



Wednesday, March 19, 2025

7:30a – 9:00a Connecticut College Arboretum Native Plant Collection Tour

Established in 1931, the Native Plant Collection features trees and shrubs native to eastern North America and hardy in southeastern Connecticut. The landscape also includes a wildflower garden, outdoor theater, pond, Buck Lodge and the Bolleswood Natural Area.

8:30a – 9:15a Registration, Continental breakfast and visit with exhibitors

9:15a – 9:30a Introductions and Welcome

- Annie Mixsell, CUFC Chair
- Danica Doroski, CT DEEP
- CTPA Leadership
- Bruce Villwock, TWAC Board of Directors

9:30a – 9:40a Land Acknowledgement

Sharon Maynard, Mohegan Tribe

9:40a – 10:25a · Keynote Speaker: Embracing Innovation and Partnerships in Urban Canopy Projects – Eric Rains

Eric Rains is an innovative and recognized Landscape Architect whose projects have embraced new technologies for tree planting, which has made a positive impact on the way many municipalities and investors view the urban forest. Eric's background and strong understanding of both nature and communities allows him to navigate private, public and environmental considerations as well as to encourage creative partnerships among stakeholders. With his enthusiastic style of civic engagement, Eric will share his successes and challenges, as well as ideas for working through complex problems with locating, planting and maintaining urban canopies from a multitude of projects in the Eastern United States and beyond.

10:25a – 10:40a **BREAK and visit with exhibitors**

10:40a – 12:00p **Preparing for Oak Wilt**

From Root to Crown: Overview of Oak Wilt Biology, Vectors, and Symptoms - Elena Karlsen-Ayala, USFS Hamden Office

*Oak Wilt is an invasive vascular disease of oak trees caused by the fungal pathogen *Bretziella fagacearum*. This pathogen is spread either above ground via nitidulid beetles, or below ground via root transmission. Symptoms include tree wilt, flagging, and premature summer leaf drop. Oak wilt has been detected in several Midwestern states, Texas, Pennsylvania, and New York. The range of oak wilt detection continues to expand into new areas, thus the best control for this disease is through preventive measures. In this talk we will discuss the pathogen biology, modes of spread, symptomology and prevention.*

New York Oak Wilt Experience - Robert Cole, NYS Department of Environmental Conservation

Abstract coming...

Responding to Suspected Oak Wilt in Connecticut Nathaniel Westrick, Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station - Dr. Nathan Westrick, CT Agricultural Experiment Station

Oak Wilt is a fungal disease of oaks, with the potential to cause immense damage in Connecticut due to the high concentration of susceptible red oaks in the state. This talk will focus on how foresters and arborists should respond when trees with suspected oak wilt is found. This will include the points of contact in the state, the sampling regime used to test for the pathogen, and management techniques to abrogate the spread of the disease.

Municipal Management Considerations - Annie Mixsell, City of New Haven Tree Warden

Managing a municipal urban forest with the threat of diseases like Oak Wilt and Dutch Elm Disease presents challenges that require thoughtful allocation of limited resources. In this session, Annie will discuss the city of New Haven's operating standards and policies that were put in place to prevent and respond to the potential threat of Oak Wilt.

12:00p – 1:15p **Lunch**

1:15p – 2:45p **CONCURRENT SESSIONS**

A. Resilient Urban Forests

Storms and the Urban Forest: Steps for your community to be ready - Matt Lee, Green Infrastructure Center

As tropical storms and other natural disasters become more frequent and severe, it is important for municipalities to be prepared for the costly cleanup and response to these events. Better preparing your community's urban forest for storms can save money, reduce property damage and restore

services faster. This presentation will review the foundation for urban forest storm resiliency. It will cover steps your community can take such as data collection, program development, and the policies and planning that will help your community be ready.

Trees as Stormwater Solutions: Options for Planting Trees in Limited Green Space - Al Key, Deep Root

With increased focus and investment in urban tree planting, it is important to ensure that the trees can reach maturity to maximize environmental benefits. Since the 1980's, many systems have been developed and tested to provide additional rooting space under hardscapes. All methods have differing levels of long-term success, as well as design limitations. Mr. Keys will provide an overview of these techniques, various types of suspended pavement, load bearing modules, gravel based structural soil (GBSS) and sand based structural soil (SBSS). Al's experience will enable a lively discussion the pros and cons of each system.

B. Tree Risk Assessment – Moriah Day, Davey Resource Group

All trees, regardless of size, health, or location, pose some level of risk to the people, structures, and services around them. At the same time, trees provide significant benefits, particularly when people are in close contact with them. How we balance the risk trees may pose with the benefits they provide is a complex challenge that is only increasing in importance as extreme weather events intensify, urban density increases, and more focus is placed on adding trees to urban areas. This talk will dive into the reasons we conduct risk assessments, what we look for when assessing tree risk, and how a better understanding of tree risk can help inform management decisions, including those regarding tree removal and replacement. This talk does not constitute certification in tree risk assessment - to become a qualified tree risk assessor, please look into the International Society of Arboriculture's Tree Risk Assessment Qualification course.

C. Trees and Tech

iTree, TreeCanopy.us, Healthy Trees, Healthy Cities - Michelle Johnson, USFS

Free and low-cost tools are available to all.

Establishing and Using a Tree Inventory System: Methodology, Software & Devices - Matthew Verry, Connecticut Department of Transportation

This talk will include an overview of the various software and database tools used by CTDOT's Landscape Design Unit, with a focus on the process and methodology used to develop tools and establish procedures for a tree inventorying system. Matt will share case studies of current CTDOT projects relating to tree inventorying, including the analysis and management of various tree sizes, species, canopy conditions, and overall tree health. He will also share how his unit is using drone technology to supplement data collection, what it looks like to implement the use of drones, and what the future may hold for this technology.

Technology for Arborists and Urban Foresters - Josh Behounek, Davey

2:45p – 3:00p **BREAK and visit with exhibitors**

3:00p – 4:30p **Community Forestry**

Implementing a Citizen Pruner Program – Marissa Nolan, Cornell Cooperative Extension

Marissa Nolan is the Horticulture Team Lead at Cornell Cooperative Extension and coordinates Ithaca’s Citizen Pruner training program. Citizen Pruners volunteers help maintain street trees and shrubs in a town or city. The Citizen Pruner program started in Ithaca, NY more than 30 years ago as a collaboration between the City of Ithaca’s Parks & Forestry department and Cornell Cooperative Extension of Tompkins County. This presentation will go into how the program and partnership works, aspects of volunteer training and management, and community perception of the program.

Grant Roundtable – Danica Doroski and Les Walker - CT DEEP Urban Forest Coordinator, Danica Doroski and Les Walker, Grant Coordinator

will highlight successes from recent urban forestry grant projects and provide resources for current and upcoming grant opportunities.

PhotoVoice Project – Teresa Verellen, UConn

Photovoice is a visual research methodology with the intention to foster social change. Photovoice has been used to investigate change in empowerment in communities. Teresa, a will present on the Photovoice project around urban and community forestry as a lead into the exhibit during the social hour. Teresa is a graduate student of Urban Forestry at University of Connecticut.

4:30p **Adjournment and CEUs**

4:30p - 6:00p **Social Hour with PhotoVoice Project Art Exhibit**

Thursday, March 20, 2025

8:30a – 9:15a **Registration, Continental breakfast and visit with exhibitors**

8:30a – 9:15a **CT Urban Forest Council Meeting and welcome over breakfast**

9:15a – 9:20a **Introductions and Welcome**

9:20a – 9:30a **Arboretum Welcome – Maggie Redfern**

9:30a – 10:30a **Choosing the Right Tree – Darryl Newman, Planter’s Choice**

Stock selection, species selection, site selection

10:30a – 10:45a **BREAK and visit with exhibitors**

10:45a – 11:30a **Tree Planting Science and Best Practices –**

Foundational science, soil amendments, best practices, B&B vs container, water, bracing

11:30a – 12:15p **Post-care Recommendations –** Jeff Thrasher, Almstead

Jeff Thrasher will discuss essential planting strategies and post planting tree care that support tree establishment. Importance of basket removal, planting hole depth and shape, and quality of backfill materials for balancing microbial stimulation and nutrient availability is discussed. Post planting tree care begins with managing soil moisture content utilizing mulch and watering programs appropriate for the planting site. Watering programs will be considered for both immediate water needs and long-term benefits and drawbacks. The importance of working with and providing guidance to irrigation service providers is discussed. The pros and cons of bracing systems will be considered. Pruning recommendations for immediate post planting care and ongoing developmental/structural pruning given. Ongoing fertilization and plant health care monitoring considered.

12:15p – 1:30p **Lunch**

1:30p – 3:30p **CONCURRENT SESSIONS**

A. Tree Planting Lab

Hands-on planting demonstration stations that will instruct proper bare root, container, and ball & burlap tree planting practices. Instruction will highlight choosing location based on site and species characteristics, tree size, digging the hole, soil, watering, bracing.

B. Connecticut College Arboretum Native Plant Collection Tour

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C. Downtown New London Urban Forestry Tour

This tour will take participants by bus to historic New London to visit two sites featuring high performance tree plantings by Kent+Frost:

In July 2016, the City of New London embarked on a project to redesign and construct two municipal parking lots along Eugene O'Neill Drive. The design features center islands serving as storm water collection & filtration bays, and the use of "Silva cells" (sub-grade plastic tree pit supports) below sidewalks and parking areas to support the hardscapes above, maximize root volumes and avoid soil compaction.

Hygienic Art Park is central to the city's cultural events, hosting festivals of up to 300 people. A grove of Linden trees provides shady seating for moveable furniture and open views to the theater. The lush canopy was developed using CU Structural Soil TM, which was a huge success, but also

requires attention due to heavy foot traffic. The Project was awarded the 2010 Award of Excellence from the CT Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects

3:30p – 3:45p **BREAK and transition**

3:45p – 4:15p **Miyawaki Forest Method** – Caseylee Bastien, RLA, CPSI

Miyawaki forests (honoring the late Japanese botanist Akira Miyawaki), are forested pocket parks that accelerate ecosystem function through urban reforestation and creation of healthy forest soil. When individuals share direct action, a story can change how they see their role in the environment. This is how we create human/forest communities where people are invested in their land, especially those where biodiversity has become distant and abstract. We will discuss a methodology for site selection; ecological benefits/ constraints; specific implementation, and strategies for communications and public engagement including events, group tours, GIS mapping, StoryMaps, signage, and self-guided tours. With lessons learned from decades of shared experience by subject matter experts performing restoration/ replication of many types. We will provide links to references for why and how to get started and how to maintain a young forest. As well as guides for Municipal Maintenance staff and leaders to speed their journey to a more forested community.

4:15p **Adjournment and CEUs**