



ecological
landscaping
association

biodiversity • conservation • lawn care
maintenance • meadows • rain gardens
pest management • restoration
soil • trees • urban landscaping
water quality & recycling • wildlife habitats

January

ELA's 20th Conference is set to take place on February 26 & 27th this year. The first day features [intensive workshops](#), one focused on trees and the other on soil. This month's newsletter provides a glimpse of some of the topics and speakers from Wednesday sessions. Chris Roddick addresses the older, "veteran" trees in our landscapes, and Dr. Nina Bassuk shares information about soil compaction and composite soils. Travis Beck offers an excerpt from his book, *Principles of Ecological Design*. In addition to presenting conference sessions on February 26th, all three authors will share their soil and tree expertise in a general discussion around the maintenance of tree health during a Panel Discussion: *Seeing the Forest for the Trees*. To round out this issue, we also have a review of *Teaming with Nutrients*, by Jeff Lowenfels - soil enthusiast and last year's Conference keynote speaker. If you missed the list of this year's Conference [topics](#) and [speakers](#), the complete schedule is available on the ELA website. *MS*



Don't Be Afraid of the Big Bad Shade Tree, A Case for Veteran Trees

by Christopher Roddick

Ask any arborist why people hire them and, more often than not, the number one answer is fear. People do love their trees, but most call an arborist because they are afraid of big trees or big branches falling on their houses. While there are many reasons to hire a tree care professional, it's fear that actually makes people open their wallets.

[Read the article](#)

Chris Roddick presents "Caring for Veteran Trees" on Wednesday afternoon, Feb 26 at [ELA's 20th Conference & Eco-Marketplace](#).



Dealing with Soil Compaction

by Dr. Nina Bassuk

Soil compaction is the single most difficult and harmful environmental or abiotic condition that a tree or shrub can experience. There are other environmental problems such as drought, cold temperatures, poor drainage, or lack of sunlight, but for the most part these problems can be overcome by appropriate plant selection. In the case of soil compaction, no amount of skillful plant selection can remedy the problem. Quite simply, if a plant's roots can't grow into the soil, the soil might as well not be there. [Read the article](#)

Dr. Nina Bassuk presents "Remediating Compromised Soils" on Wednesday morning, Feb 26 at [ELA's 20th Conference & Eco-Marketplace](#).



Using CU-Structural Soil to Grow Trees Surrounded by Pavement by Dr. Nina Bassuk

Soils under pavement need to be compacted to meet load-bearing requirements so that sidewalks and other pavement won't subside and fail. Soils are often compacted to 95% peak (Proctor or modified Proctor) density before pavements are laid. When trees are planted into these soils, root growth is severely reduced or eliminated beyond the tree-planting hole. When root growth is restricted, tree growth suffers as water, nutrients, and oxygen are limited. The need for a load-bearing soil under pavement gave rise to the development of CU-Structural Soil, a blended soil that can be compacted to 100% peak density to bear the load of a pavement while allowing tree roots to grow through it. [Read the article](#)

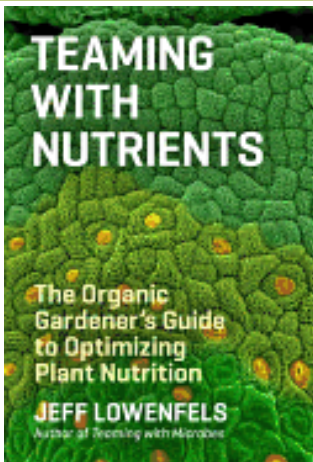
Dr. Nina Bassuk presents "Remediating Compromised Soils" on Wednesday morning, Feb 26 at [ELA's 20th Conference & Eco-Marketplace](#).



When Lightning Strikes: Counting on Disturbance, Planning for Succession by Travis Beck

From *Principles of Ecological Landscape Design* by Travis Beck. Copyright © 2013 Travis Beck. Reproduced by permission of [Island Press](#), Washington, D.C.

Disturbances occur, and our landscapes ought to be ready for them. Hurricanes and wildfires are common natural disturbances whose impacts can be mitigated with sensible landscape design and larger-scale planning. Much of the damage caused by hurricanes stems from falling limbs, flying debris, and the direct force of winds (Abbey 1994). A simple preventive step is to remove dead branches and dead or diseased trees from areas where they might cause a problem. Tall sentinel trees such as cabbage palm (*Sabal palmetto*) and bald cypress placed at the edges of a lot can break up wind flows and act as initial storm buffers. Storm walls and wind deflector trees with low centers of gravity and deep root systems, such as live oak (*Quercus virginiana*), can guide winds up and over buildings. [Read the excerpt](#)
Travis Beck presents "Designing Plant Communities with Succession in Mind" on Wednesday afternoon, Feb 26 at [ELA's 20th Conference & Eco-Marketplace](#).



Book Review: Teaming With Nutrients

Written by Jeff Lowenfels; Published by Timber Press ©2013

Reviewed by George Batchelor

What do plants eat? In his latest book, *Teaming with Nutrients*, Jeff Lowenfels writes for the gardener who is fascinated by plants and wants to better understand and visualize the world of soil molecules and root hairs, of hydrogen ions, covalent bonds, and nutrient movement through the phloem. In the best of instructive traditions, his writing is not only clear, but his personal wonder and astonishment of the subject are contagious. [Read the review](#)



Green Roof Workshop Attendees to Receive Professional Guide

ELA has added a hands-on workshop to the ELA Conference & Eco-Marketplace lineup this year. On Thursday, Feb 27, Green Living Technologies Inc (GLTi) and Land Escapes co-sponsor an opportunity for Conference attendees to construct a green roof using the latest materials and to quiz practitioners on techniques and resources.

The workshop is free to Thursday conference attendees, but requires [registration](#). Those who register will also receive a copy of *A Professional Guide to Green Roof Installations* by George Irwin, GLTi.

The *Guide* is a 200-page reference that addresses all aspects of green roofs. From the history of green roofs to green roof components to installation specifics and logistics, Irwin shares his expertise in great detail. Descriptions and photos of a wide variety of GLTi roof projects demonstrate the versatility and beauty of green roofs while providing lots of specifics.

The 2014 ELA Eco-Marketplace Exhibitor Lineup

At ELA's 20th Conference and Eco-Marketplace you'll meet exhibitors providing all kinds of support services to the eco-landscaper. From seeds and plants to tools and services, you'll find lots to explore in the Eco-Marketplace.

A Jandris & Sons	Groundscapes Express, Inc +	Organic Mechanics Soil
Amherst Nurseries +	Guardair Corp	Organic Plant Magic +
Bay State Forestry Service	Herbanatur +	Planters' Choice Nursery
Colonial Seed Company	ICT Organics	Project Native, Inc *
Compostwerks!	Land Escapes +	Quiet Communities *
Conway School +	Lawn Equipment Parts Co (LEPCO) +	RainStay +
Earth and Turf Products	New Moon Nursery	Read Custom Soils
Filtrex	North Creek Nurseries	Rhode Island Natural History Survey *
Fourth Generation Nursery	OESCO, Inc. +	UNH -Thompson School*

+ Sponsors * Nonprofits

Gleanings

UMass Green Directory

The UMass Extension 2014 Green Directory is available for download at <http://ag.umass.edu/agriculture-resources/green-directory>. The 42-page guide offers names and contact information for staff with expertise in particular areas, information about extension newsletters, conferences, and workshops, information about testing services provided by the extension, and other useful information. A good document to keep at hand.



LCA Releases Landscape Specification Guidelines, 6th Edition

The Landscape Contractors Association MD * DC * VA (LCA) recently announced the release of the 6th edition of the [Landscape Specification Guidelines](#). Written with landscape contractors, landscape architects, and designers in mind, the guidelines provide green industry professionals with up-to-date research and techniques used in the landscape industry. They serve as a guide for specifying, installing, and maintaining quality landscape projects, while also promoting sound horticultural principles.

New to this edition, the *Landscape Specification Guidelines* are published as eight independent parts: Exterior Landscape Installation, Exterior Landscape Maintenance, Interior Landscape Installation and Maintenance, Irrigation, Non-Tidal Wetland Planting, Seeding and Sodding, Soils, and Tree Preservation. Users may purchase the part(s) that are most relevant to their businesses. Additionally, the guidelines are available in print and electronic versions.



Internship Opportunities

The New England Wild Flower Society (NEWFS) is currently seeking applicants for three paid internship opportunities: Native Plant Horticulture Internship, Native Plant Curatorial Internship, and Native Plant Nursery Internship. Details are posted at <http://newenglandwild.org/jobs/internships>.



Symphony of the Soil

Boston's Museum of Science and the Arnold Arboretum have joined up to present [Symphony of the Soil](#), on Wednesday, January 29, 7:00-9:00pm. The film explores the complexity and mystery of soil, sharing the views of scientists, farmers, and activists, while drawing from ancient knowledge and cutting-edge science. A panel discussion follows the film screening. Participants include Thomas J. Akin, conservation agronomist, grazing lands coordinator, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service; Serita D. Frey, PhD, professor soil microbial ecology, University of New Hampshire and research faculty at The Harvard Forest; and Jim War, farmer and owner, Ward's Berry Farm, Sharon, MA.



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

Jan 20 - **ELA EVENT**→[Sustainable Landscape Design, Webinar](#); 7:30-8:30pmEST.

Jan 21 - **ELA EVENT**→[SITES from the Ground Up: How to Rate Sustainable Landscapes, Webinar](#); 7:00-8:00pmEST.

Jan 23 - [Lecture with Julie Moir Messervy](#); Elm Bank, Wellesley, MA; 5:30pm.

Jan 26 - [Reading the Rodents](#) (Lecture); New Hope, PA; 2:00-3:00pm.

Jan 30 - [Global Warming: How New England Forests and Trees Will Be Affected](#); Newton, MA; 7:00pm.

Jan 30 - [Selected Topics for Tree Care Professionals](#); Topsfield, MA; 8:30am-12:30pm.

Jan 30 & Feb 1 - [7th Organic Seed Growers Conference](#); Corvallis, OR.

Feb 2-4 - [Soil and Nutrition Conference: With Graeme Sait and Joel Williams](#); Somerville, MA.

Feb 4 - March 18 - [Residential Landscape Design](#); Cambridge, MA; 5:45-7:45pm on Tuesdays.

Feb 5 - [Wetland Shrubs in Winter](#); Framingham, MA; 10:00am-2:00pm.

Feb 5 - [Wildness in Our Midst: The Middlesex Fells](#); Cambridge, MA; 7:00-8:30pm.

Feb 6 - **ELA EVENT**→[FREE ELA Reception at New England Grows](#); Room 206A; Boston, MA; 1:00-2:00pm.

Feb 6 - **ELA EVENT**→[Sustainability & Health: How Sustainable Practices in Guatemala Have Influenced My Business and My Way of Life, Webinar](#); 7:30-8:30pmEST.

Feb 10-13 - [NOFA Accreditation Course in Organic Land Care](#); Norwich, CT.

Feb 19 - [Invasive Plants: What Follows Success, Webinar](#); 7:30-8:30pmEST.

Feb 20 - [Principles and Fundamentals of Weed Science](#); Milford, MA; 9:00am-2:30pm.

Feb 20 - [Growth, Effectiveness, Management \(GEM 2\)](#); Horticultural Business Seminars; Rockfall, CT.

Feb 24 - [Water Wars in MA: Reforming Water Management in a Blue State](#); Newton, MA; 7:00pm.
Feb 24, 26 & March 1- [Bones of the Garden: Strengthening the Design](#); Framingham, MA.
Feb 26 & 27 - **ELA EVENT**→[Sustaining the Living Landscape](#): ELA Conference & Eco-Marketplace;
Springfield, MA.

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