

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

July 2021



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

## From The Editor

Even though it is summer, ELA's continues to **advocate for ecological landscape practices through education, collaboration, and outreach**. To me, environmental education has never felt more important. Several large mature trees were recently cut down in my neighborhood, disturbing food webs, releasing carbon, and disrupting stormwater management provided by those trees. Could they have been saved if people were more knowledgeable? Perhaps, since we tend to advocate for things we know well. Get to know the inhabitants of your backyard. Look for bees collecting pollen, watch butterflies flitting around a flower, and wonder how they get anywhere with their unapparent flight pattern. If you are really lucky, catch a hummingbird sipping nectar, wings beating so quickly they become a blur. Looking closely will we become connected. I hope you take time to experience the wonder of summer and encourage connections. Invite friends into your gardens, talk with neighbors about your shared tree canopies, and witness the enchantment of fireflies dancing at dusk.



While farmers' markets and CSA's offer tasty fare, learn about edible plants you might not have considered in this month's "Eat the Lawn" article. Then join ELA for a live **Eco-Answers with an ELA Eco-Pro: Edible Landscapes** with your questions. In this issue of the newsletter, you'll also find a review of *100 Plants for Monarchs* and a handy Native Plant reference guide for the Northeast. If you need design templates, revisit **Native Plants for the Small Yard: Easy, Beautiful Home Gardens that Support the Local Ecology** (2018). Articles also ponder an arborist view on tree decline and consider the soil seed bank's role in restoration. Happy Summer. *GRH*



### Can the Soil Seed Bank Save Us?

by Nathan Lamb

Imagine two woodlands. Both have deciduous, fire-adapted trees overhead. One has widely spaced trees, and sunlight reaches a diverse community of grasses, sedges, and forbs. The other has a dense thicket of invasive shrubs that shades out all but the earliest spring ephemerals. Will removing the invasive shrubs and exposing the bare soil trigger a profusion of native plants, restoring the diverse community that lived there hundreds of years ago? **Read the article.**

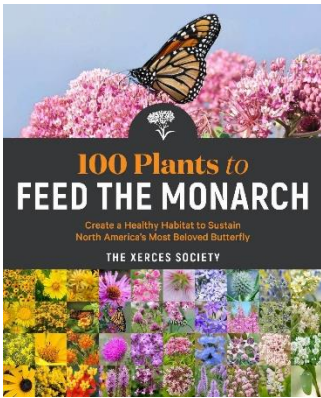


## Connecticut Native Plant and Sustainable Landscaping Guide

by Victoria Wallace and Alyssa Siegel-Miles

Interest in native plants and sustainable landscaping has exploded over the last decade. Through our UConn Extension Sustainable Turf & Landscape program, we provide practical science-based information to support the sustainability goals of Connecticut green industry professionals and home gardeners. With that in mind, we developed a free 44-page online guide of plant lists for every location matched with vibrant photographs. [Read the article.](#)

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### Book Review:

## 100 Plants to Feed the Bees

by Xerces Society

Reviewed by Sara Bothwell Allen

As the populations of the Monarch (*Danaus plexippus*) have dropped precipitously in size in recent years, public engagement towards saving the Monarch is increasing thanks to education programming. This book provides gardeners, both novice and experienced, the information they need to make their home gardens or community spaces valuable parts of the Monarch's global support system. [Read the review.](#)

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## Eat the Lawn

by Arianna Alexandra Collins

July is a perfect time to gather flowers and greens for salad and pesto. There is an abundance of wild and garden edibles, so why make the trip to the grocery store for produce when you have a variety of food to choose from right in your yard? Create a daylily salad with a bit of yard-grown purslane topped with pedals of bee balm for color and finished with a tasty vinaigrette. [Read the article.](#)

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## Tree Decline, Dieback, and Death

by Norm Helie

There is considerable decline, dieback, and death of many tree species in New England and throughout the country. Many professionals focus on the final stages of a tree's life, but tree health can't be determined by outward appearance and general foliar analysis. Environmental and ecological studies must consider tree life history. [Read the article.](#)

**Highlighting Company Members**

**Regenerative Design Group** was founded as a values-driven business to respond positively to the ecological challenges of our time. We work with individuals, institutions, and municipalities at all scales to see, create, and manage landscapes as resilient, living ecosystems. In 2020, after over a decade in business, we accomplished a long-time goal of becoming a worker-owned cooperative.



**Regenerative DesignGroup**  
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## ELA News

### Volunteer with ELA

What are your talents and interests? Would you like to put them to work as an **ELA volunteer**? As a member-driven organization, we are always looking for your expertise, guidance, and help. We are looking for people to help with a few specific needs, plus we have some ongoing opportunities for volunteers.

If you are comfortable presenting to groups, familiar with virtual presentation tools, and quick with a quip, consider becoming a **webinar moderator**. We'll provide training, and you can choose 3-5 webinars to help with (fall, winter, and spring event dates). If you don't want to moderate, maybe you'd like to **present a webinar**. Submit your proposal by [clicking here](#).

If you're not interested in presenting, you could:

- **Write an article** for the ELA Newsletter (newsletter editor will help define topic & timing)
- **Post/Share ELA events** on Facebook and Instagram (coordinated with a small group throughout the year)
- **Serve on a regional committee** to plan ELA conferences. You'll help define programming, identify speakers, and reach out to sponsors and exhibitors.

Let us know your interests. Email [maureen@ecolandscaping.org](mailto:maureen@ecolandscaping.org).

### Eco-Answers with an Eco-Pro

ELA Members, join us for **Q&A with ELA's Eco-Pros**, a monthly discussion focused on a general ecological topic of interest. We welcome our members to this **free 90-minute Zoom conversation** to get the inside scoop from a Pro.

Coming up in July: **Edible Landscapes**. Is your vegetable garden letting you down? Are you unsure about non-toxic pest and disease controls? Suffering from tomato envy? Meet virtually with Dan Jaffe Wilder, native edible plant specialist, on July 28, 6:30-8:00pm, to ask your questions about managing and maintaining edible plants. [Register here](#).

### Share Your Expertise!

As ELA begins scheduling fall and winter virtual conferences, we're reaching out to our community for speakers. Our members have hundreds of years of combined experience designing, developing, and maintaining all manner of ecological landscapes. If you have an ecological expertise or field experience, consider sharing with the ELA audience. We seek speakers on a great variety of topics, and ELA programs are geared to audiences from general gardener to advanced professional. If you have a topic you'd like to present with ELA, take a minute to let us know by providing a little information. [Click here to submit a proposal](#).

If you aren't a speaker, but you heard a great talk this past year, we'd like to hear about that, too. Just send an email to [penny@ecolandscaping.org](mailto:penny@ecolandscaping.org).

**Enjoy all the ELA Membership Benefits - including free and discounted events.**

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## Gleanings

### Scientist Still Searching for the Pathogen Behind the East's Songbird Epidemic

For two months, a mysterious bird disease had been rippling across parts of the Mid-Atlantic and Southeastern United States. The disease has now been found west to Kentucky, as far north as New Jersey, and south to Florida. Until scientists find the culprit, concerned citizens in affected regions should take down their bird feeders. Read more at [Audubon](#).



### Six Species that Need Federal Protection

According to the National Wildlife Federation, one-third of all US species are at risk of extinction. At least **1 million species currently face extinction** by the end of this century. US

federal commitment to save endangered species has been inconsistent at best, and many species have slipped through the cracks. Here are six endangered-yet-unlisted species that need us. Read more at [The Sierra Club](#).

### **Desert River Gila Struggles to Keep Flowing**

The Gila was once a vibrant desert river, providing a lifeline for the riparian habitat and wildlife that depended on it in the U.S. Southwest. But population growth, agricultural withdrawals, and, increasingly, climate change have badly diminished the river and threaten its future. Read more at [Yale Environment 360](#)

### **The Tick Project**

Tick populations continue to expand and emerge as one of our nation's most complex public health crises. What if we could prevent Lyme disease instead of just treating it? Read more at [The Cary Institute](#).

### **USDA Identify Racial Barriers to Under-Served Communities**

USDA is requesting input to identify barriers that people of color and underserved communities and individuals may face in obtaining information from USDA. This survey includes accessing, enrolling, and participating in USDA programs and services and engaging with USDA staff. Read more at [Federal Register](#).

### **Bipartisan Bill Addresses Pollution on Working Lands**

The Senate passed the Growing Climate Solutions Act (GCSA). The bill creates a new program to self-certify technical assistance providers and third-party verifiers for the agriculture and forestry sectors for voluntary actions intended to reduce the amount of air and carbon pollution and processes to store carbon naturally. Read more at [Audubon](#).

### **Solar Array Planted with Biodiversity in Mind**

Sacramento County, California, just completed construction of a 16.5-megawatt solar park on what was once open ranchland. Usually, the ground underneath large solar installations is scraped and covered with gravel or low grass, but this solar array has been planted with pollinator native plants. Read more at [The Sierra Club](#).

### **Can Satellite Imagery Detect Habitat Loss?**

Using satellite imagery, researchers have built an automatic habitat loss detector. They then trained image change detection algorithms on "before and after" images of places that had recently been cleared, built on, or even covered in solar panels. This data will help researchers know the extent of current habitat degradation in order to recommend new protections. Read more at [The Anthropocene Magazine](#).

### **Do-It-Yourself Rain Garden**

So you spent the holiday weekend indoors, watching rainwater pool in your yard – or worse, in the basement? You can help water move across the landscape by creating a rain garden that is both functional and attractive. Read more at [The New York Times](#).

### **Massachusetts Regional Ecological Partnership**

The Massachusetts Division of Ecological Restoration has established the Partnerships Program to support Regional Restoration Partnerships to promote the restoration of degraded aquatic ecosystems and increase climate change resiliency. DER will solicit applications from Massachusetts-registered 501(c)(3) organizations and Massachusetts Regional Planning Agencies. Read more at [Mass Gov](#).

### **Tool Kit for Massachusetts Pollinators**

Our environment is at risk because of steep declines in habitat. The pollinators that are an essential part of making the whole system work are in severe decline. This toolkit contains information about the problem and some easy steps you can take to help alleviate it – while

creating a fascinating and vibrant garden at the same time. Read more at [Newton Conservators](#).

## Events to Note

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

At this time, many events are still being held online; check with organizations to confirm the most up-to-date information.

#### July

July 15-18 - **Cape Cod Hydrangea Festival and Garden Tours**, locations and times vary.

July 17 - **You Can Grow Better! Underused Plants for Northeast Gardens**; Beverly, MA; 4:00-5:00pm.

July 21 - **UMass Turf Research Field Day**; South Deerfield, MA; 8:00am-1:00pm.

July 23 - **Moth Ball with SEMPBA**; Plymouth, MA; 6:30pm.

July 28 **ELA Member Event**→**Eco-Answers with an ELA Eco-Pro: Edible Landscapes**; 6:30-8:00pm ET.

July 29 - **Introduction to Butterflies**; 6:30-8:30pm ET.

July 30-August 6 - **NOFA Summer Conference**.

#### August

August 4 - **Sustainable Land Care**; 7:00pm ET.

August 12 - **Eight Actions to Protect Insects from Global Declines**; 1:00-2:00pm ET.

August 14 **ELA Class**→**Shade Gardens: Embracing the Dark Side**; 1:00-4:00pm ET

August 19&26 **ELA Class**→**Navigating Public Design, Part 2**; 1:00-3:00pm ET.

#### September

September 8 **ELA Webinar**→**Designing for Dry Stone Walling in the Landscape**; 3:00-4:00pm ET.

September 13,28,20,25 - **2021 MA Gardening Symposium “Inspiration for Next Year: Specialty Gardens.”**

September 15,19,22 **ELA Class**→**Cultivating Your Plant Communities**; times vary.

September 15 **ELA Webinar**→**Water Infiltration and Improved Soil Carbon Storage**; 12:00-1:00pm ET.

September 22 **ELA Webinar**→**Forest Bathing 101: Tapping into Everyday Nature**; 12:00-1:00pm ET.

#### October

October 6 **ELA Webinar**→**Implications of Climate Change for Invasive Species**; 12:00-1:00pm ET.

October 6-9 - **APLD International Design Conference**; save the dates for this virtual event.

October 13 **ELA Webinar**→**Understanding Soil Health and Its Principles for Improving Landscape Resilience**; 12:00-1:00pm ET.

October 18 **ELA Webinar**→**Practical and Accessible Stretches for Your “Every” Day**; 7:00-8:00pm ET.

October 20 **ELA Webinar**→**Rewild in 10 Action Steps**; 12:00-1:00pm ET.

October 27 **ELA Conference**→**2021 Season’s End Summit**; 8:30am-4:30pm ET.

#### Anytime

**URI Cooperative Extension Learn at Home Webinar Series**

**Deep Roots: Native Plants at Noon**

Submit events by the 10th of the month for inclusion in the upcoming newsletter.

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ELA shares job posts as a courtesy to our community, no endorsement implied. Postings will run for two months. Employers are asked to notify ELA if jobs fill before the second posting.

**Flower Power Gardens**, a fine-gardening landscape company with a focus on sustainable, native, and pollinator-friendly plantings, is hiring! We're looking for plant-loving, motivated people to join our team as crew members or a crew leader. Serving gardens and pollinators in Watertown and surrounding communities. Hourly rates start at \$18. Job duties, qualifications, and application are available at <https://www.flowerpowergarden.net/joinourteam>.

**The Conway School**, a small, independent graduate school of planning and design, seeks a part-time Admissions Manager. Excellent communication skills a must; awareness of the ecological design and planning fields preferred. BIPOC, immigrants, women, and LGBTQIA candidates are encouraged to apply. [Find full job description and application details here.](#)

**Connecticut College Arboretum** seeks a horticulturist to care for the Native Plant Collection (NPC) and dedicated natural areas. The NPC, established in 1931, is a 30-acre collection of trees and shrubs native to eastern North America and features a series of special collections including the wildflower garden, a Plant Collections Network accredited azalea garden, dwarf conifer collection, greenhouse and nursery. Natural areas includes 600 acres of mixed deciduous forests, restored meadows, a bog, salt marsh and wooded island in the Thames River. The Arboretum seeks a dynamic individual with a passion for native flora, experience cultivating indigenous plants and skills in natural areas management to join the horticulture team. [Find full job description and apply here.](#)



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Mention of products is not intended to constitute endorsement. Opinions expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily represent those of ELA's directors, staff, or members.

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). Georgia Harris, ELA Newsletter Editor

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