



Sustaining the Living Landscape

The 26th Annual ELA Conference & Eco-Marketplace

March 4 & 5, 2020 at the UMass Murray D. Lincoln Campus Center, Amherst, MA



SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES

Russ Cohen served as Rivers Advocate for the Massachusetts Department of Fish and Game's Division of Ecological Restoration until his retirement in June of 2015. Since then he has pursued his passion for connecting with nature via his taste buds and teaching others to do the same. Mr. Cohen conducts numerous wild edible walks and talks throughout the Northeast and is now propagating edibles native to Northeast ecoregions. He is partnering with land trusts, municipalities, state and federal agencies, schools and colleges, tribal groups, and others to introduce his nursery plants to their properties. Mr. Cohen is the author of a foraging book, *Wild Plants I have Known... and Eaten*, published in 2004 and now in its seventh printing.

Leslie Duthie is a lifelong gardener. She was formerly employed at the Norcross Wildlife Sanctuary where she was the horticulturist and plant propagator for over 38 years. An accomplished grower of ferns and wildflowers, Leslie's love of ferns began when she first learned how to raise them from spore. Now retired, she continues to volunteer at various gardens and works to protect land for her local Conservation Commission and land trust.

Georgia Hann is a professional plantswoman with specific interest in the ecosystems of the New England coastline and beyond. Born in Chatham, MA and raised in Mystic, Connecticut. Ms. Hann studied Environmental and Conservation Biology at Clark University in Worcester, Massachusetts for three years. She worked in the farming and landscaping industries in Connecticut and Rhode Island until seeking a degree in Botany at Connecticut College in New London, which she earned in 2018. Ms Hann now operates a professional

gardening company and works as a tree specialist. She intends to expand as a native seed-grown plant retailer fit to serve both homeowners and those carrying out habitat restoration projects.

Mark Highland It was on a beautiful piece of Illinois farmland that Mark Highland pushed his first shovel into garden soil. After he "grew up," Mark focused his MS degree studies in the Longwood Graduate Program on compost and potting soil. After completing the Longwood program, Mr. Highland started The Organic Mechanics Soil Company, LLC in 2006 and has served as President since that time. He has consulted for the Environmental Protection Agency and the Institute for Local Self-Reliance. Mr. Highland is the author of the recently published *Practical Organic Gardening: The No-Nonsense Guide to Growing Naturally*.

Dan Jaffe Photographer and author Dan Jaffe has over ten years of experience with ecological horticulture. He is a propagator of native species, the photographer and co-author of *Native Plants for New England Gardens*, and a lecturer on numerous topics, including pollinators, sustainable landscape practices, foraging, cultivation of edible species, and low-maintenance horticulture. He has developed a native plant horticultural database and has years of nursery management experience. Mr. Jaffe earned a degree in botany from the University of Maine, Orono and has an advanced certificate in Native Plant Horticulture and Design from Native Plant Trust (formerly New England Wild Flower Society). He is the Horticulturist and Propagator for Norcross Wildlife Sanctuary in Wales, Massachusetts and is currently building his own home-scale homestead, growing and foraging numerous edible species, preserving and

cooking whenever possible, and raising small animals.

Jennifer Jewell is the creator, writer, and host of *Cultivating Place*, an award-winning public radio program and podcast on natural history and the human impulse to garden. She learned how and why to garden from her mother and learned to love the diversity and interconnectedness of all life from her wildlife biologist father. Traveling the world and reading, gardening, and hiking wherever she was, Ms. Jewell was inspired by the generous and smart plant and garden people she met. She has been writing about gardens and horticulture since 1998, and her work has appeared in *Gardens Illustrated*, *House & Garden*, *Pacific Horticulture*, and other magazines. Her first book, *The Earth in Her Hands* (Timber Press, 2020), profiles 75 extraordinary women working in the world of plants and transforming horticulture around the world.

Laura Kuhn is a self-taught designer, who brought her experiences in theatre arts and choreography to the design of outdoor spaces in 1997. After initially working in the nursery business, she started her own business in 2000. Laura Kuhn Design Consultation creates custom artistic and wild spaces for private clients in the New England region and beyond. Ms. Kuhn offers services in landscape design strategy and restoration; project coordination and construction; oversight for urban oases, small parcels, estate gardens, and rural landscapes; edible gardens; and outdoor dining spaces. Her certifications include MCH, MCLP, and NOFA AOLCP. She currently serves on MNLA's Government Relations Committee. In the past, she enjoyed

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serving as Advocacy Chair for the Association of Professional Landscape Designers (APLD), serving on the MCLP certification committee for Massachusetts Certified Landscape Professionals, and most of all, teaching at the Landscape Institute.

Kirsten Kurtz is the Manager for the Cornell Soil Health Lab with responsibilities in lab management, research, communication, teaching, and outreach. She has more than eight years of experience working with Soil Health Assessments. Before joining the Lab, Ms. Kurtz worked extensively with various Finger Lakes wineries and vineyards and co-owned a small organic farm, thus accumulating valuable agricultural and scientific knowledge. She is a co-author of the Comprehensive Assessment of Soil Health (CASH), the Cornell Framework Manual Version 3.2. She is the co-author on the Cornell Soil Health Laboratory Standard Operating Procedures, guest lecturer for a wide range of Cornell University classes, and developer of lab modules focused on soil health at Cornell University and elsewhere. Ms. Kurtz is also the founder of the Soil Painting Initiative, which utilizes soil painting as a form of scientific communication.

Pennington Marchael is a landscape contractor based in Brooklyn and Bedford Hills, New York. Throughout his career he has cultivated a deep understanding of horticulture and ecology, which he uses to execute successfully vibrant landscapes. Mr. Marchael has over ten years of experience in project management, landscape construction, and maintenance. In those ten years, he has installed and maintained meadows

from Virginia to Northern New York with a total of over one hundred fifty acres installed and many more maintained and monitored. His present focus is growing his business, Pennington Grey, where he aspires to train a new generation of land managers who will lead the landscape industry away from traditional practices and toward a more sustainable and dynamic approach.

Michael Nadeau has been intrigued by and working in the landscape and tree business since the age of 12. With a great respect of Nature, Michael was an early proponent of sustainability and worked with NOFA to develop the first-ever Standards for Organic Land Care and the Organic Land Care Accreditation Course which he also teaches. Mr. Nadeau (and his brother, Dan) co-founded Plantscapes Organics, Inc. in 1982. A few years ago, he retired from that business and went on to create Wholistic Land Care Consulting, LLC, a nature-based landscape consulting firm, where he continues to learn from Nature. With more than three decades of Nature-based landscape experience, Michael is passionate about educating land care stewards about the overdependence on synthetic chemicals, the environmental consequences of their use, and natural alternatives for land management.

Dr. Cathy Neal recently completed a twenty-year career as Landscape Horticulture Specialist and Extension Professor emeritus with University of New Hampshire Cooperative Extension. During her career, she worked closely with commercial horticulture clientele in the state to maintain professionalism in the green industry and to encourage sustainable practices and designs. She is well known for her educational leadership in landscaping for water quality and in

planting for pollinators; she has published many fact sheets and articles on related topics. As an active researcher with NH Agricultural Experiment Station, she conducted many trials leading to the development of recommended seed mixes and strategies for creating beautiful and diverse wildflower meadows in New England. Dr. Neal continues to work part time to help private and public landowners establish wildflower meadows and pollinator habitat.

Keith Nevison serves as Manager of Farm and Nursery Operations for the Thomas Jefferson Foundation at Monticello. In this role, he oversees a thriving nursery business at the Thomas Jefferson Center for Historic Plants and is working to successfully launch a 21st century center for innovative farming, which aims to engage a broad audience in discussion on food, public health, and regenerative agricultural issues. Mr. Nevison earned his MS in Public Horticulture from the University of Delaware through the Longwood Graduate Program and his BS cum laude in Environmental Studies from Portland State University, Oregon. For 15 years, his work has included landscape management, organic food production, nursery horticulture, and ecological restoration.

Michael Ormston-Holloway works as a landscape and urban ecologist, as well as certified arborist, with over 15-years of experience working in these related fields. He specializes in the urban environment, integrating the experience of thoughtful landscape design with the importance of functional ecological systems and working toward better connections with people and their natural environments. Mr. Ormston-Holloway integrates design and

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ecological principles into his projects and enriches them with insights as an arborist, horticulturist, and soil scientist. He believes that joining a detailed understanding of the biotic realm of landscape architecture with a strong understanding of planting design ensures a more valuable landscape experience. Mr. Ormston-Holloway has a unique perspective on water in the urban context and is regularly promoting projects with a greater application of LID principles, both water-related and otherwise.

Lori Silvia has a BFA from Mass College of Art & Design and graduated from The Landscape Institute, Arnold Arboretum of Harvard University. A collaboration of art, landscape design, science, and intuition is part of her vision. She has been a landscape designer and gardener at St. George's School since 2008, creating LEED-certified ecological designs for the newly-built Hill Library and Academic Center and renovating nearly every corner of the campus in some way. Ms. Silvia is dedicated to experiential learning and lectures to students and the greater community.

Trevor Smith is the owner of Land Escapes, a full service regenerative landscape design and build company based in the Boston area. Land Escapes specializes in green stormwater infrastructure, such as permeable pavers and rain gardens, as well as in landscapes designed to maximize Earth's systems while balancing them with the needs and desires of her human inhabitants. Mr. Smith is equally driven by both the form and function of his landscape designs. He is passionate about the natural world which inspires his commitment to ecological principles

and practices and devoted to creating beautiful landscapes that provide clients with an oasis to reconnect with the natural world. Mr. Smith holds several landscape certifications, including MCH, NOFA AOLCP, LEEDGA, and IPCI, and he is also a past President of the Ecological Landscape Alliance and a current Trustee.

Nancy Striniste, founder and principal designer at EarlySpace, LLC, has a unique background as both a landscape designer and an early childhood educator. From her Arlington, Virginia design office, she has worked with schools, childcare centers, municipalities, and organizations to create sustainably designed natural play and learning spaces and to teach educators and others about how to use the outdoors for teaching and learning.

Steven Torgerson is a Registered Landscape Architect and the Director of Landscape Architecture at AMT Landscape Architecture + Design Division. He has nationwide experience in planning and design within an ecologically resilient framework and is passionate about creating spaces that are a catalyst for people to interact with their environment and community. Mr. Torgerson's multidisciplinary design approach encourages alternative solutions to complex rainwater problems. He delights in community engagement and the opportunity to integrate public preferences into the design outcome. Before coming to AMT, Mr. Torgerson served as the Cultural Landscape Architect at Yosemite National Park and was the lead landscape architect for the Forest Service during the 2002 Winter Olympics. He has won numerous awards for his work in landscape architecture including the 2018 ASLA Potomac Chapter Honor Award for Brookside

Gardens and the 2017 ASLA, Potomac Chapter Honor Award for Greening DC's Streetscapes. Mr. Torgerson holds a Master in Landscape Architecture from the Pennsylvania State University with an emphasis in watershed planning and a Bachelor of Landscape Architecture from Utah State University.