



Photo by Larry Weaner Landscape Associates

# Expanding the Scope of Landscape Design: *People, Ecology, & Time*

## 33<sup>rd</sup> Annual Landscape Symposium — Held Virtually

Landscape designers who successfully employ an ecology-based approach typically draw from a variety of sources. The inextricable link between people and ecology only increases the need to broaden their investigative lens. Join us as we explore the integration of *ecology-based* design with *people-based* factors, including the lingering effects of historic land use and the need to accommodate diverse cultural perspectives on the meaning of “ecology.”

*This program is geared toward the Mid-Atlantic & New England regions.*

CEUs Available.

**Thursday and Friday, January 20 and 21, 2022**

**Thursday and Friday, January 27 and 28, 2022**

**1:00–4:30PM EST (includes instructional time & breaks)**

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**Connecticut  
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New Directions in the American Landscape  
Developed by Larry Weaner Landscape Associates



Ecological Systems Include People

1– 4:30 PM EST (3 CEU Hours)

*Eastern Grasslands*

Dwayne Estes, PhD

Ecologists have long considered the Eastern United States as a naturally forested region due to its levels of precipitation. This viewpoint, however, disregards the historic presence of extensive grasslands that resulted from the activities of humans and native grazers. While mostly lost, some of these grasslands persist today due to deliberate and accidental human activity. Through a series of case studies, grassland expert Dwayne Estes will show how the study of human interactions with the landscape, past and present, can inform the design, restoration, and re-creation of native grasslands.

*Forested Landscapes*

Daniela Shebitz, PhD

In this presentation, Daniela Shebitz will share her insight and experience as a forest ecologist and ethnobotanist. She will discuss how to look for indicator species and environmental cues that give insight into the past landscape and how these cues can inform the work of restoring native plant assemblages. Daniela will also discuss her work reconstructing historical landscapes based on past land management, including agriculture, logging, and burning.

*Panel: Speakers Compare Notes and Q&A*

Dwayne Estes, PhD

Daniela Shebitz, PhD

Moderated by Larry Weaner, FAPLD

The City as Habitat

1– 4:30 PM EST (3 CEU Hours)

*Urban Landscape Inspirations from Native Plant Communities*

Ethan Dropkin, MLA

Whether at ground level or high above the city streets, growing plants in an urban setting imposes stress, both for the plants and the people maintaining them. By using existing native plant communities found in stressed ecological environments to guide us, we can use urban conditions to our advantage and create resilient, productive plantings.

*Urban Shores: Untangling Ecology and Access in a Changing Climate*

Gena Wirth, RLA

As hotly contested spaces facing competing demands, urban shorelines sit at a meeting point between the needs of local communities and broader issues like climate change, inequitable access, ecological deterioration, and disputed ownership. In this lecture, Gena Wirth will share three projects with different approaches to thinking long-term about urban shorelines as essential infrastructure for the next century.

*Ecologies of Memory*

Sara Zewde, RLA

In order to understand “place”, we need to understand both the ecology of that place, and how people have used and interacted with it over time. In the midst of a changing climate, rapid urban development, and clarified political tensions, ecologies of memory can offer creative departures for landscape design today. Sara Zewde will discuss the recent design work of Studio Zewde in this context.

Ecology and Landscape Design:  
A Reciprocal Relationship

1– 4:30 PM EST (3 CEU Hours)

*Flowers, Insects, and People: Stewarding an Ancient Mutualism through Greenspace Design*

Douglas Sponsler, PhD

Together, flowering plants and flower-visiting insects make up a third of the Earth’s species. In this talk, we will trace the relationship between flowers and insects from its ancient origins to its modern application in greenspace design. Along the way, we will explore the ecological and philosophical basis for understanding greenspace design as an act of radical stewardship.

*Ecology-Based Landscape Design:  
A Collaborative Effort*

Barbara Wilks, FASLA, FAIA

Steven Handel, PhD

Landscape professionals working on public landscapes are increasingly attempting to make ecological improvements in conjunction with their practical, aesthetic, and cultural design enhancements. Landscape architect Barbara Wilks and ecologist Steven Handel have collaborated on numerous projects over the past ten years. They will review their collaborative design process through a series of public park projects where ecological structure and function were a significant part of the design approach. They will conclude with a conversation on the nuts and bolts of their Eco-Design collaboration.

*Panel: Speakers Compare Notes and Q&A*

Douglas Sponsler, PhD

Barbara Wilks, FASLA, FAIA

Steven Handel, PhD

Moderated by Jenna Webster

Sculpture, Choreography, and the  
Integration of Landscape and Art

1– 4:30 PM EST (3 CEU Hours)

*Art and Ephemerality in the Designed Landscape*

W. Gary Smith, FASLA

While Gary Smith has been a major player in the ecological design movement for much of its existence, he now devotes his primary design energies to ephemeral and environmental art. He will discuss this work, how it has influenced his design practice, and how its immediacy can reflect natural processes of change in the landscape.

*Walking in Dumbarton Oaks:  
Beatrix Farrand’s Rhythmic Design*

Robin Veder, PhD

When landscape architect Beatrix Farrand designed the paths, staircases, and landings at Dumbarton Oaks in Washington, D.C., she thought about what they demanded of the human body and phrased her solution in terms of “rhythm.” Farrand’s notion of rhythm comes from health practices and aesthetic theories that were linked in early twentieth century thought. Historian Robin Veder proposes that landscape design was and is impacted by contemporary understandings of health, and that conversely, landscape designs continue to choreograph the embodied experiences on the bodies that walk them a century later.

*Principles, Not Formulas: The Visionary  
Modernist Gardens of Roberto Burle Marx*

Raymond Jungles, FASLA

Raymond Jungles is an authority on the work of the legendary Brazilian landscape architect Roberto Burle Marx. Jungles will discuss Burle Marx’s design excellence and share photographs he took while immersed in Burle Marx’s projects, including his personal paradise, Sítio Burle Marx, now a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Jungles will also share gardens he designed in homage to Burle Marx, including the New York Botanical Garden’s temporary exhibit *Brazilian Modern: The Living Art of Roberto Burle Marx*.

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**Ethan Dropkin, MLA**, landscape designer at Larry Weaner Landscape Associates (LWLA), has an extensive understanding of native plants and their effective use in the designed landscape. Prior to joining LWLA, Ethan worked as a designer at Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates, as a horticultural designer and technician for Cornell University, and as a horticulturist for the New York City Parks Department. Ethan has a MA in Landscape Architecture, and a MPS in Horticulture from Cornell University.

**Dwayne Estes, PhD**, is co-founder and executive director of the Southeastern Grasslands Initiative, a conservation organization affiliated with Austin Peay State University, which is dedicated to the protection and restoration of the Southeast’s native grasslands. In addition to his role as executive director of the Southeastern Grasslands Initiative, Dwayne is a Full Professor of Biology and Principal Investigator for the Center of Excellence for Field Biology at Austin Peay.

**Steven Handel, PhD**, is a Distinguished Professor of Ecology at Rutgers University, and formerly Visiting Professor at Harvard University’s Graduate School of Design. He studies the restoration ecology of urban habitats and is Editor of the journal *Ecological Restoration*. He received his BA in biology from Columbia University and a PhD in ecology and evolution from Cornell University.

**Raymond Jungles, FASLA**, is the founder of the Miami-based, award winning landscape architecture firm, Raymond Jungles, Inc. (RJI). Raymond leads all RJI’s projects from their conception to final completion and enjoys mentoring his staff and passionately promoting the profession of landscape architecture. He lectures widely about his work and the influence Roberto Burle Marx, the “Master Modernist,” has had on it.

**Daniela Shebitz, PhD**, is a restoration ecologist and ethnobotanist currently serving as the Executive Director and Associate Professor for the School of Environmental and Sustainability Sciences at Kean University in Union, NJ. She conducts research with her students in sites ranging from Costa Rica and China to the New Jersey Pine Barrens where she studies the effects of land management on plant diversity, with a specific focus on culturally significant plants.

**W. Gary Smith, FASLA**, specializes in the design and planning of botanical gardens. His work weaves together ecological and cultural themes, more recently involving

environmental art. His projects include the Santa Fe Botanical Garden, the Luci and Ian Family Garden at the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center, the Southern Highlands Reserve in North Carolina, and Peirce’s Woods at Longwood Gardens.

**Douglas Sponsler, PhD**, was born and raised in Philadelphia, where his love for nature grew out of time spent in urban parks and gardens. He completed his PhD in entomology at Ohio State University, did a postdoc at Penn State University, and is currently a postdoc at the University of Würzburg in Germany. From the fields of Ohio, to the rooftops of Philly, to the Alps of Germany, the theme of his work has been the relationship between flowers, insects, and people.

**Robin Veder, PhD**, is a cultural historian of U.S. and transatlantic art history, visual culture, history of the body, and landscape studies. Among other publications, her garden and landscape research has appeared in the *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* and the *Journal of Victorian Culture*. Fellowships include the Smithsonian, Winterthur, and Dumbarton Oaks. She is the executive editor of *American Art*, the scholarly journal co-published by the Smithsonian American Art Museum and University of Chicago Press.

**Barbara Wilks, FASLA, FAIA**, established an award-winning career instilling nature into some of the most challenging urban sites around the world. She began her professional vocation as an architect in Baltimore, but soon realized that her interests in public space aligned more with landscape architecture. After earning an MLA at the midpoint in her career, she founded W Architecture and Landscape Architecture in New York City in 1999.

**Gena Wirth, RLA**, is Design Principal at SCAPE. She works with cities, community advocates, and landowners to reveal the ecological and cultural potential of public landscapes. As Design Principal, Gena translates research into practice and leads the design of complex urban landscapes, including public and private waterfronts, regional trail systems, parks, plazas, and resilience plans.

**Sara Zewde, RLA**, is founding principal of Studio Zewde, a design firm in New York City practicing landscape architecture, urbanism, and public art. The studio is devoted to creating enduring places where people belong. Parallel to practice, Sara serves as Assistant Professor of Practice at Harvard University’s Graduate School of Design.

Registration Fees

Early Bird Rate

Full Bundle, Modules 1-4 | \$180 if registration is received online or postmarked by Dec. 20, 2021

Individual Modules | \$50 per module if registration is received online or postmarked by Dec. 20, 2021

Regular Rate

Full Bundle, Modules 1-4 | \$200 if registration is received online or postmarked after Dec. 20, 2021

Individual Modules | \$60 per module if registration is received online or postmarked after Dec. 20, 2021

Student Early Bird Rate\*

Full Bundle, Modules 1-4 | \$100 if registration is received online or postmarked by Dec. 20, 2021

Individual Modules | \$25 per module if registration is received online or postmarked by Dec. 20, 2021

Student Regular Rate\*

Full Bundle, Modules 1-4 | \$125 if registration is received online or postmarked after Dec. 20, 2021

Individual Modules | \$32 per module if registration is received online or postmarked after Dec. 20, 2021

*\*Please send proof of student status including a current date (ie. course schedule, student ID card) to [info@ndal.org](mailto:info@ndal.org) to receive a coupon code for the student rate.*

Student Scholarship – Free Conference Admission

Students and recent graduates are invited to apply for scholarships granting free admission to the Symposium. Application deadline: Dec. 15, 2021. For eligibility and application information, visit [NDAL.org](https://www.ndal.org). Four scholarships will be awarded. The scholarships honor Darrel Morrison, FASLA, Senior Honorary Faculty Associate, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Department of Planning and Landscape Architecture and Glenn Dreyer, Connecticut College Arboretum Director Emeritus.



Comments from 2021 Conference Attendees

*“The NDAL conference is the best marriage of art, landscape design, and science out there.”*

*“Thanks again for what I’ve come to rely on for my winter energy boost!”*

*“Top notch as always! Energizing, educational, approachable.”*

*“Great job of converting a large in-person event to virtual.”*

Registration

Create an account on NDAL’s [Events Portal](#) to register for the Symposium. This account will give you exclusive access to the session recordings and course materials. These materials will be available for three (3) months after each live session ends.

*Registration will be refunded only if notification is received before ten (10) working days prior to the event less a processing fee of 10% of the total order fee.*

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Registration closes 24 hours prior to each individual Module start time.