



"Advocating for responsible stewardship of land and natural resources in landscaping and horticultural practices."

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July

Summer heat has taken hold in New England with the dog days of summer arriving early. Throw in a July 4th hurricane, microbursts, and torrential downpours, and we seem to face unusual weather every other day lately. Nonetheless, we're expecting a pleasant day Tuesday, July 22nd, for ELA's second [Community Action Project](#). Collaborating again with Boston Natural Areas Network and the Landscape Institute, ELA will restore Arcola Park in Jamaica Plain, MA. If you are in the area and have a couple of hours to spare on Tuesday, [sign up to lend a hand](#). Until then, dig into this month's articles focused on soil; we'll dig into the landscape on Tuesday. The satisfaction we'll feel from transforming a community landscape into a gem that will sparkle rain or shine? Priceless. *MS*



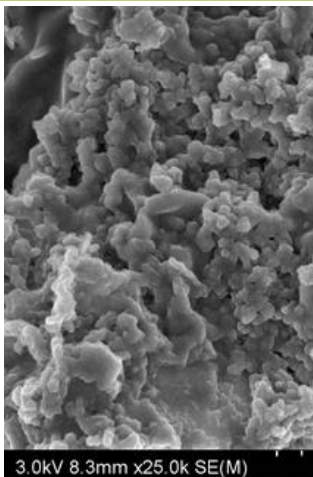
"Don't Treat Soil Like Dirt!" or "Is Your Soil Healthy?"

by Thomas J. Akin

"In our increasingly paved-over civilization, soil is a woefully under-appreciated asset. Just think what an amazing resource it is! Soil naturally filters all of our water. Soil enables us to grow all of our food, fiber and flowers. Soil is home to millions of life forms. And it was dropped here, free of charge, by the last glacier that came through, 12,000 years ago...."

I originally wrote this article for an ELA newsletter a little over 10 years ago; today I would call the article, "Is Your Soil Healthy?" Let's see how much I got right and how much the science has improved since then.

[Read the article.](#)



Humic Substances: Markers of a Healthy Soil

by Dr. Elham A. Ghabbour and Dr. Geoffrey Davies

Natural landscaping depends to a large extent on healthy soil. In this context 'healthy' means that the soil is carbon- and nutrient-rich and that it retains water but drains well. It's important to know that soil carbon consists of two main pools, one of which is accessible to microbes as food (labile) and the other that is much less accessible and is sequestered (stabilized). This sequestered carbon in the form of humic substances (HS) confers long-term stability to a soil, ensuring that landscapers' efforts will last well into the future without major intervention. Getting a soil carbon analysis helps with assessment of the soil's readiness for natural landscaping. [Read the article.](#)



Soil as Carbon Storehouse: New Weapon in Climate Fight?

by Judith D. Schwartz

In the 19th century, as land-hungry pioneers steered their wagon trains westward across the United States, they encountered a vast landscape of towering grasses that nurtured deep, fertile soils. Today, [just three percent](#) of North America's tallgrass prairie remains. Its disappearance has had a dramatic impact on the landscape and ecology of the U.S., but a key consequence of that transformation has largely been overlooked: a massive loss of soil carbon into the atmosphere. The importance of soil carbon - how it is leached from the earth and how that process can be reversed - is the subject of intensifying scientific investigation, with important implications for the effort to slow the rapid rise of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. [Read the article.](#)

This article first appeared in [Yale Environment 360](#).



Sustainable SITES Releases v2 Standards

by Toby Wolf and Nyssa Gyorgy

The systems that promote and support ecological landscape practices have just taken another stride forward. The Sustainable Sites Initiative (SITES) has released the SITES v2 Rating System, which is the most comprehensive rating system for developing sustainable landscapes. As the LEED program does for buildings, SITES provides guidelines and standards for every stage of a project, from site selection through operation. [Read the article.](#)



Checking In: ELA Lays Plans for 2014-15 Annual Meeting 2014

ELA held its annual meeting on July 15, 2014 at Garden in the Woods in Framingham, MA to review ongoing initiatives and chart new collaborations. Each year ELA meets to review its fiscal status and renew its commitment to promoting land care based on an understanding of and respect for natural ecosystems.

[Read the article.](#)

Gleanings

Your Sustainable Project

Richard Hartlage, [Land Morphology](#), is seeking projects to include in a book series that will illustrate three emerging trends in landscape architecture and garden design: dynamic planting design as exemplified by the Highline, sustainability and green building practices in the high end single family/estate market, and the forging of art and landscape architecture as co-mingling practices. According to Hartlage, "If you are interested in being included in one of more of the books please submit images of projects you think are exceptional projects and would fit the topic/s. I have a small amount of money to travel and photograph projects but it is limited. If you have professional images that can be used for publication that is optimum. Please include a brief description or cut sheet, and the location of the project." For additional information or submission, email book@landmorphology.com.



Milkweeds: A Conservation Practitioner's Guide

A new guide available from The Xerces Society provides information gathered from interviews with native plant nurseries and seed producers, gained firsthand through Project Milkweed, and synthesized from scientific literature. It provides conservation professionals with information about optimizing milkweed seed production methods, offers guidance on incorporating milkweeds into restoration and revegetation efforts, and highlights milkweeds' unique characteristics and value to wildlife. Native seed producers, restoration practitioners, land managers, monarch conservationists, gardeners, and landowners will all find this guide valuable. Download a free PDF now of [Milkweeds: A Conservation Practitioner's Guide](#).



ELA Members in the News

The Boston Globe recently featured work by Former ELA Board member Jessie Banhazi and her Green City Growers. Read about her urban vegetable gardens in an [archived ELA article](#) or in [the Globe](#).



ELA Introduces Speakers Bureau

As interest in ecological solutions continues to grow, ELA is receiving an increasing number of requests for speakers with an expertise in various areas of ecological landscape design and maintenance. The ELA Board of Directors recently voted to create the ELA Speakers Bureau in order to connect our knowledgeable membership with garden clubs, green councils, and other groups looking for speakers. Any ELA member who would like to be listed should contact [Penny Lewis](#).

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

July 24 - [MNLA/MFGA Summer Conference and Trade Show](#); Deerfield, MA; 8:00am-5:00pm. Early registration discount ends July 19th.

July 25 - Gardening for Pollinators Workshop; Housatonic, MA; 10:30am-12:30pm. Call 413-528-4521.

July 25 - Butterfly House Reception at Project Native; Housatonic, MA; 5:00-7:00pm. Call 413-528-4521.

July 29 - [The Identification of Turf Damaging Diseases Workshop](#); Amherst & South Deerfield, MA; 9:00am-2:00pm.

July 31 **ELA EVENT**→[Found Well Farm: Native Plant Nursery with Permaculture Roots](#); Pembroke, NH; 4:00-6:00pm.

August 5 - [Summer Conference Connecting the Classroom to the School Garden](#); Boylston, MA; 9:00am-3:00pm.

August 7 - [A Native Meadow: 40 Acres and Over 10 Years of Success](#); Salisbury, CT; 1:00-3:00pm.

August 8-10 - NOFA Summer Conference; Amherst, MA.

August 12 **ELA EVENT**→[The Trouble with Earthworms](#); Framingham, MA; 6:00-8:00pm.

August 15-17 - [Wild Ones Annual Conference](#); Neenah, WI.

August 18 **ELA EVENT**→[The Edible Landscape at Wellesley College](#); Wellesley, MA; 5:00-7:00pm.

August 19 **ELA EVENT**→[Caring for Trees at the Rose Kennedy Greenway](#); Boston, MA; 1:00-3:00pm. (Rain Date August 20)

August 20 **ELA EVENT**→[The Beautiful and Functional Rain garden at St. George's School](#); Middletown, RI; 6:00-8:00pm.

August 27 - [Pollinator Conservation Short Course](#); Kingston, RI; 9:00am-4:30pm.

September 15-19 - [Field Study: Botanic & Aesthetic Composition of Native Plant Communities](#); Cornwall, NY.

September 1 - [Practical Options for Food Production Resilience in an Increasingly Variable Climate](#); Newton, MA; 10:00am-4:00pm.

September 2 - [Practical Options for Food Production Resilience in an Increasingly Variable Climate](#); Amherst, MA; 10:00am-4:00pm.

September 8-10 - [Water Education Summit](#); Asheville, NC.

September 19 **ELA EVENT**→[The Trees at Brooklyn Botanic Gardens](#); Brooklyn, NY; 10:00am-noon.

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**Field-Grown Perennials - Litchfield, NH
Going Out of Business - Close-out Sale!**

**The Gardens at Rosewood Fields
Daylilies, Grasses, Phlox, & More**

[Contact ELA](#) for more details.

ELA wants to express appreciation to Lynda Morrow and Wendy Turner, owners of The Gardens at Rosewood Fields for the generous contribution of plant material donated to ELA Community Action projects.



Garden and Conservation Technician - Boston Management Unit of Trustees of Reservations

Full time position based in Boston responsible for the maintenance and stewardship of community gardens, City Natives, the Hutchinson's Field and Pierce Reservations, and the Leatherbee Woods Urban Wild.

[Complete job description.](#)

Office Coordinator (Part-time) - Grow Native Massachusetts

This person will manage the basic operations and day-to-day needs of running our office and programs. Essential to this work is the administration of our sophisticated CRM database (Salesforce) for managing donations, program registrations, communications, and events.

Additional responsibilities include producing our monthly E-Letter, organizing programs and events, providing routine office administration, and helping to manage volunteers. [Complete Job Description.](#)






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all of my landscape installations."
Nancy DuBrule Clemente, Northford, CT*

We hope that you enjoy this edition of the ELA newsletter.

We welcome your comments at ela.info@comcast.net.

Maureen Sundberg, ELA Newsletter Editor