

Enjoy this issue as you explore principles and practices that support the living landscape.

April 2019



Advocating for ecological landscape practices
through education, collaboration, and outreach.

From the Editor

A neighbor's pussy willow is my street's harbinger of spring. Branches bend over the sidewalk, and I can't stop myself from stroking the furry catkins as I pass. Soon bulbs pop through leaves, tree buds swell, and the tumble of a new season is underway. ELA follows its own cycle: the weather warms, and outdoor events supplant indoor conferences and webinars. Eco-tours bloom on the calendar, including the [Native Plant Garden Tour](#), and we look forward to enjoying the entries in ELA's [Spotlight on Natives](#) photo contest.



With warmer weather, it's time for investigating garden beds and discovering what was recently hidden beneath snow and leaves. We hope you'll uncover a few interesting nuggets in this issue of the newsletter, featuring an evaluation of leaf mulch at Rose Kennedy Greenway and a follow-up on maintenance at a residential SITES project that will also be the destination of a May Eco-tour. We rethink black locust, learn from the Eco-pros, and take a moment to inhale the fragrance of moist spring earth. *MPS*



Leaf Mulch - New Options on the Greenway by Darrah Cole and Anthony Ruggiero

In 2016, The Rose Kennedy Greenway Conservancy began an exploration of leaf mulch, or leaf mold, as an alternative to the bark/compost mulch blend previously used. They found both positive results and a few concerns over the course of two years. [Read the article.](#)



Maintenance Post SITES™ Certification Journey at Dancing Tree, Part 2 by Margot Taylor

SITES certified six years ago, Dancing Tree is a model of a sustainable landscape, and the only residence with three-star certification. Now that the site is well established, the focus is on maintenance and resource management. [Read the article.](#) Read Part 1: [Certification Journey at Dancing Tree.](#) Join Margot for an Eco-tour of Dancing Tree: [Artfully Designed Pollinator Oasis](#) on May 9, 4:30pm.



Rethinking Black Locust by Dan Jaffe

Considered invasive in some New England states, black locust (*Robinia pseudoacacia*) does not cause the ecological harm of many other species categorized as invasive. Given the ebb and flow of plant populations over time and the challenges of successful invasive removal, how should we treat black locust? [Read the article.](#)



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. And if you need additional help, refer to the listing of ELA Professionals.

Dreaming of an Eco-lawn

I would like to have an "eco-lawn" (some sort of fescue?) for my Martha's Vineyard home. My goal is to have something that looks like a lawn, requires little mowing and water, ideally requires no fertilizer, can thrive in sandy soil, and handles salty air. Am I a crazy dreamer?

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

Native Evergreen Groundcovers for Sun

I am looking for a native groundcover recommendation for my yard. It is a slope between wetlands and uplands that gets full sun exposure. Ideal plant would be perennial evergreen that will help suppress weeds and is low maintenance and drought resistant. Thanks for any recommendations! [Read the Pro's Advice.](#)

How to Find Research Articles in the Public Domain

It can be frustrating to locate current literature on a topic without bumping into paywalls that prevent free access to information. How can you find the relevant information within the public domain? [Read the Pro's Advice.](#)



Earth

by Tovah Martin

Spring sneaks in through a crack in the window. It steals in when you push the panes open for that whiff of fresh air you've anticipated for so long. You've almost forgotten what the mingling of indoors and outside feels like; it's been an eternity since you bonded. [Read more.](#)

ELA News

Introducing Two New Programs!

[National Green Infrastructure Certification Program](#)

Initiated under the leadership of DC Water and the Water Environment Federation, the National Green Infrastructure Certification Program (NGICP) sets national certification standards for green infrastructure (GI) construction, inspection, and maintenance workers.

Designed to meet international best-practice standards, NGICP certification advances the establishment of sustainable communities by promoting GI as an environmentally and economically beneficial stormwater management option, supporting the development of proficient green work-forces, and establishing a career path for skilled GI workers.

In collaboration with ELA, Trevor Smith offers a 5-day, 35-hour course that provides graduates the skillset needed to design green stormwater infrastructure and to oversee construction, inspection, and maintenance of these projects. [Learn more.](#)

Eco Courses Now in Spanish

On April 1, ELA introduced its first ecological landscape classes designed for native Spanish speakers. The nine-part series covers a complete range of land care topics and is being offered at no cost for three months (April, May, and June 2019). Starting July 1st, the classes will remain free for ELA Members and will be available for \$10 per class for non-members.

Click on a title to get started now:

1. [Calidad del Aire y Jardineria Verde - Air Quality](#)
2. [Fertilizantes y Hierba Cortada Compostaje - Fertilizer and Grass Cycling](#)
3. [Introduccion A Cobertura \(Mulch\) Y Abono \(Compost\) - Introduction to Mulch and Compost](#)
4. [Introduccion A Suelos - Introduction to Soils](#)
5. [La Planta Correcta en el Lugar Correcto - Right Plant Right Place](#)
6. [La Poda Para La Salud De La Planta - Pruning for Plant Health](#)
7. [Manejo Integrado de Plagas MIP - Integrated Pest Management \(IPM\)](#)
8. [RIEGO #1 Interaccion Entre Agua - Plantas Y Suelos - Irrigation Part 1 of 2](#)
9. [RIEGO Programacion del Riego - Irrigation Part 2 of 2](#)

Celebrate Native Plants

Third Celebrating Native Plants Tour!

Showcase your native plant garden during ELA's [Third Annual Celebrating Native Plants Garden Tour](#). Whether it's a garden you've nurtured and maintained over decades or just installed at your own or a client's property, ELA invites you to share your passion for native plants on **Saturday afternoon June 22**. Registered guests will visit gardens to share, discuss, and discover the beauty and ecosystem value of native plants. (Hosts determine the number of visitors.) Take advantage of this opportunity to inspire greater use of native plants.

[Learn more here and add your garden to the growing list](#)

Spotlight on Natives - Submit Your Photos

ELA's Spotlight on Natives Photo Contest has begun! Submit your entries between now and May 31 at 5:00pm. Share your photos of native plants in garden settings and individual specimens. First Prize Winners receive a one-year ELA Professional Membership. Photographers receiving Honorable Recognition will earn \$50 credit toward purchases at the ELA Bookstore. Winners will be announced in June. Find all the details [here](#).

Join Us for Virtual Coffee, April 17

This month, we're seeking your ideas for hands-on workshops. Let us know the ecological experiences and skills you seek. Join ELA for coffee and share your ideas on Wednesday, April 17 between 12:30pm and 1:00pm. Drop in for a few minutes, or stay the whole time. Email ahead to ela_new@verizon.net for the call-in number.

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We provide our customers with sound ecological and economical guidance towards meeting their specific needs. Whether it be for public/commercial design or for private/residential installations, **Indigenous Ingenuities** is a multifaceted design and build landscape company. We focus on serving our local community, both socially and environmentally.



The Connecticut College Arboretum consists of 750 acres in New London, CT and features a Native Plant Collection with 30 acres of woody trees and shrubs. It also includes a wildflower, outdoor theater, pond, Buck Lodge and the Bolleswood Natural Area.



*The mission of **Coastal Maine Botanical Gardens** is to inspire meaningful connections among people, plants, and nature through horticulture, education and research.*



Peninsula Environmental Group, Inc. is a Pacific Northwest-based regenerative and ecological landscaping design company. We specialize in habitat restoration design, permaculture design, sustainable landscapes, and other highly functional landscapes. In addition to regenerative landscape design, we provide many other natural resource consulting services.



North Creek Nurseries strives to promote sustainable outdoor environments. As a wholesale propagation nursery, we specialize in growing starter plants or plugs of perennials, ornamental grasses, ferns, vines and shrubs with an emphasis on Eastern US native plants. Our plants are

used by wholesale growers and landscape contractors. Landscape Plugs™ provide planting solutions for ecological projects including storm water management, soil stabilization,

landscape restoration and habitat establishment. Our vision is to be a leader in the development and practice of sustainable horticultural systems while delighting our customers.



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Gleanings

Study Shows Biochar Soaks Up Ammonia

A new study led by Cornell University shows that pyrogenic matter (biochar) soaks up nitrogen, a byproduct of fertilizer. By capturing nitrogen, the biochar keeps it available for use by plants and limits the release of nitrous oxide (a greenhouse gas) into the atmosphere. [Read more in Cornell Chronicle](#).



Flushing Forests Down the Toilet

Many North American toilet paper makers source virgin pulp from Canadian boreal forest. "The Issue with Tissue," a recent report by Natural Resources Defense Council and stand.earth ranks the sustainability of this everyday product. [Read more in GreenMatters](#).



How Green Is Mass Timber?

Construction with "mass timber" is on the rise, with advocates touting it as a climate change solution. Do the logging and manufacturing required to make the product outweigh any benefits? [Read more in YaleEnvironment360](#).



Old Faithful, New Pavement

The first national park in the U.S. finished installation of porous pavement in 2018, including around Old Faithful. [Read more in SWS](#).



Bavaria Saves the Bees

Presented with 1.75 million signatures, Bavarian politicians announced they would write into law a petition that will drastically alter farming practices in the region in an effort to protect insects. [Read more in The Guardian](#).



Wild Bees May Benefit from Fire

A groundbreaking two-year study in southern Oregon found greater abundance and diversity of wild bees in areas that experienced moderate and severe forest fires compared to areas with low-severity fires. [Read more at Phys.org.](#)



Green Roofs for Healthy Cities Symposia 2019

One-day events across the U.S. will feature industry experts and local leaders presenting on green roof and green wall projects and policy. [Find the list of events.](#)



Latest on Managing Garlic Mustard

Researchers at UMass Amherst released a new publication in 2018 on the management of garlic mustard: *Here's the Dirt: The Newest Recommendations for Garlic Mustard Management*. [Download here.](#)



Allergy-friendly Schoolyards

Canadian horticulturist and educator Peter Prakke began an initiative to define allergy-friendly landscapes for allergy sufferers. If you are planting with allergies in mind, especially around playgrounds and schools, you can check for recommendations at healthyschoolyards.org.



New England Wild Flower Becomes Native Plant Trust

Highlighting its mission to conserve and promote New England's native plants, New England Wild Flower Society has taken a new name: Native Plant Trust. [Find out more at nativeplanttrust.org.](http://nativeplanttrust.org)



Arnold Arboretum Summer Institute

The Arnold Arboretum of Harvard University is now accepting applications from educators of youth grades 6-12 for a summer learning program: Investigating Ecosystems through Fieldwork, August 12-16. [Find more information.](#)



Enjoy all the ELA Membership Benefits - including free and discounted events.
[Become a Member!](#)

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

April

April 15 - Application deadline for September 16-27 [Waza to Kokoro: Hands and Heart](#), an intensive seminar in Japanese garden arts; Portland Japanese Garden, Portland, OR; 9:00am-5:00pm daily. Applications due by April 15, 2019.

April 22 - [Earth Day 2019 - Protect Our Species.](#)

April 24 - [Ticks and Tick-Associated Diseases Conference](#); Milford, MA; 3:00am-3:30pm.

April 24-25 - [LIISMA 2019 Invasive Species Conference](#); Brentwood, NY.

April 27 - [Pollinators in New Hampshire: Who's Who, How Are They Faring and How You Can Help](#); Concord, NH. 2:00-4:00pm.

April 27 - [Local Environmental Action Conference](#); Worcester, MA; 9:00am-4:30pm.

April 29-May 2 - [2019 National Watershed and Stormwater Conference](#); Historic Charleston, SC.

May

- May 1 - [A Grassland Restoration Tale of Weeds, Wildlife, and Renewal](#); Cambridge, MA; 7:00-8:30pm.
- May 2 - [Vermont Arbor Day Conference](#); Montpelier, VT; 8:30am-4:30pm.
- May 4 - [Landscape Plant Selection, Planting, and Establishment](#); Arnold Arboretum, Boston, MA; 1:00-3:30pm.
- May 4 - [The Wonders of Spring Ephemerals](#); West Stockbridge, MA; 10:00-11:00am.
- May 5-11 - [Trillium Week at Garden in the Woods](#); Framingham, MA; daily.
- May 8 - [American Dog Ticks and Lonestar Ticks and Associated Diseases](#) (free webinar); 12:00-1:00pm EST.
- May 8-10 - [Stormwater and Green Infrastructure Symposium](#); Fort Lauderdale, FL.
- May 9 **ELA Tour**→[SITES Certified Taylor Residence - Artfully Designed Pollinator Oasis](#); Kennett Square, PA; 4:30-6:30pm.
- May 23 - [Spring Greetings from Woodland Wildflowers](#); Medford, MA; 5:30 - 7:45pm.
- May 25 - [Creating Designs with Perennial Planters](#); West Stockbridge, MA; 10:00-11:00am.
- May 29 **ELA Tour**→[Native Trees and Shrubs for Beauty and Birds](#); Needham, MA; 4:30-6:30pm.
- May 31 - [Boston Green Roof and Wall Symposium](#); Boston, MA; 9:00am-5:00pm.

June

- June 2 - [Creating Pollinator Forage in the Landscape](#); UMass Amherst, MA; 8:30am-12:30pm.
- June 5 - [White Pine Health Field Trip](#); Hadley, MA; 8:00am.
- June 6 **ELA Class**→[Why Mulch When You Can Plant](#); Garden in the Woods, Framingham, MA; 9:30am-12:30pm.
- June 6 - [Compost Compendium](#); Arnold Arboretum, Boston, MA; 6:00-8:00pm.
- June 8 - [Landscaping for Bird Diversity](#); Waltham, MA; 9:30 - 11:30am.
- June 15 - [The Diversity and Ecological Value of Native Shrubs](#); Hyde Park, MA; 10:00am - 12:15pm.
- June 17-21 **ELA Class**→[NGICP National Green Infrastructure Certification Program](#); Tower Hill Botanic Garden; Boylston, MA; 8:30am-5:00pm.
- June 19 - [The Diversity and Ecological Value of Native Shrubs](#); Hyde Park, MA; 5:30pm - 7:45pm.
- June 22 **ELA Tour**→[Celebrating Natives Garden Tours](#); locations throughout Massachusetts; 12:00-4:00pm.
- June 27 **ELA Tour**→[Carex: Foundation Species for Successful Plant Communities](#); Deerfield, NH; 1:00-3:00pm.

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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. *Maureen Sundberg, ELA Newsletter Editor*

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