

FEBRUARY 15-16, 2024



PLAN IT NATIVE

LANDSCAPES CONFERENCE



Presented by Deep Roots KC





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WELCOME TO PLAN IT NATIVE 2024!

This year marks Deep Roots KC's fifth annual conference, but only our second in person. So we're especially thrilled you're joining us.

Our conference campus spans the adjoining grounds of two of our valued sponsors, the Kauffman Family Foundation and the Missouri Department of Conservation. The path between travels along lush native landscapes in which, this time of year, you might spy delicate blossoms of Ozark witch hazel (*Hamamelis vernalis*) or the frost flowers of dittany (*Cunila origanoides*). These will soon be succeeded by ephemerals like Virginia bluebells (*Mertensia virginica*) and year-round stalwarts like Golden groundsel (*Packera aurea*).

But native plants give us more than beauty. With 2023 officially the warmest year on record, it's a good time to remember the crucial role of native landscapes. We hope the knowledge and inspiration you gain from this year's panel of experts will deepen your commitment to Plan It Native. Because now, more than ever, What You Plant Matters.

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KEYNOTES



OPENING KEYNOTE

NEIL DIBOLL, CONSULTING ECOLOGIST, AUTHOR

Genetic Diversity and Plant Preservation

The fields of agriculture, silviculture, and horticulture have historically focused on selecting “superior” plants to serve the needs of food production, lumber and fiber production, and the human fascination with bigger, longer-blooming, and more colorful ornamental plants. Ecological gardeners tend to be more concerned with creating low maintenance, sustainable, native gardens that provide not only enjoyment for the gardener, but also preserve native plant gene pools while creating habitat for birds, butterflies, pollinators, and other creatures. In this thought-provoking talk, Neil embraces a fairly technical topic and makes it understandable and interesting to both native plant enthusiasts and the average gardener.



MIDDAY KEYNOTE

ROY DIBLIK, AMERICAN PERENNIAL GARDEN DESIGNER, PLANT NURSERYMAN

Perennial Plant Communities: “The Know Maintenance Approach”

Roy’s thoughtful way to design perennial plantings welcomes fresh contemporary styles and plant diversity integrated with responsible stewardship concerns. By using a selection of regionally dependable perennials and native plants, endless nature-inspired plant patterns can be created, each relating to time and cost to nurture and care for. He will discuss the developing partnership between the gardener, the plants, and nature, always knowing the beauty is in the doing.



CLOSING KEYNOTE

DESIREE NARANGO, PhD., CONSERVATION SCIENTIST, VERMONT CENTER FOR ECOSTUDIES

Cultivating Bird Conservation at Home: Simple Actions for Every Season

Several recent headlines have revealed alarming declines in bird species around the globe—but what can we do to help? The green spaces in our yards and gardens can provide one solution to restore wildlife habitat in human-dominated landscapes. In this keynote, Dr. Desiree L. Narango will speak about the state of bird populations in the US, mechanisms contributing to declines, and conservation actions you can take at home to help bring them back. Specifically, her talk will focus on the evolutionary relationships between plants, insects, and birds and highlight recent research on simple actions that are essential components of ‘bird-friendly’ gardening practices across the year.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 15

Time • Details	Location
7:30-8:30am • REGISTRATION & EXHIBIT HALL	Discovery Center
8:30-9:30am • OPENING KEYNOTE	Discovery Center
Neil Diboll: Genetic Diversity & Plant Preservation	Auditorium
10:15-11:05am • SESSION 1	Kauffman Center
Julie Farstad: Flowers for Marlborough	Troost
Scott Woodbury: Nativars Now and Then (Part 1)	Brush Creek
Cheryl Salatino: Learn the Land: A Fresh Approach to Site Analysis	Paseo
Office Hours: Neil Diboll	Town Square
11:15am-12:05pm • SESSION 2	Kauffman Center
Carl Stafford: At the Intersection of Arts, Nature & Neighborhoods	Troost
Scott Woodbury: Nativars Now and Then (Part 2)	Brush Creek
Mervin Wallace: Creating and Maintaining Successful Small Landscapes	Paseo
Office Hours: Julie Farstad, Cheryl Salatino	Town Square
12:15-1:15pm • LUNCH	Town Square
1:30-2:30pm • MIDDAY KEYNOTE	Discovery Center
Roy Diblik: “The Know Maintenance Approach”	Auditorium
3:00-3:50pm • SESSION 3	Kauffman Center
Will Metcalf: Evaluating Landscape Performance & Telling Stories with Data	Troost
Roy Diblik: “The Know Maintenance Approach” (Continued)	Brush Creek
Sarah Beier: Biodiverse Beauty: Keystone Species in Garden Design	Paseo
Office Hours: Carl Stafford, Mervin Wallace, Scott Woodbury	Town Square
4:00-4:50pm • SESSION 4	Kauffman Center
Dan Shaw & Kirsten Theye: Lawns to Legumes	Troost
Natasha Thomas-North: Commercial Native Plant Production	Brush Creek
Mike Saxton: Managing for Native Biodiversity: Fire, Weeds and Seeds	Paseo
Office Hours: Sarah Beier, Roy Diblik, Will Metcalf	Town Square
5:00-7:00pm • RECEPTION	Town Square



FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 16

Time • Details	Location
8:00am • EXHIBIT HALL OPENS	Discovery Center
9:00-9:50am • SESSION 5	Kauffman Center
Kenn Boyle: Fox House: A Case Study of Turf to Native Garden	Troost
Guy Sternberg: Native Trees in a Changing Climate (Part 1)	Brush Creek
Desiree Narango: Informed Plant Selection to Support Pollinators & Songbirds	Paseo
Office Hours: Mike Saxton, Dan Shaw & Kirsten Theye, Natasha Thomas-North	Town Square
10:00-10:50am • SESSION 6	Kauffman Center
Shannon Currey: Native Sedges for Every Garden	Troost
Guy Sternberg: Native Trees in a Changing Climate (Part 2)	Brush Creek
Heather Holm: Creating and Managing Landscapes for Native Bees	Paseo
Office Hours: Kenn Boyle, Desiree Narango, Guy Sternberg	Town Square
11:15am-12:15pm • CLOSING KEYNOTE	Discovery Center
Desiree Narango: Cultivating Bird Conservation at Home	Auditorium
12:15-1:00pm	Discovery Center
Office Hours: Shannon Currey, Heather Holm, Guy Sternberg	Amphitheater
1:00pm • EXHIBIT HALL CLOSES	Discovery Center

THURSDAY MENUS

LUNCH

Baked Potato Bar

Baked potatoes, butter, sour cream, grated cheese, green onion, bacon, grilled chicken, roasted vegetables (V, VG)

RECEPTION

Chardonnay, pinot noir, cabernet sauvignon, beer
 BBQ meatballs
 Stuffed cremini mushrooms (V)
 Tortilla pinwheel roll-ups (V)
 Hummus, pita & crudité's (V, VG)
 Cheese assortment with crackers & fruit (V)

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MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION

SESSIONS

SESSION 1

Flowers for Marlborough

Julie Farstad

Professor of Painting at the Kansas City Art Institute

Julie is the artist behind the public art project, Flowers for Marlborough, as well as the creator of intimate, interior-facing oil paintings on panel, all of which aim to celebrate the immense, interconnected world of native plants. Through her teaching at KCAI and her Flowers for Marlborough project, Farstad uses drawing and painting to help students awaken to a sense of wonder and curiosity about plants, their development, their ecological roles, as well as their political and cultural histories. Artists culturally operate in a myriad of ways: they are catalysts, provocateurs, questioners, complicators, storytellers, and communicators, among many other roles. In this presentation, Farstad will explore the many ways in which she and other artists have engaged with native plants in order to deepen the relationship that humans have with them, in the hopes of revealing our complex and beautiful entanglement with them.

Nativars Now and Then: Their History, Use and Folly (Part 1)

Scott Woodbury

Owner, Caciala Garden Design and Wilding

Cultivars of native plants (nativars) have been gracing gardens in Europe and North America for over a century. Though many have developed since 1950, their popularity has soared in recent decades. Some nativars are veering far from their evolutionary path and are attractive only to humans, while others appear to follow in their ancestors' footsteps, attracting butterflies, moths, ants, bees, flies, mammals and birds. What are nativars? Are nativars too much of a good thing? What are straight species? What are their purposes and applications of both in landscaping?

Learn the Land: A Fresh Approach to Site Analysis

Cheryl Salatino

Dancing Shadows Garden Design

Understanding the land on which we will interject our ideas offers the very information needed to make ecologically sound design choices. How we arrive at this understanding

goes well beyond our traditional approach in collecting data about soil type, moisture retention, light exposure and grade change. Building upon the basics, we can attain new insights by weaving together the elements of purpose, observation, discovery and analysis. Tapping into the conditions a site can reveal about its current state, and what may have been present beforehand, has the potential to open a different door to the future. Taking the time to dig deeper can yield a significant payback in ecological benefits, resource requirements and the long term success of the project.

SESSION 2

Working at the Intersection of Arts, Nature and Neighborhoods

Carl Stafford

Founder/Visionary MY REGION WINS!

Learning about native landscaping has helped with the understanding of how to address storm water runoff. Future water insecurities have been discovered, and ecosystem restoration has begun. MRW! programs and projects (like BOON AREA 1) are created to address environmental and social injustices and issues. Work is done at the intersection of the arts, nature, and neighborhoods. Carl sees nature as the Great Matrix, and Carl is its Morpheus.

Nativars Now and Then: Their History, Use and Folly (Part 2)

Scott Woodbury

Creating and Maintaining Successful Small Landscapes and Container Gardens

Mervin Wallace

Founder, Missouri Wildflowers Nursery

Mervin will help you to:

- Understand why plants wilt when you move them and how to prevent wilting,
- Why it's okay that the lower leaves die on some plants,
- Why annual weeds come up in beds and how to prevent it,
- When it's okay to let weeds grow when you see them coming up in beds.

He will provide helpful knowledge on a lot of subjects that will make your wildflower gardens easier to establish and maintain. Both experienced and inexperienced native plant gardeners should find this helpful.

SESSION 3

Evaluating Landscape Performance and Telling Stories with Data

Will Metcalf

Associate ASLA, SITES AP

We are in the midst of a biodiversity crisis. The built environment sector is a leading threat to global biodiversity while simultaneously depending on the ecosystem services provided by an ecologically healthy planet. As such, professionals who shape the built environment must understand the landscape performance benefits of their work to transform our relationship to nature, but it is no straightforward task. This session will introduce the concept of landscape performance benefits, address challenges in quantifying and communicating benefits, explore opportunities to promote biodiversity through design, and discuss how rating systems such as LEED or SITES can guide the protection and restoration of biodiversity in the built environment.

Perennial Plant Communities: "The Know Maintenance Approach" (Continued from Midday Keynote)

Roy Diblik

Biodiverse Beauty: Keystone Species in Landscape Design

Sarah Beier

Owner, Oak & IO

Do your garden plans include plenty of keystone plant species? If not, they should! These remarkable native plants play a crucial role in supporting the web of life. Learn how to identify the most valuable perennial keystone plants in your region, and then incorporate them into your garden designs in ways that make ecological – and aesthetic – sense! Whether you're a seasoned pro or just getting your hands dirty, this session will leave you inspired and equipped to create functional, beneficial, beautiful landscapes.

SESSION 4

Lawns to Legumes

Dan Shaw

Senior Ecologist and Vegetation Specialist,
BWSR; Professor, University of Minnesota

Kirsten Theye

Professor, Communication Studies; Program
Director, Social Activism at Concordia College,
and Lawns to Legumes participant

Lawns to Legumes is a state funded initiative in Minnesota started in 2019 to support declining pollinator populations. The program was designed to build a statewide movement to engage residents to “Bee the Change” for pollinators and has resulted in over 3500 installed projects, over 1000 projects in environmental justice areas, participation in every Minnesota county and nearly 6000 residents participating in program webinars. This presentation will discuss program strategies and highlight the important role of local collaboration to support pollinators. We will also discuss next steps for the program to further support pollinators and increase the health and resiliency of landscapes.

Commercial Native Plant Production: Processes and Challenges

Natasha Thomas-North

Growing Center Manager, Taylor Creek
Restoration Nurseries

This presentation will provide the audience with an overview of the processes of propagating native plants, systems for maintaining large numbers of different crops, and the logistics involved in shipping the finished product. Natasha will also discuss the challenges faced regularly, and how nurseries work to prevent and overcome said challenges.

Managing for Native Biodiversity: Fire, Weeds and Seeds

Mike Saxton

Manager of Ecological Restoration and Land
Stewardship, Shaw Nature Reserve

Hear what it takes to manage multiple habitat types over the course of an entire year with a focus on seed collection, invasive species control, prescribed fire and how empowering volunteers and scaling up equipment can lead to restoration success.

SESSION 5

Fox House: A Case Study of Turf to Native Garden

Kenn Boyle

Native Plant enthusiast

Located in the heart of Kansas City, the Fox House boasts native gardens rich with blooms and biodiversity. Starting with the demolition of his lawn in 2020, Kenn has documented three years of growth in his garden. In this presentation he will discuss the transformation of his garden as well as ongoing maintenance practices.

Native Trees in a Changing Climate (Part 1)

Guy Sternberg

Co-Founder, Starhill Forest Arboretum, author

Virtually all scientists now agree that our climate is becoming increasingly unstable. How will this affect our most treasured and permanent landscape plants – our trees? Why should we be concerned, and what should we do? Learn more about observed versus proxy data; clinal variation; Milankovich and ENSO climate cycling; clathrate guns; the infamous hockey stick; invasive exotic species and their problems; and the importance of provenance and diversity. Then look more closely at some of our North American native trees most likely to adjust and survive, and come away better prepared for the uncertain future of your environment.

Informed Plant Selection to Support Pollinators and Songbirds

Desiree Narango

Conservation Scientist, Vermont Center for
Ecostudies

The plant species you select for your garden is a critical decision influencing whether wildlife can thrive. In this talk, Dr. Desiree L. Narango will discuss her research evaluating which plant species and traits are best for supporting interactions with pollinating insects and songbirds. She will also provide information and online tools you can use to make informed decisions and contribute to community science.

SESSION 6

Foundations, Fillers and Flourishes: Native Sedges for Every Garden

Shannon Currey

Education & Outreach, Izel Native Plants

Native sedges are garnering attention for their versatility and ecological impact in the landscape. These herbaceous perennials—primarily in the genus *Carex*—shine as alternatives to mulch, turfgrass, and aggressive groundcovers, especially in shady conditions. They provide food, shelter, and nesting material for wildlife. Learn about the roles they play and the benefits they offer. You’ll come away knowing which species are well-adapted to your region and will help you build beautiful, ecologically sound landscapes.

Native Trees in a Changing Climate (Part 2)

Guy Sternberg

Creating and Managing Landscapes for Native Bees

Heather Holm

Pollinator conservationist and award-winning
author

When creating and managing thriving habitats for native bees, many factors such as seasonal phenology, nesting strategies, and flower preferences must be considered—and with approximately 3,600 species in North America (north of Mexico), there are many unique aspects to keep in mind when managing successful landscapes for bees.

Join Heather as she explores the nesting habitats, life cycles, pollen collection, brood rearing, and general characteristics of some of the most common native bees in eastern North America, while highlighting the pollination of native plants and the mutualism between native plants and native bees. Learn about pollen specialists, the presentation of floral resources, and how the physical characteristics of bees can influence their effectiveness as pollinators. Heather will also discuss ways to manage landscapes to enhance bee diversity, plant selection considerations, and ultimately how to think like a bee!



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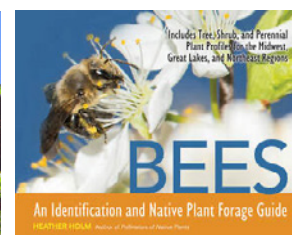
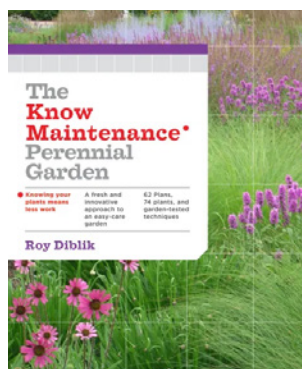
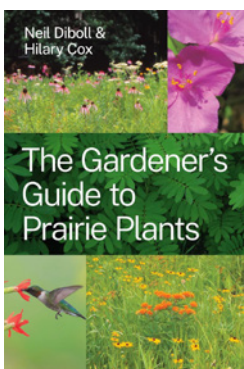
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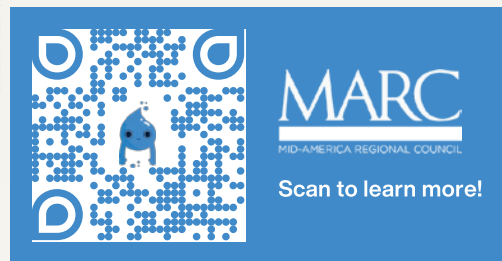
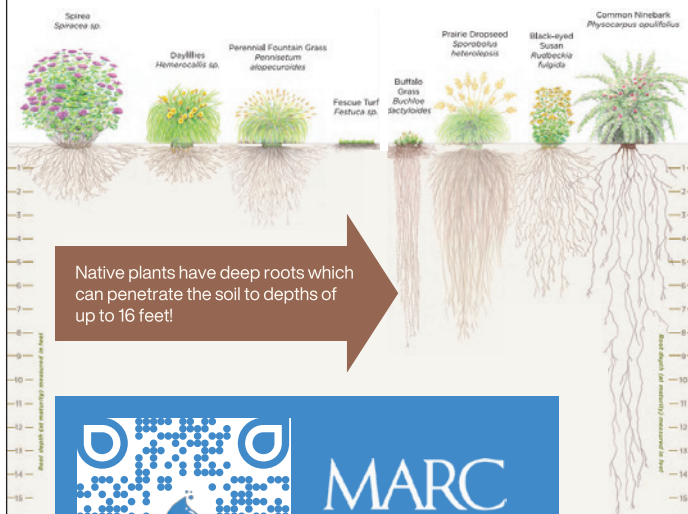
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Know Your Roots

Increasing the number of native plants in your landscaping is a great way to reduce the amount of runoff that leaves your property. Native plants are trees, shrubs, flowers, grasses, ferns and other plants that evolve in a region over time. [Learn more at cleanwaterkcmetro.org](http://cleanwaterkcmetro.org)



Keep growing with us!

We have lots of great things germinating for you – garden tours, hands-on workshops, plant sales and much more.



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