

Analyzing the Wild, Designing the Garden

January 19, 2017--Day 1

8:15 a.m.— Registration and Continental Breakfast

9 a.m.— Welcome

9:10 a.m.--The Forest between the Trees: Herbaceous Layer Ecology & Forest Management--

Frank S. Gilliam, Ph.D., Biological Science Professor, Marshall University

The herbaceous layer plays a critical role in forest structure and function. It is highly sensitive to disturbance and difficult to re-establish once lost. We will review the ecology of the forest herb layer and explore how management practices that closely resemble natural disturbance regimes can be adapted to preserve and establish this essential stratum in managed forests and woodland gardens.

10:10 a.m.—Break

10:30 a.m.--Creating Garden Momentum--Matthew Cunningham, Landscape Architect and Principal, Matthew Cunningham Landscape Design

In order to stand the test of time, gardens need to be responsive to changing conditions even as they continue to meet aesthetic expectations and design intent. Join landscape architect Matthew Cunningham as he explores how his firm's projects evolve over time and how this shapes his process—from concept to installation and management.

11:30 a.m.--The Ecosystems and Flora of Eastern North America: a Long and Surprising Tale of Evolution and Resilience

Derick Poindexter, Ph.D. Candidate, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill

The native ecosystems and flora of eastern North America have evolved over millions of years, accumulating raw materials from many biogeography sources and recombining and altering them into what we see today. Our modern natural communities show surprising juxtapositions of tropic, temperate, and boreal; ancient and modern; native and foreign. Studying this assemblage reveals a fascinating palimpsest of change through time—and can inform our design choices while enriching our experience of the landscapes in which we work.

12:30 p.m.—Lunch

1:45 p.m.--Beatrix Farrand's Lost Garden: Historic Reclamation Meets Ecological Restoration

Ann Aldrich, Former Director, Dumbarton Conservancy, instructor, George Washington University

In addition to the famed formal gardens at Dumbarton Oaks in Washington, DC, landscape architect Beatrix Farrand designed an adjacent 'wild garden.' Made into a separate park in 1940, this portion of the estate deteriorated from neglect. Learn how The Dumbarton Oaks Park Conservancy is balancing historic and ecological goals to reclaim this masterful landscape.

2:45 p.m. Native Annuals: An Underutilized Resource

Ethan Dropkin, Designer, Larry Weaner Landscape Associates

Although designers rarely use native annuals, this suite of plants offers numerous design applications, including seeding them in as placeholders, nurse crops, and gap fillers in response to disturbance. Explore a variety of native annuals, their biology, and uses in designed landscapes.

3:45 p.m.—Break

4:00 p.m.—The Crosby Arboretum: Observing Big, Applying Small

Patricia Drackett, Director, Crosby Arboretum

The Crosby Arboretum in coastal Mississippi is an icon of natural landscape design, preserving and displaying the region's native flora on 64 acres with minimal maintenance. The land, rather than traditional static displays, is the exhibit at Crosby as expressed through its ever-evolving plant communities. Learn from the Arboretum's director how lessons from Crosby's design and management can be applied at varied scales.

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5:00 p.m. Adjourn

Join us for complimentary reception with beer, wine, & hors d'oeuvres. Larry Weaner will sign copies of his recent book *Garden Revolution: How Our Landscapes Can Be a Source of Environmental Change*.

January 20, 2017--Day 2

8:30 a.m.—Continental Breakfast

9 a.m.—Design Practice R&D: How One Firm's Research Farm Informs and Advances Design

Edward Marshall, Landscape Architect and Principal, Stephen Stimson Associates

The work of landscape architecture firm Stephen Stimson Associates is rooted in an agrarian sensibility and a strong environmental ethic. Learn how the firm's unique research farm, a 100-acre mosaic of New England landscape typologies, informs their practice by serving as a nursery, agricultural arboretum, demonstration plots for indigenous plants, and testing ground for grazing as a management tool.

10:00 a.m.—Break

10:15 a.m.—The Beautiful Adaptations and Regional Realities of Native Plant Traits

Dan Segal, Owner, The Plantsman Nursery

This presentation will go beyond 'pretty' plant features and dig into the natural origins of certain plant traits. Understanding these traits as expressions of regional adaptation and survival, rather than simply ornamental attributes, will allow you to use natives more confidently and

successfully. Learn how initially de-emphasizing aesthetics, ironically, can result in even more beautiful landscape compositions.

11:15 a.m.--The Rich Potential of Poverty Grass

Scott Warnke, Ph.D., Research Geneticist, U.S. Department of Agriculture

Poverty oatgrass (*Danthonia spicata*) is a native cool-season grass found throughout the Northeast. Its tolerance of shade and low-fertility soils suggest it has rich potential as a low-input turfgrass for our region. Dr. Warnke will discuss his recent research into the unique life cycle and establishment requirements for this much-needed native turf alternative.

12:15—Lunch--Frederick Steiner's book, *Human Ecology: How Nature and Culture Shape Our World*, will be available for sale and signing during lunch.

1:30 p.m.--Exploring the Boundaries of Wild Landscapes & Design

Uli Lorimer, Curator of Native Flora, Brooklyn Botanical Garden

Careful study of plants in the wild can prove invaluable to designers and gardeners, informing our understandings of opportunities and limits and often inspiring non-traditional techniques in the designed landscapes. This presentation will demonstrate the power of field observations and discuss implications for design, plant selection, and management of designed landscapes over time.

2:30 p.m.--Restoring a Historic Ecological Laboratory: Lessons for Today and Beyond

Meg Ronsheim, Ph.D., Biology Professor, Vassar College

The book *American Plants for American Gardens* (1929) was visionary in its celebration of native plants. Perhaps less well known is that one of its authors, Edith Roberts, created an “ecological laboratory,” at Vassar College in Poughkeepsie, NY that featured examples of all of the region’s major plant associations. Examining how those plantings fared over time, despite eventual neglect, can shed light on the potential resiliency of contemporary landscape plantings.

3:30 p.m.--Break

3:45 p.m.-- Design for a Vulnerable Planet

Frederick Steiner, Ph.D. Dean, University of Pennsylvania, School of Design

To heal the planet’s vulnerabilities, designers and planners must go beyond traditional concepts of sustainability and embrace innovative new design techniques that foster regeneration and resilience. This also means adopting a broad view of ecology that encompasses human and natural, urban and wild environments. Using precedents by pioneering landscape architect Ian McHarg and others, Steiner explores design practices for the future that are grounded in ecology and democracy and informed by critical regionalism.

4:45 p.m.--Adjourn

