



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

## July 2016

July is a time of movement, of change as we try to pack in as much summer fun and as many summer chores as possible. July is also a time of change for ELA as an organization. Every two years we welcome in a new set of officers on our Board of Directors. This year, Trevor Smith steps down as ELA President, and we welcome Theresa Sprague and Toby Wolfe as incoming President and Vice-president. Of course, we won't be saying good-bye to Trevor; he continues to serve on the Conference Committee and help with other ELA initiatives. ELA extends a warm thanks to Trevor for his work on behalf of ELA and welcomes the 2016-17 Board of Directors, including four new members. You can read letters from Trevor and Theresa to the ELA community and find out more about ELA's talented new board members in ELA News.

When you aren't on the move this summer, enjoy this month's newsletter. Articles take a look at a few different garden spaces - from a natural play park in Maryland to a wildflower garden in New York to the naturalistic gardens that arise from intermingled plant combinations. We also review the documentary film *Hometown Habitat* with its call to create more spaces, large and small, that welcome nature into our communities and everyday lives. Finally we have an Eco-pro response to an invasion of poison ivy and bindweed. *MS*



### **Natural Play and Sustainability in Maryland City Park**

by Nancy Striniste

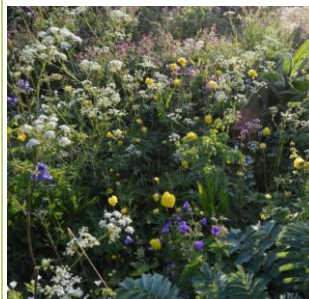
Constitution Gardens Park is the first natural play-themed park in the National Capitol area. A relatively new phenomenon, natural playscapes incorporate mostly natural materials and encourage children to get outside and play in nature. In addition to its more playful elements, the park references the local natural and cultural history and prioritizes sustainability. [Read the article.](#)



### **New Garden at Cornell Plantations Mundy Wildflower Garden**

by Krissy Boys

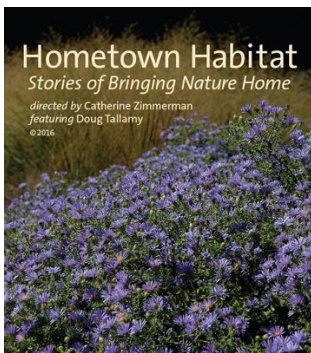
An infestation of crown vetch provided the impetus for development of a new garden at Mundy Wildflower Garden, which borders on Fall Creek, a protected waterway. The discovery of structural problems on the site failed to derail the restoration, and the garden now features an array of native plants. [Read the article.](#)



### **Effectively Intermingled Perennials**

by Dr. Noel Kingsbury

As interest in naturalistic planting and the use of native plants rises, there is corresponding interest in mixing and blending plantings. Unlike block plantings, intermingled plantings offer the opportunity to create finely-textured and detailed perennial combinations; however, there are plenty of potential problems to avoid. [Read the article.](#)



**Film Review: Hometown Habitat, Stories of Bringing Nature Home**  
Directed by Catherine Zimmerman, in partnership with Conservation  
Featuring and Narrated by Dr. Douglas Tallamy  
Reviewed by Penny Lewis

This 90-minute environmental documentary, produced by award-winning filmmaker Catherine Zimmerman, educates viewers about the critical role that native plants play in our ecosystems. Beyond the education, the film shares a series of successful, nation-wide initiatives that inspire us to get involved and make a difference in our own landscapes and client projects. [Read the Review.](#)

## Eco-Answers from the Pros

ELA members have spent hundreds of hours learning the best ecological solutions to problems in the landscape. You can benefit from all that accumulated knowledge by posing a question to our experts. If you are stumped by a problem in your landscape or are looking for a second opinion on a potential solution, ask ELA's Eco-Pros. Send your question to [ela\\_new@verizon.net](mailto:ela_new@verizon.net). And if you need additional help, refer to the listing of [ELA Professionals](#).



### Chemical Free Poison Ivy and Bindweed Removal

I have never used chemicals on my property and do not want to start. Poison ivy, which I am HIGHLY allergic to, is showing up in more and more places on my property - my herb garden included! Also, a very invasive strangling type of morning glory with pink flowers covers my one front garden area like a blanket AND it grows up my foundation under the shingles. I had "Goats du Jour" come to take a look, but they felt fencing the area to keep the goats safe would be a problem. What can I do??

[Read the Pro's Answer.](#)



### Plant Identification Challenge Solved

Thank you to the many readers who responded to last month's Plant Identification Challenge. Glenn White, New Jersey, was the first to identify *Ixeris stolonifera*, or creeping lettuce. *Ixeris stolonifera* is listed in the Natural Resources Conservation Services' PLANTS Database as introduced throughout Delaware and New Jersey and in parts of New York and Pennsylvania. The challenge plant came from a New Hampshire garden and has been reported. Congratulations to Glenn who received an ELA hat for his quick response.

## ELA News

### Save the Dates for New Collaborative Events

ELA has embarked on two new collaborative programs planned for 2016-17, offering a pair of unique education opportunities. Plan now to save the dates.

- **December 9** - ELA, Brooklyn Botanic Garden, and Brooklyn Bridge Park present [Creating Ecological Plant Communities: Digging Deep into Plant Knowledge with the Masters](#). This symposium provides a forum for five distinguished plant master to share in-depth knowledge of a few of their favorite plants and much, much more.
- **January 31** - Join the Ecological Landscape Alliance, along with collaborators Biodiversity for a Livable Climate, the Northeast Organic Farming Association (NOFA/Mass), and the Organic Land Care of NOFA/CT for [Landscape Heroes: Carbon, Water, and Biodiversity](#). Come learn practical steps you can take from carbon experts.



## ELA Welcomes New Board Members

ELA members recently voted in a slate of officers for a two-year term. The new officers are Theresa Sprague, President; Toby Wolf, Vice-president; Michael Opton, Treasurer; and Maureen Sundberg, Secretary.

As Trevor Smith, ELA's outgoing president, wraps up his term, he offers comments on his two years as ELA's president. [Read Trevor's letter](#). And Theresa previews the next two years. [Read Theresa's letter](#).

At this time we must also bid farewell to three ELA board members. The ELA Board and Officers want to express appreciation for several years of service to retiring board members Jon Ford, Jeanne Lukenda, and David Queeley.

And we would like to welcome four new board members who were accepted for a three-year term with ELA's Board of Directors. ELA's new board members are Tabitha Harkin, Mark Highland, Marie Machiarolo, and Angela Tanner. [Learn more about ELA's new board members](#).



## Gleanings

### Biochar Webinar for Designers

Dr. Kelby Fite, PhD and Peter MacDonagh, FASLA co-present the webinar [Biochar: What Designers Need to Know](#), offering the latest information on biochar research and the effects of biochar on health and survivability of urban trees.



### Gowanus Canal Stormwater Project

The 2,000 Gallon Project repurposes commercial dumpsters as stormwater retention vessels filled with soil and plants and designed to reduce combined sewage overflow (CSO) into the Brooklyn's Gowanus Canal. In addition to retaining stormwater, each 2,000-gallon dumpster presents a visual reminder of the physical volume of managed stormwater. Find out more about the project and follow its progress toward deploying and planting 10 dumpsters at <http://gowanuscanalconservancy.org/ee/>. You can also sign up for free workshops or volunteer with the project.



### Decline in Global Insect Populations Reported

Christian Schwägerl reports in Yale Environment360 on the dramatic decline in global insect populations in [Vanishing Act: Why Insects Are Declining and Why It Matters](#).



### Urban Agriculture in Vancouver

[Sole Food Street Farms](#) in Vancouver British Columbia produces thousands of pounds of fresh produce in high-density plantings on vacant lots in the heart of the city, including a two-acre plot near BC Place stadium. Read about this farming project in "[Concrete Farmland](#)."



### A Ghost in the Making

A single bee species, *Bombus affinis*, is the subject of a short film: [A Ghost in the Making: Photographing the Rusty-patched Bumble Bee](#). Clay Bolt chronicles his poignant search for one of many native bee species that are disappearing from North America.



### Planning for Gypsy Moth

Gypsy Moth has seen a dramatic return to Massachusetts this summer. Although it is too late to manage gypsy moth this year, UMass Extension offers an [update](#) on management steps to take next year and a [Gypsy Moth Fact Sheet](#).



### MA Introduces State Apiary

Announced during Massachusetts Pollinator Week, the state opened its first apiary on the campus of University of Massachusetts Amherst. The hives will be used for education, outreach demonstrations, and research. [Read more](#).



### Sour Mulch

Beware of mulch smelling of vinegar, ammonia, sulfur, or silage rather than that good cut-wood or earthy smell. Hot summer days can lead to sour mulch that is toxic to plants and animals. [Find out more.](#)



### Demo Garden Under Construction

[Grow Native Massachusetts](#) has begun construction of demonstration gardens at their new home at the Waltham Field Station. The organization is recruiting volunteers to help with garden installation as well as ongoing maintenance and invasive monitoring and control. Contact Meredith to offer your help: [mgallogly@grownativemass.org](mailto:mgallogly@grownativemass.org).



### ALB Education Materials Available through MDAR

Asian Longhorn Beetle (ALB) remains a threat in central Massachusetts. Worcester and surrounding towns have already lost 33,000 trees to this invasive insect, and eradication efforts still continue. In its ongoing effort to educate the public about ALB, Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources is offering free information pamphlets, posters, ID cards, etc. available for distribution by organizations in Massachusetts. Some materials are available in Spanish. There are also opportunities for free local training sessions. Order materials at <http://bit.ly/pestoutreach> or contact [Joshua.brucknerg@MassMail.state.ma.us](mailto:Joshua.brucknerg@MassMail.state.ma.us). General [information about ALB](#) is available through UMass Extension.

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

- July 16 - [Introduction to Native Ferns](#); Framingham, MA; 11:00am-3:30pm.
- July 21 - [Learn Locally: Herb Gardening](#); Pawtucket, RI; 5:00pm.
- July 23 **ELA Event**→[Eco-Tour: Wildlife Haven at Turkey Hill Brook Farm](#); Spencer, MA; 10:00am-12:00pm.
- July 27 **ELA Event**→[What Role Do Nativars Play in an Ecological Landscape](#) Framingham, MA; 1:00pm-5:00pm.
- July 27 - [Drought-Tolerant Plants for the Dog Days of Summer](#); Cambridge, MA; 6:30-8:30pm.
- July 28 - [Down to Earth Summer Conference](#), UMass/MNLA/MFGA; Walpole, MA.
- July 28 - [Natives, Pollinators, and Your Backyard](#); Framingham, MA; 10:00am-12:00pm.
- July 31 - [Garden Dialogues with Larry Weaner](#); Millerton, NY & Salisbury, CT; 10:am-2:00pm.
- August 3 **ELA Event**→[Eco-Tour: YardScaping Ecological Demonstration Gardens](#); Portland, ME; 4:00-6:00pm.
- August 5 - [Compost: Turning Waste into Wealth](#); Whately & Amherst, MA; 8:30am-1:15pm.
- August 9 - [Hydric Soils](#); Framingham, MA; 9:00am-4:00pm.
- August 11 **ELA Event**→[Eco-Tour: Landscape Design with Maintenance in Mind](#); Boston, MA; 10:00am-12:00pm.
- August 11&18 - [Botanic Inventory Methods](#); Framingham, MA.
- August 12-14 - [NOFA Summer Conference](#); Amherst, MA.
- August 13-17 - [ISA Annual International Conference & Trade Show](#); Fort Worth, TX.
- August 14 - [Fern Identification and Ecology for Conservationists & Gardeners](#); Harvard, MA; 1:00-5:00pm.
- August 15,16,22,23 - [Maine Accreditation Course in Organic Land Care](#); Portland, ME.
- August 18 **ELA Event**→[Bird Park Ecological Management = Beautiful and Healthy Ecosystems](#); East Walpole, MA; 10:00am-12:00pm.
- September 14 **ELA Event**→[Eco-Tour: Sustainable Eco-Systems for Wildlife](#); Cambridge, MA; 10:00am-12:00pm.
- September 20 **ELA Event**→[Reawaking Large Landscapes - Activating the Space](#) - Webinar; 7:00pm EST.
- September 22-24 - [Trail Building and Stewardship Skills](#); Easthampton & Northampton, MA.
- September 23 **ELA Event**→[Inspiration from a Prairie](#); Garden City, NY; 8:30am-3:30pm.
- September 29 - [MA Green Careers Conference](#); Worcester, MA; 8:00am.
- October 2 - [Celebrating Connecticut's™ Landscape: Fall Foliage Tour](#) (focus on habitat management projects); meet in Burlington, CT; 10:00am-4:00pm.

October 4 **ELA Event**→[Eco-Tour: Ecological Landscape Maintenance Techniques at Mass Audubon](#); Belmont, MA; 3:00-5:00pm.

November 10 **ELA Event**→[2016 Season's End Summit: Landscape Design with Maintenance in Mind](#); North Grafton, MA; 8:30am-4:30pm.

November 16 **ELA Event**→[Tools and Techniques to Manage Healthy Soil](#) - Webinar; 1:00-2:00pm EDT.

December 9 **ELA Event**→[Creating Ecological Plant Communities: Digging Deep into Plant Knowledge with the Masters](#); Brooklyn, NY; 8:00am-5:00pm.



#### Landscape Designer / Design Assistant

Harwich, Massachusetts

**BlueFlax Design, LLC**, a rapidly growing design/build firm located in Harwich, Massachusetts (on Cape Cod) specializing in a blend of landscape and ecological restoration design and implementation, seeks a designer/design assistant to support the owner/lead designer with projects ranging from traditional residential landscape design to the development of wetland mitigation/restoration plans and land management plans. [Read the job post.](#)

### ELA Company Member Profiles



**Sustainable Soils** can help you transform your soil to achieve optimum nutrition, efficiency, and sustainability by balancing critical mineral nutrients. We offer **nation-wide soil fertility consulting services**, custom soil prescriptions, and organic soil amendments. Bringing together the knowledge of soil science, chemistry and plant biology, we maximize your soil's performance. For help to transform your garden, farm, or landscape to optimum performance, contact us at [info@sustainablesoils.com](mailto:info@sustainablesoils.com) or give us a call at 816-665-8550.

**Thank you for subscribing to ELA Newsletter! If you'd like to support our efforts to educate and promote sustainable and ecological landscape practices, please consider making a tax-deductible donation. We appreciate your support!**

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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*

 Forward to a Friend