on volunteers for program delivery. Expanding programs and advocacy will require additional support staff, including expanding the Executive Director's position to fulltime and adding a part-time position for Outreach and Education Coordinator.

4) Improve digital communications

In the new era of electronic communication, the importance of having a professional web presence, coupled with a sophisticated digital marketing communications program and a strong social media strategy are all absolutely essential. ELA needs to continue working on its website and improve all aspects of its digital communications to effectively meet its goals.

5) Updating materials

Although much of our work is done online, we distribute printed materials at events and to assist with outreach and advocacy. We anticipate additional expenses to update and refine our printed materials.

6) Expand membership campaign

ELA has the ability to grow its membership both regionally and nationally. With close to 300 members in 22 states, ELA expects to double membership over the next few years. ELA has a very active membership group in California, and there is growing interest in other parts of the country. The ELA Board recently approved the ELA Ambassador Program which identifies local advocates to grow membership in a region. Dedicated campaigns to increase membership require additional resources.