

# THE ecological landscaper

The Newsletter of the Ecological Landscaping Association

Vol. 14, No. 4

Winter 2008

## Re-Visioning : educating ourselves by widening our view

ELA's 14th Annual Conference & Eco-Marketplace offers three extraordinary keynote speakers: **Charles C. Mann**, **Dr. John Todd**, and **Tom Wessels**, in addition to a diverse group of practitioners, talented writers, and prominent educators in the fields of landscaping, gardening, permaculture and eco-design solutions.

*"The illiterate of the 21st century will not be those who cannot read and write, but those who cannot learn, unlearn, and relearn."*

— Alvin Toffler (1928- ) American writer and futurist

### UNNATURAL ABUNDANCE

• Charles C. Mann

Few Americans over the age of 30 escaped from high school without encountering Jennie Augusta Brownscombe's 1914 painting "The First Thanksgiving" in their American history textbooks. Reproduced in thousands of lithographs, it depicts the post-harvest gathering of Europeans and Indians in 1621 as a momentous transition, a kind of cultural passing of the baton. Suffused in celestial light, a vigorous New Order serenely takes over from the diminished indigenes.

But the changeover was even bigger in scale than Brownscombe knew. In "The First Thanksgiving," as in other depictions of the first Thanksgiving meal, natives and newcomers share their feast on a field of bluegrass, dandelion and clover – three species that did not exist in the Americas before colonization.

Until the arrival of the Mayflower, continental drift had kept apart North America and Europe for hundreds of millions of years. Plymouth Colony (and its less successful predecessor in Jamestown) reunited the continents. Ecosystems that had evolved separately for millennia collided. The ensuing biological tumult – plants exploding over the landscape, animal species spiking in population or going extinct – had consequences as profound as those from the cultural encounter at the center of Brownscombe's painting.

In a phenomenon known as "ecological release," imported species can run wild because their natural predators have not come along with them. Clover and bluegrass, tame as accoun-

nants at home, transformed themselves into biological Attilas in the Americas, sweeping through vast areas so fast that the first English colonists who pushed into Kentucky found both species waiting for them. The peach proliferated in the Southeast with such fervor that by the 18th century, the historian Alfred Crosby writes, farmers feared that the Carolinas would become a wilderness of peach trees.

South America was just as badly hit. Endive and spinach escaped from colonial gardens and grew into impassable, six-foot thickets on the Peruvian coast; thousands of feet higher, mint overwhelmed Andean valleys. In the pampas of Argentina and Uruguay, the voyaging Charles Darwin discovered hundreds of square miles strangled by feral artichoke. "Over the undulating plains, where these great beds occur, nothing else can live," he observed.

In "The First Thanksgiving," the colonists appear to be eating turkey. Historians, however, say the more likely main course was a pottage of European wheat and Indian corn. The mix

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ELA

1257 Worcester Rd., #262

Framingham, MA 01701

(617) 436-5838

[www.ecolandscaping.org](http://www.ecolandscaping.org)

Write to us! We welcome comments, letters, articles, topic ideas, and opinions. Send to Newsletter Editor at the address above.

Also send all other ELA business, including address changes, to the address listed above.

The ELA board meets throughout the year in various locations in eastern Massachusetts. All members are welcome. Contact us for specific dates and locations.

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was emblematic of what Dr. Crosby has called "the Columbian Exchange," the movement of species between the Old and New Worlds. Wheat, following bluegrass and clover, occupied huge swathes of the Midwestern savanna. Meanwhile, corn conquered Africa, Asia and central Europe. Corn so thrived in 16th- and 17th-century Africa, Dr. Crosby has argued, that it sustained a population explosion that let Europeans take millions of Africans for slaves without emptying the continent.

Brownscombe depicted 23 Europeans sharing the meal with five Indians. According to the Pilgrims' own accounts, natives outnumbered newcomers at the meal by almost two to one. But once again the artist unknowingly got something right. Soon after Europeans arrived, European diseases killed 90 percent or more of the hemisphere's original inhabitants - at least 30 million people, and possibly 100 million, according to most recent estimates.

Four years before the Pilgrims' arrival, shipwrecked French sailors accidentally unleashed an epidemic, possibly viral hepatitis, on Cape Cod, which then swept through New England. The Pilgrims moved into an Indian village, Patuxet, that had been emptied by disease; they survived the first winter only after digging up food caches in victims' houses and graves. Some historians have speculated that holding the Thanksgiving meal was, in part, an act of apology.

The epidemics were momentous historically, for they opened up the continents to European assault. They were equally momentous ecologically,

for they changed the continents themselves. American Indians were ambitious, sophisticated landscape managers. In South America, they drained vast areas of wetland; scattered networks of raised agricultural fields in Bolivia, Colombia and the Guianas; and converted much of Amazonia into an "anthropogenic" forest - a mix of gardens, orchards and agricultural forests. Visitors to the Andes still gawp at the Indian terraces that carpet the highlands - more than 2,000 square miles of them in Peru alone, according to the geographer William M. Denevan, most of them at more than 9,000 feet.

Above the Rio Grande, Indians' principal land-management tool was fire, used to create and maintain open, game-friendly forests and grazing lands. Native pyromania created a third or more of the Midwestern prairie; fire kept Eastern forests so open that the first European colonists reported being able to ride through the woods in carriages. In California, Oregon, Texas and a hundred other places, Indian burning governed the conditions under which other species thrived or failed.

When disease carried away native societies, the torches went out. Trees and underbrush erupted in ways that had not been seen for millennia, filling in areas kept open by Indian axes and Indian fire. "Almost wherever the European went, forests followed," wrote the ecological historian Stephen Pyne. Far from destroying wilderness, in other words, European settlers created it - only it was a peculiar, unprecedented kind of wilderness, shot through with

## 2008 Annual Appeal

With your generous support, ELA will continue doing what we do best: promote ecological landscaping through networking, educational events and publications. Your tax deductible contribution to

ELA is **ESSENTIAL** and **APPRECIATED**. Thank you!

European invaders and characterized by population outbreaks from species that had formerly been uncommon.

Eighteenth-century visitors to the Western hemisphere were awed by its bounty, of which the iconic symbol is the passenger pigeon. Approaching what is now St. Louis on a voyage up the Mississippi in 1770, Jean-Bernard Bossu was overwhelmed by “clouds of turtle-doves” that passed for hours overhead. The flocks of pigeons were so dense, he wrote, that “sometimes as many as 80 of them are killed with one shot.”

Bossu was not far downstream from the ruins of Cahokia, once the biggest Indian settlement north of the Rio Grande. Yet in a 2003 review of archeological studies of the Cahokians’ diet, Bernd Herrmann, an environmental historian, and William I. Woods, an archaeologist and soil scientist, found that traces of passenger pigeon were “only a very minor component.”

Another archaeologist, Thomas Neumann, had previously reviewed the results of studies in the Southeast and came to the same conclusion. Other researchers have made similar arguments for bison, elk and moose. All were kept down by Indians - the big mammals by hunting, the pigeon because Indians both ate it and competed with it for the nuts on which it depended. The huge herds and flocks seen by Europeans were evidence not of American bounty but of Indian absence.

These population booms ended as the Europeans consumed the excess (or overconsumed it, in the case of the passenger pigeon). But the ecological mixing inaugurated in this country by the Pilgrims continues apace - ask the farmers in the Southeast whose peach orchards are being invaded by kudzu from Japan. Ever since Plymouth, Americans have lived, for better or worse, in a new and distinctly contemporary kind of environment, one marked by continued, rapid ecological change. What was being created that first Thanksgiving was

nothing less than the American landscape itself.

*Reprinted with permission from the Author.*

*Charles C. Mann is the author of the forthcoming “1491: New Revelations of the Americas Before Columbus” and a keynote speaker at the 14th Annual ELA Conference. To learn more about Mr. Mann’s other articles and books visit [www.charlesmann.org](http://www.charlesmann.org).*

## MINERAL RESTORATION & UTAH ROCK DUST

by David Yarrow

April 2000

Jared Milarch was in a hurry. At 13 he was thinking ahead, he planned to sell his 500 newly planted sugar maple saplings as street trees to pay for his college education.

Watching this investment in his future creep slowly skyward, Jared “got impatient because the trees weren’t growing fast enough.”

About this time, he read *Secrets of the Soil* by Christopher Bird and Peter Tompkins. One chapter described a “miracle” plant food that stimulated plants to remarkable vigor. This powdered pink clay “miracle” from central Utah was montmorillonite ore, known as rock dusts or Azomite (acronym for A-to-Z of Minerals, Including Trace Elements).

What is Azomite? It is a unique mineral with special biological character. In ancient geologic times, central Utah was an inland sea. Bacteria living in this inland sea ate the minerals that washed off the then young Rocky Mountains, and then excreted them in oxidized, hydrated and blended forms. This microbial manure accumulated on the sea floor. Over eons, this body of water evaporated leaving sediment that has an abundance of over 60 elements.

Jared convinced his Dad to order a few bags and when they arrived; he sprinkled two soup-size canfuls around 100 sapling, until the bags were empty.



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The other 400 saplings got none.

The next spring, Jared noted the unfertilized trees grow a foot. But the Azomite treated trees grew 3 feet in one spring spurt! In Jared’s years working in his family’s shade-tree business, this was unprecedented.

But even more amazing, the treated trees grew not only taller, but better — healthier. Treated trees had darker color, less leaf tatter, and bigger calipers.

Impressed by these results, Jared bought more, apply it to all his trees and in the family garden with similar effects bigger, stronger plants. One further benefit was “The taste of the vegetables was dramatically different, they tasted great!”

His father, David Milarch, a third-generation nurseryman in northwest Michigan, decided in 1996 he had seen enough financial gains on his tree farm, and read enough evidence of Azomite’s effects, to become a distributor. Soon the Milarch barn was stacked with bags of pink Utah dust.

“No one we worked with in the horticulture industry ever heard of rock dust remineralization. They add magnesium to commercial fertilizers, but know nothing about trace elements. It’s time the tree industry—all the way from seedlings to champion trees up to

MINERAL continued on page 4



wholesale shade tree industry—tested this in horticulture.”

David also founded The Champion Tree Project. The effects of Azomite on his tree farm urged him to require that every champion tree be sold and planted with rockdust.

“In the Champion Tree Project, seedlings distributed to schools and youth groups for Arbor Day come with a small bag of rockdust with instructions to sprinkle it around the roots. I recommend seed companies use it in soil mix as seedlings are produced. And right up the ladder when shade tree liners are grown by nurseries, I ask them to use rockdust. Then, as shade trees are planted at job sites, 1- or 2-pound bags must be spread by landscape industry.”

In 1997, Jared enrolled in a botany class in Michigan State University’s Horticulture Extension Program (while still in high school). For his botany lab, he decided to scrutinize this Azomite miracle more carefully to understand how a bit of dust boosts plant growth and health. He proposed a controlled experiment in the college greenhouse to professor, Kirk Waterstripe.

Waterstripe, a Rutgers graduate, scoffed at the idea at first and was skeptical a few ounces of powder from the Utah desert could have such dramatic effect on plants. But he finally relented and assented.

Jared designed a very simple, but controlled experiment to test the effect of Azomite as a soil supplement on tomatoes.

Eight tomato plants of the same size and under uniform greenhouse conditions were grown in a mix of standard potting soil with 6 tablespoons of composted cow manure. Two tablespoons of Azomite were added to the soil of four of the eight plants.

After two months, the tomatoes fed Azomite were easy to distinguish

from untreated vines. On several measurable characteristics, Azomite yielded a better plant.

Jared’s report listed five significant observations he had measured as numerical indications of “better, healthier” plants:

- Average height of Azomite-treated plants was 98.5 cm, compared to 89.75 cm for control plants.
- Whiteflies were found on both treated and control plants by day 28. After day 42, insecticidal soap was sprayed to control whiteflies. The treated plants had much less damage-defined as “honeydew” the sticky excretions of whiteflies.
- Azomite-treated plants flowered earlier, more prolifically.
- First tomato was on an Azomite treated plant.

- Treated plants set more fruit.

In a summary as simple as his experiment, Jared wrote: “While four plants per treatment do not provide statistically testable results, this experiment suggests that mineral supplements such as Azomite, may help produce plants that are more vigorous and pest-resistant, and that blossom and set fruit sooner than plants grown without any supplement. Further tests, both in lab and field, are highly recommended.”

From this modest understatement issues a bright light of insight. The implications of this simple experiment could alter farm economics, food production and horticulture methods.

Waterstripe, impressed by Jared’s results, now sees real potential value in this clay from the Utah desert, plans

MINERAL continued on page 6

The Ecological Landscaping Association (ELA) would like to invite you to **advertise your business in the ELA newsletter**, *The Ecological Landscaper*. Advertising in the ELA newsletter will deliver your message directly to our growing membership – a targeted group of motivated people who share a concern for environmental responsibility. The newsletter is also sent to selected interested organizations. The newsletter is published quarterly in January, April, July and October. The newsletter is now produced in electronic format (PDF) for three of our four issues and back issues will be made available on our website. The winter issue, produced just before our Conference, is sent as hardcopy for wider distribution. With all of these newsletter updates, we expect an even greater audience will be reading it than in previous years.

Advertisements in *The Ecological Landscaper* will help to associate your product, service, or organization with our mission of environmental stewardship. We have prepared a range of advertising options for your consideration. You can choose the right size ad for your needs and can either run the ad for a single issue or for all four issues published in a year.

**Would you like to reach a larger audience?** You can reach a targeted audience of all attendees and exhibitors of ELA’s Conference & Eco-Marketplace if you advertise your ecologically oriented business in the 2008 Conference Proceedings Book. An ad in the conference proceedings keeps your message going long after the event has ended as this book contains speaker’s handouts which are often referenced throughout the year.

Please direct inquiries on both types of ads to:  
ELA • 1257 Worcester Road, #262 • Framingham, MA 01701  
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## VISIT THE MARKETPLACE

“Re-Visioning the Landscape: An Ecological Approach” is the theme of this year’s Conference & Eco-Market-place.

We invite you to visit with our Exhibitors to acquaint yourself with ecologically-sound products and services that will help you take a more ecological approach to landscaping. Among the exhibitors will be:

### **Cockadoodle DOO**

Selling organic fertilizers a safe effective alternative to chemicals for lawns and gardens.

### **Earth and Turf Products LLC**

Supplier of products developed to provide landscapers with the tools needed to spread compost on turf.

### **Fertrell Company**

Purveyors of natural organic fertilizers including a wide range of minerals.

### **Filterra**

The Filterra Stormwater Bioretention Filtration System harnesses the power of nature to capture, cycle and immobilize pollutants to treat urban runoff.

### **Groundscapes Express**

Specializing in compost tea, compost products for erosion control, topdressing and mulching.

### **ICT Organics**

Provides instant compost tea granules that can produce either a bacterial or a fungal-dominant nutrient solution to promote healthy soil foodwebs.

### **John Jay Landscape Development**

A construction-management company committed to the highest standards and values of conservation and ecological restoration and creating beautiful landscapes inspired by nature.

### **Maine Stream Organics**

(A division of Ocean Organics)  
Manufacturer of organic liquid and granular marine-based fertilizer.

### **NOFA/OLC**

Provides information on organic land-

care training, and organic farming and gardening.

### **Neptune’s Harvest**

Products include: humates, fish emulsions, seaweed, and much more.

### **New England Environmental**

Wetland restoration specialists. Pond management, bank stabilizers, and invasive controls.

### **North Country Organics®**

OMRI-listed natural pest control, blended and custom organic fertilizers, compost, bio-stimulants, seed, and other products. They also offer quality soil testing services.

### **OESCO, Inc.**

Supplier of quality hand tools, machinery, sprayers, landscaping tools and forestry and woodlot equipment.

### **Plant Health Alternatives**

Provides professional services for stressed and declining trees and other plants using their Tree Centrics™ system, saving trees ‘from the inside out.’

### **People, Places and Plants**

The magazine for Northeast Gardeners and promotes horticulture through environmentally friendly techniques with a focus on the local gardeners, independent businesses, and public spaces of a particular region.

### **PJC & Co.**

Will appear as distributor for Renaissance®All-Natural Fertilizers’ OMRI-listed, soybean-based, and available in 2 lawn formulas, balanced garden, plus a weed-and-feed formula. Based in Minnetonka, MN, they have

custom blending and technical support, and you can review a report by Iowa State University on Renaissance products on their website.

### **Quansett Nurseries**

A leading supplier of top quality plants.

### **RPM Ecosystems**

Native tree and shrub nursery growing plants with high survival, fast growth and earlyseed production.

### **Remineralizes the Earth**

A nonprofit organization incorporated to disseminate ideas and practice about soil remineralization throughout the world. Regenerating soils with finely ground gravel dust is a sustainable alternative to chemical fertilizers and pesticides.

### **Sudbury Nurseries West, LLC**

A wholesale grower/propagator of New England native plants of local ecotypes. Container grown trees, shrubs and perennials.

### **Sylvan Nurseries**

Offers a complete line of landscape plant materials with a wide range of coastal and natives plants available.

### **Van Berkum Nursery**

Perennial wholesale nursery with a retail feel, clear signage, display borders, and an informative catalog.

### **Vermont Compost Company**

Provides high quality compost and compost based, living soil mixes for certified organic plant production.

to write his own paper for a science journal, and wants to test Azomite on other crops. The professor is even considering writing his doctoral thesis on this trace element effect.

This experience has inspired Jared and Waterstripe on to other experiments. But I weary of experiments to repeat what we rediscovered a decade ago that was discovered by others over a century ago. How many academics and scientists have to see the facts before serious research begins?

We need experiments to learn, not “if,” but “how” mineral powders restore soil fertility and boost plant vitality. Decades of research by dozens of investigators clearly show this happens, but we still have only fragments of real insight into the secret lives of soil that accomplish this miracle of minerals transformed to living cells.

I asked Jared what he thinks causes Azomite’s remarkable effects.

“I believe there’s a lack of minerals in the soil,” Jared mused. “It was probably depleted with chemical fertilizers. So, this was the first step to put minerals back in the soil. Almost healing the soil enough for the trees to really be able to use what’s in the soil.”

I pointed out that a few tablespoons of clay dust doesn’t supply much nitrogen or potassium. What minerals might this Azomite be feeding trees and seeds?

“I think it may be a balance,” he offered cautiously. “Not just one mineral, but all the minerals. Or it might catalyze other parts of the soil. Or it might catalyze other parts of the soil. I’m not sure.”

Whatever substance or essence Azomite supplies, it boosts overall vitality and quality of tomatoes—for seemingly every plant it is fed to.

David Milarch pointed out, “Most soils only have their mineral elements replenished by volcanic action or glaciers. Here in north Michigan that was 10,000 years ago. Our old soils are worn out, especially with chemical

agriculture and acid rain.”

The Milarchs’ positive results have been followed by an expansion of Azomite use.

David Yarrow is speaking both Friday and Saturday at the 14th Annual ELA Conference March 7-8 come hear the latest information available about Azomite, other spectrum minerals, and Terra Preta soils. Lot’s has been learned since this 2000 article was written.

Reference: Tompkins and Bird’s book, *Secrets of the Soil*.

*David Yarrow is a frequent contributor to the publication. He has written extensively on the environment, macrobiotics and Native American issues.*

*Adapted from “Mineral Restoration & Utah Rock Dust” by David Yarrow, published April 2000 in Acres U.S.A. Vol.30 #4. Reprinted with Permission. To subscribe to Acres, National Journal of Sustainable Agriculture, call 800-355-5315 or visit [www.acresusa.com](http://www.acresusa.com).*

See information about  
**Julie Major,**  
who is speaking at the  
Conference on March 7,  
in the article  
“Terra Preta Soils Are Heating Up”  
in Fall 2007 issue of the  
*Ecological Landscaper*.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
January 21, 2008



#### MCLP Study Guide CD

CONTACT: Charissa Sharkey  
(508) 653-3373  
[csharkey@ALCoM.org](mailto:csharkey@ALCoM.org)

#### **An Essential Resource for the Massachusetts Landscape Professional** *Updated & Improved Version 5.0 Eases Preparation for the MCLP Examination*

BOSTON, Mass.—The Associated Landscape Contractors of Massachusetts (ALCM) announces the release of its CD-based Study Guide v.5.0 for landscape contractors preparing to take the ALCM-sponsored Massachusetts Certified Landscape Professional (MCLP) exam.

The MCLP Study Guide was developed by a team of experts from the University of Massachusetts together with members of ALCM, and provides a comprehensive resource and primer for exam candidates. This new version features updated information, improved navigation, comprehensive plant identification, and enhanced tutorials.

The new Study Guide CD includes applications for the MCLP examination, which is typically offered twice a year, in the Spring and in the Fall. Applications are due two weeks prior to the scheduled exam date.

The new MCLP Study Guide CD v. 5.0 is available for \$75 to ALCM members and for \$150 to non-members. Examination fees are \$75 and \$150 for ALCM members and non-members, respectively. To obtain the CD Study Guide, register for the MCLP exam, or for further information please visit ALCM's website at [www.ALCoM.org](http://www.ALCoM.org) or call (508) 653-3373.



## The ELA Website has a new look!

We've added some new pages too. Let us know what you think. Our URL address continues to be [www.ecolandscaping.org](http://www.ecolandscaping.org).

Some of the new and improved features include:

- **Improved** Find An Eco-Pro with links to member's web sites to maximize your company's visibility.
- **New FAQs**
- **New ELA Publications**
- Easy to navigate Index and Site pages
- Coming in 2008—a Member's Only section with an ELA newsletter archives, help wanted section, and much more.

**"Thank You"** to ELA PR committee members Karen Dominguez-Brann, Cathy Rooney, and Owen Wormser for the many hours they devoted to making this new look a reality.

Member's web page links are now "live" on the ELA website in the "Find an Eco-Pro" section. Please be sure to provide your most current website address when sending in your membership renewal.

## What's a great way to get involved with ELA and support us on a fundamental level?

Meet people on the cutting edge of landscape and design while helping the ELA to make the Winter Conference and Eco-Marketplace a great experience.

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March 6-8, 2008  
MassMutual Center  
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March 6: Full-day  
Permaculture Intensive with  
Dave Jacke & Jono Neiger



RE-VISIONING THE LANDSCAPE:  
An Ecological Approach

## 14th Annual ELA Conference & Eco-Marketplace

Co-hosted  
by:



College of the Environment and Life Sciences  
University of Rhode Island  
Cooperative Extension  
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Education, Experience, Excellence for the 21st Century

### Thursday, March 6

9:00am-4:30pm:

#### PERMACULTURE INTENSIVE

*Permaculture: Landscape Design  
for Ecological Cultures*  
Dave Jacke, Dynamics Ecological Design  
Jono Neiger, Regenerative Design

5:00pm Music/Cash Bar/Hors d'oeuvres

6:00pm

#### DINNER & KEYNOTE

with Charles C. Mann, author of 1491.  
*Sustainable Soils, Sustainable  
Landscapes: An Historical Perspective*

### Friday, March 7

8:00am Registration opens

9:00am-10:30am

*Ecology of Tree-Pathogen Interactions*  
Pierluigi "Enrico" Bonello, Ohio State Univ.

*Vegetative Practices in  
Low Impact Development*  
Scott Horsley, Horsley Witten Group

*Global Climate, Local Climate*  
Jerry Jenkins, biologist/ecologist/author

*Bio-Energetic Plant Health*  
James J. Conroy, PhD &  
Basia Alexander, Plant Health Alternatives

11:00am-12:00pm

*Impact of Invasives on Native Plants*  
Bernd Blossey PhD, Cornell University

*Building Constructed Wetlands &  
Bio-retention Areas*  
Scott Horsley, Horsley Witten Group

*Forest Biodiversity*  
Donald Leopold, SUNY Syracuse

*Bio-dynamics & the Landscape*  
Stephen Storch,  
Natural Science Organics

2:30pm-3:30pm

*Ecologically Sound Turfgrass Management*  
Frank S. Rossi, PhD, Cornell University

*Biodiversity Planning & Design*  
John F. Ahern, University of Mass.

*Insect Predators, Pests & Global Warming*  
Richard B. Primack, Boston University

*Bio-char & Its Use in the Managed Landscape*  
Julie Major, Cornell University

4:00pm-5:00pm

*Bug Bio-rationals*  
Suzanne Wainwright-Evans, Buglady Consulting

*Eco-landscaping in the Commercial Design Process*  
Tom Benjamin, Vanasse Hangen Brustlin

TBA

*Full Spectrum Mineralization*  
David Yarrow, Champion Trees

5:15-6:15pm Music/Cash Bar/Hors d'oeuvres

6:30pm DINNER & KEYNOTE with Dr. John Todd,  
Ocean Arks International & Univ. of Vermont,  
*Designing for Sustainable Communities*

### Saturday, March 8

8:00am Registration opens

9:00am-10:00am

*Constructing Sustainable  
Landscape Systems*  
Jay Archer, Jay Landscape  
Development

*Visions for a Sustainable  
Human Landscape*  
Will Bonsall,  
Scatterseed Project

*Spread the Word:  
Marketing Eco-Lawn Care*  
Paul Tukey, People, Places  
& Plants Magazine;  
SafeLawns.org

10:30am-11:30am

*Building Raingardens*  
Michael F. Clark,  
Weston & Sampson, Inc.

*Minerals and Microbes*  
David Yarrow,  
ChampionTrees

*The Gardener's Calendar*  
Tess McDonough,  
Sequencia Gardens

12:00pm-1:00pm

*From Swimming Ponds  
to Floating Islands...*  
Jay Archer,  
Jay Landscape  
Development

*Techniques for  
Bio-Efficient Gardening*  
Will Bonsall,  
Scatterseed Project

*Attract Pollinators  
Using Medicinal  
Herbs & Flowers*  
Deb Soule,  
Avena Botanicals

1:30pm

TRADE SHOW CLOSES

1:30pm

LUNCH &  
ENDING PLENARY  
with Tom Wessels,  
Antioch University  
New England,  
*The Myth of Progress*



ELA members living in California have been working for years to form an official Chapter of the organization. Now that the national-chapter guidelines are complete, momentum is once again building toward making that happen. Roxanne Evans, who has been informally serving as coordinator of the group's efforts for the past few years, reports the following news with a call for action.

The first annual ELA-CA State Meeting & Conference is being planned. Help is needed to organize this event, which could be the most important one for our organization this year. We'd like to host an ecolandscaping demonstration tour, hear from various speakers and have an exciting business meeting where we celebrate our progress to a legitimate 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization in the State of CA. All who are interested are invited to help organize, speak, sponsor or in any other way participate in this event. To date, we are happy to announce that Alane O'Reilly Weber has agreed to speak on the soil food web.

In March, the San Francisco Flower & Garden Show comes to Daly City for five days. We need 40 volunteers to staff the ELA table. Free admission to the show will be given for a four-hour commitment (\$20 value). Also in March, the Water Conservation Showcase is happening in San Francisco. This is an important industry-specific event, geared to architects, developers, government agencies and other folks related to green building, water conservation, etc. Major co-sponsors are the Pacific Energy Center and the Northern CA Chapter of the USGBC.

Please contact L. Roxanne Evans at [ecocentricdesignco@yahoo.com](mailto:ecocentricdesignco@yahoo.com), for more information.

## BOOK REVIEW

### RAIN GARDENS—MANAGING WATER SUSTAINABLY IN THE GARDEN AND DESIGNED LANDSCAPES

*Rain Gardens* is divided into three sections:

- Global view of the necessity for managing all aspects of rainwater.
- A close look at the details of managing rainwater.
- A directory of plants suitable for rain gardens.

The first section makes a good case for managing all aspects of rainwater from hard- surface run off in the built environment to replenishing ground water and reducing the use of water for irrigation. The intention is to manage the rainwater in a more comprehensive, natural and sustainable way.

The second section has many good examples of aesthetically pleasing rainwater management. This section has extensive coverage of roof gardens as well as other rainwater features.

The third section on suitable plants for rain gardens is based on useful plants in the UK. The entire list may not translate well to American gardens because there are many aggressive and invasive species in the list and some States may have laws prohibiting their use.

Overall, this book does a good job of explaining what rain gardens are all about and expands the definition of rain gardens. It has many beautiful pictures and useful diagrams that will serve as an inspiration for designing your own rain garden. Note that you will need to look elsewhere for hydrological engineering required for properly sizing your rain garden as well as requirements for maintenance.

— Review by Bill Jewel



Nigel Dunnett and Andy Clayden

## RAIN GARDENS

Managing water sustainably in the garden and designed landscape

by  
Nigel Dunnett  
and  
Andy Clayden

Timber Press [www.timberpress.com](http://www.timberpress.com)  
[www.timberpress.com/books/isbn.cfm/9780881928266/rain\\_gardens/dunnett](http://www.timberpress.com/books/isbn.cfm/9780881928266/rain_gardens/dunnett)

ELA welcomes 2008 and wishes you  
a happy & prosperous New Year

The ELA membership year is January thru December and that means

## it's time to renew!

Remind yourself why ELA is important to you and why you want to be a part of this organization and invite others to join and enjoy the benefits of membership as well.

Review the benefits of membership:

- Receiving the quarterly ELA newsletter
- Inclusion in the on-line ELA Find an Eco-Pro (Professional level and above) to maximize your business visibility on the web
- Networking with professionals, non-professionals, and others supportive of ecological landscaping
- Receiving the printed ELA Membership Networking Directory
- Learn more about sustainable landscaping practices, and speak with those that use them
- Access to ELA-CA yahoo groups (CA members only)
- Be on the forefront of a nationwide movement
- Make a positive change in yourself, your community, the environment, and the world

This year, please consider the Professional, Supporting, and Sustaining levels of membership.

Let's strengthen and grow our organization in 2008 – Join or Renew Now!

Visit [www.ecolandscaping.org](http://www.ecolandscaping.org) to print the membership brochure and to get further information.

Ecological Landscaping Association  
1257 Worcester Rd., #262  
Framingham, MA 01701  
617-436-5838

## gleanings



Before. Photo Credit SNWA.

### REWARDS FOR REMOVING LAWNS

Building a water-efficient landscape can be a challenge in the Mojave Desert, unless you use the same plant species that have evolved there during the past million years or so. Las Vegas, a city known for its excesses, is trying to reverse a completely unsustainable trend in landscape practices: maintaining lawns in a region with average rainfall of 3.5" and limited entitlement/access to the Colorado River water via Lake Mead. Although the famous "Strip" features waterfalls, fountains and man-made ponds, it only represents 3% of the water usage in the city. Residential and commercial lawns and golf courses have been estimated to consume up to 70% of the water resources.



After. Photo Credit SNWA.

Southern Nevada Water Authority's (SNWA) Water Smart Landscapes (WSL) Rebate Program has increased its reward for removing lawns in 2008. According to the SNWA website, residents and businesses will receive \$1.50 for each square foot of grass they replace with water-efficient landscaping. Since the WSL program's inception in 1999, it has converted more than 96 million square feet of grass to water-smart landscaping, **saving more than 18 billion gallons of water.** This amount of grass is reportedly equivalent to an 18-inch roll of sod stretching nearly halfway around the world at the equator.

### SSI OFFERS USEFUL TOOL AND SEEKS ELA HELP

Sustainable Sites Initiative (SSI) deadline for comments on the 1st draft of *Standards and Guidelines: Preliminary Report* has just recently passed (January 11, 2008) and the final report is scheduled for publication in the Fall. SSI is a partnership of the American Society of Landscape Architects, the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center, the United States Botanic Garden, and a diverse group of national stakeholder organizations. The report (available at: <http://sustainable-sites.org/report.html>) appears to be a useful reference. It offers startling information such as this from the EPA in 2006, "... **yard and landscape trimmings contribute approximately 32 million tons to the municipal waste stream, representing more than 13 percent of total municipal waste in the United States**".

ELA has been asked to help. Just recently, one of the project's coordinators contacted us to see if our members would participate in several ways. In addition to providing feedback during the public comments period on the final draft (expected in November, 2008), members could be of service in two ways. In the next few months, SSI would like to document case studies with sustainable land development and management practices. People are invited to submit a project that monitors and documents the success or failure of sustainable land practices. By end of January, there will be an online form for submission. **The deadline date will be May 1, 2008.**

Also, in the future (scheduled for 2010-2012), they will be looking for pilot projects to test the Standards and Guidelines and the Rating System. The knowledge gained from these pilot projects will be incorporated in the Reference Guide and will clarify and improve the performance goals. More information about this will be available in the future.



### ONLINE TRAINING HELPS PEOPLE FIGHT INVASIVE SPECIES

In collaboration with the Center for Invasive Plant Management, the National Wildlife Refuge System has designed an online training course for people interested in fighting invasive species.

The new invasive species website: [www.fws.gov/invasives/volunteersTrainingModule](http://www.fws.gov/invasives/volunteersTrainingModule) includes video, text and photos that provide background on the Refuge System and information about the science and management of invasive plants. The site also includes links to government and private websites dealing with the issue.



## NEW ENGLAND WILD FLOWER SOCIETY Internship Application Deadline Feb 28

Do you know of someone who might be interested in becoming part of our Conservation and Education efforts? To learn more visit [www.newfs.org/volunteers](http://www.newfs.org/volunteers). Please feel free to forward this email to your friends and colleagues. Society Volunteers are also needed. Contact Bonnie Drexler for more information [bdrexler@newenglandWILD.org](mailto:bdrexler@newenglandWILD.org)



## GreenScapes Display at the United States Botanic Garden

The EPA GreenScapes exhibit will demonstrate to homeowners and gardeners many of the simple and easy ways to greening their yard. For more information about gardening for wildlife, please visit [www.nwf.org/backyard/](http://www.nwf.org/backyard/)

## Newsletter Editor Position Available

ELA is looking for an Editor  
for the  
*Ecological Landscaper*,  
our quarterly publication

Duties: Sourcing and procuring articles, excerpts, and other content that may be of interest to our newsletter readers. Securing appropriate permission to reprint articles when necessary. Develop and procure other content including events listings and resources.



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Framingham, MA 01701  
or call the ELA Message Center at  
617-436-5838 or email us at  
[ELA.info@comcast.net](mailto:ELA.info@comcast.net)

## events



### FEBRUARY 25 ROUNDTABLE Local Lichens : An Introduction

Speaker: Elizabeth Kneiper

Date: February 25, 2008

Time: 7:30-9:00 PM

Location: Weston Community Center, 20

Alphabet Lane, Weston, MA

Fee: \$25 ELA member \$35 non-members

Lichens, plant-like organisms which are half-algae, half-fungus, are an integral component of ecosystems with diverse roles.

Lichens are known best for their slow growth, the part they play in the weathering of rock, and their ability to withstand extreme environments.

This introductory talk will focus on the biology and ecology of representative New England lichens and on the special aspects of our local lichen diversity and raise our awareness of their function as indicators of air quality in habitats.

Elizabeth Kneiper, instructor, New England Wild Flower Society.



### March 6-8, 2008 ELA 14th Annual Conference and Eco-Marketplace

at the MassMutual Center in Springfield, MA. Visit us on the web for all the details, [www.ecolandscaping.com](http://www.ecolandscaping.com). See page 8 for schedule information.



### March 9, 2008 ~ 1 PM Book Signing and Talk at New England Wild Flower Society's Garden in the Woods in Framingham, MA.

Bill Cullina will give a short talk and will sign books including his newest book *Native Ferns Moss & Grasses*.

To learn more visit [www.newfs.org](http://www.newfs.org)



### March 26-28, 2008 New England Assn. of Environmental Biologists (NEAEB)- Annual Meeting Attitash Grand Summit Hotel and Conference Center, Bartlett, NH More Info: The call for papers and other conference information can be found online at [www.epa.gov/region1/neaeb2008/](http://www.epa.gov/region1/neaeb2008/), or by contacting Dave Neils at 603-271-8865 or [dneils@des.state.nh.us](mailto:dneils@des.state.nh.us)

*The Ecological Landscaping Association would like to thank the following for their generous help in sustaining our mission through the Annual Appeal:*

*Lucy Borodkin*

*Carroll County Landscape, Inc.*

*Janet Childs*

*Daniel Hildreth*

*Sarah Holland*

*Howard Garden Designs*

*Andrea Knowles*

*Land's Sake, Inc.*

*Sarah A. Little*

*Joe Moore*

*Henry Moss*

*Lillabeth Wies*

*Thomas Wirth Associates*

*Thank you as well to our many valued ELA supporters who wish to remain anonymous.*

## Humboldt Institute, Steuben, Maine INVASIVE AND EXOTIC PLANTS SEMINARS

### June 22 -28, 2008

–Submersed & Floating Aquatic Flowering Plants: Taxonomy, Ecology, and Management.

### Sept. 28-Oct.1, 2008

–Exotic & Invasive Plant Eradication and Plant Community Restoration

For more information contact the Humboldt Institute, PO Box 9, Steuben, ME 04680-0009. Phone: 207-546-2821. Fax: 207-546-3042; E-mail: [office@eaglehill.us](mailto:office@eaglehill.us)  
Online general information may be found at <http://www.eaglehill.us>

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**May 4, 2008**

**Fourth Annual Bringing Back the Natives  
Garden Tour**

Admission is free.

Admission to Companion Events: the  
Saturday, April 12, 26, and Saturday, May 3  
Select Tours are \$30 per person, with a limit  
of 30 people per tour. **Registration prior to  
April 26 is required** and can be completed  
at [www.BringingBackTheNatives.net](http://www.BringingBackTheNatives.net).

For more information, contact Kathy@  
KathyKramerConsulting.net or call (510)  
236-9558 between 9am and 9pm or visit  
[www.BringingBackTheNatives.net](http://www.BringingBackTheNatives.net)

## announcements

### Attention Arborists:

**Electrical Hazards Awareness Program  
Free Workshop – March 1, 2008**

The Electrical Hazards Awareness Program (EHAP) from the Tree Care Industry Association (TCIA) in cooperation with UMass Extension is a training program that employers can use in conjunction with documented on-the-job skills training and assessment to certify their employees as line-clearance arborists while meeting OSHA and ANSI requirements for arboricultural operations.

TCIA has been awarded a federal OSHA/Susan Harwood grant to provide **FREE\*** EHAP

workshops in 2008, allowing professionals to be trained in electrical hazards awareness at no cost. EHAP workshops allow large groups to be trained and fulfill many of the program's requirements in one day.

All necessary EHAP program materials will also be provided at no cost.

**Free EHAP workshop will be held:**

**March 1, 2008**

**Holdsworth Hall, UMass Amherst  
Amherst, MA**

For more information about the EHAP program and to register for the workshop online, visit [www.tcia.org](http://www.tcia.org) and click the Safety tab, then EHAP.

\*A nominal fee of \$12 will be charged for lunch and refreshments.

## unclassifieds

**Well Water Connection, Inc.** provides practical, cost-effective and environmentally conscious solutions to water-related problems experienced by green industry professionals and their clients. Our unique approach combines professional project management with water well, pump, filtration and stain removal services. For immediate service or more information, contact John Larsen at 978-640-6900 or [jlarsen@wellwaterconnection.com](mailto:jlarsen@wellwaterconnection.com).

## 2008 Conference Proceedings Booklets for Sale

Copies of the 2008 Conference Proceedings Booklet, which contains speaker handouts, are available for purchase for \$20 (includes postage and handling) and will be mailed after the conference.

For booklet orders please send your check made payable to the *Ecological Landscaping Association* to this address:

**1257 Worcester Rd., #262  
Framingham, MA 01701**

Please be sure to include your return address with your order.



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