

# *Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden's* Sustainable Urban Landscapes Symposium

*Talk Descriptions and Speaker Biographies*

March 13, 2025

## **Adventures in Ecological Horticulture**

### **Rebecca McMackin, 9:00AM-10:00AM**

Gone are the days when a garden could be ornamental alone. We now recognize the impact that our land care practices have on the ecosystems around us and can see the importance of encouraging biodiversity. Thankfully, we do not need to sacrifice beauty when we invite butterflies and songbirds into our gardens.

Rebecca McMackin has cultivated gorgeous landscapes in the toughest environments possible: urban parks, school playgrounds, and the sidewalks of New York City. She will take lessons from her work at Brooklyn Bridge Park, the Brooklyn Museum, and decades of research to share how those of us who are fortunate enough to care for land, can do it beautifully and ecologically.

*Rebecca McMackin is an ecologically obsessed horticulturist and garden designer. She writes, lectures, and teaches on ecological landscape management and pollination ecology, as well as designs the rare public garden. She is currently Arboretum Curator for historic Woodlawn Cemetery, managing one of the best tree collections in the state.*

*Rebecca spent a decade as Director of Horticulture of Brooklyn Bridge Park, where she managed 85 acres of diverse parkland organically. Their research into cultivating urban biodiversity and ethical management strategies has influenced thousands of people and entire urban parks systems to adopt similar approaches. She has been published by and featured in the New York Times, the Landscape Institute, on NPR and PBS. Her garden for the Brooklyn Museum recently won the PPA's Award of Excellence and her TED Talk has been viewed over a million times.*

## **The Middle Ground: A Feasible Approach to Environmentally Friendly Urban & Suburban Landscapes and Gardens**

### **Scott Beuerlein, 10:00AM-10:50AM**

All the trends are focusing on new methods of creating environmentally stronger landscapes, but is the public ready for how they look? Is there the infrastructure and the uniquely trained labor force to make and maintain them? This talk looks into merging the affordability, the practicality, and the popularity of more traditional landscape approaches with the goals of newer design concepts to achieve more high functioning landscapes in more places, a goal that is so badly needed.

*Scott Beuerlein is the Manager of Botanical Garden Outreach at the Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden. He runs the Zoo's Botanical Garden educational programs, including three symposiums.*

*Scott is also a garden writer and horticultural speaker. He has published hundreds of articles and columns in several gardening and green industry publications. He currently writes two columns in each issue of Horticulture Magazine. Scott is also a partner in the long running and highly respected Garden Rant blog site. Scott has received numerous awards and recognition for his writing and community efforts.*

*Scott serves on the Spring Grove Cemetery and Arboretum Board of Directors. He is the Chair of the Boone County Arboretum Collections Committee, and as the Vice-President of the City of Cincinnati Urban Forestry Advisory Board.*

*Scott earned a B.A. in Communication Arts from Xavier University. He is an ONLA Certified Landscape Technician and an ISA Certified Arborist.*

## **The S-List – The Most Sustainable Plants for Urban Landscapes**

### **Steve Foltz, 11:10AM-12:00PM**

Steve will use his extensive experience from his long career in horticulture at the Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden to share his list of favorite sustainable plants. This list will cover the full realm of plant types for the entire spectrum of uses, from storm water runoff to public engagement. New ideas and seldom discussed plants will be introduced to the audience.

*Steve Foltz is the Director of Horticulture at the Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden, where he has worked for over 35 years. As such, he has been involved in all aspects of Horticulture, ranging range from very common to incredibly unique. He is widely regarded as one of the top plant experts in the country.*

*Steve has taught horticulture to hundreds of students for over 30 years, serving as an adjunct professor at both Cincinnati State and the University of Cincinnati.*

*Steve is a graduate of the University of Kentucky's Horticulture program. He has received numerous awards and recognition for his contributions to the Zoo, the community, and the green industry.*

## **Lessons Learned from Curating the Venerable Tree Collections of Spring Grove Cemetery and Arboretum and the Historic Woodlawn Cemetery in the Bronx**

### **Rebecca McMackin and Brian Heinz, 1:00PM-2:10PM**

Both Spring Grove Cemetery and Arboretum and Woodlawn Cemetery in the Bronx are Adolph Strauch designs, and both feature tree collections that are over 150 years old. Brian Heinz and Rebecca McMackin curate these collections and will share what they have learned from these venerable collections about tree selection, siting, maintenance, protection and more.

*Brian Heinz is the Director of Horticulture and Arboriculture at Spring Grove Cemetery and Arboretum, where he has worked for 25 years. He studied Horticulture at the University of Cincinnati and is widely respected by his peers for his extensive expertise across the realm of horticulture, but especially for his knowledge of trees.*

*Rebecca McMackin (see above)*

## **Lessons Learned About Urban Trees from the Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden, the Cincinnati Park Board, and OSU Extension**

### **Steve Foltz, Crystal Courtney, and Joe Boggs, 2:30PM-3:30PM**

This trio of Steve, Joe, and Crystal have an incredible breadth of knowledge of and experience with growing trees in urban places. In this talk they will share their best information gained from their work at the Zoo, Cincinnati Urban Forestry, and OSU Extension and focus it on what others need to know in order to have success in their urban landscapes, open spaces, and gardens throughout the community. Topics will cover goals and expectations, tree selection strategy, siting ideas, planting, care, and more.

*Joe Boggs is an assistant professor in Extension and has a courtesy appointment with the OSU Department of Entomology. In Extension, he is an Educator, Agriculture and Natural Resources, Specialization: Tree/Shrub Diagnostics, Applied Entomology, Non-Native Invasive Pests, Urban Forestry.*

*Joe has authored a large number of posts on the Buckeye Yard and Garden Online website.*

*He averages over 100 teaching presentations per year. He's published articles in the Tree Care Industry Association (TCIA) Magazine, Landsculptor (Michigan Green Industry Association), the Buckeye Arborist, the Society of Commercial Arboriculture Newsletter, and the Canadian Groundskeeper. He has provided educational outreach on Asian longhorned beetle (ALB) since the beetle was discovered in Ohio in 2011 garnering over \$100,000 in funding for outreach efforts. Joe is a frequent contributor to the Buckeye Yard and Garden Line (BYGL) blog [bygl.osu.edu]. His weekly radio segment, "Buggy Joe Boggs Report," runs from April through October on the Saturday morning show, "In the Garden with Ron Wilson," (iHeartRadio: WKRC, Cincinnati; News Radio 610 WTVN, Columbus). The Cincinnati show is syndicated to 34 radio stations in 12 states.*

*Crystal Courtney is Division Manager of Natural Resources for the Cincinnati Park Board. In this role, she oversees the city's Urban Forestry Program, Greenspace Program, Parks Conservation and Land Management Section, and Explore Nature! Section.*

*This Division represents a dynamic mix of skilled colleagues working collaboratively to beautify core gateways into the city, create and enhance urban tree canopy in all 52 neighborhoods, restore the ecosystems by starting with building the methodology to do so within the 3800 forested acres of Cincinnati parks, and ultimately share the importance and purpose of this work with our community through environmental education and nature interpretation.*

*Crystal has a BS in Geological and Earth Sciences/Geosciences from Northern Kentucky University. She has certifications from the International Society of Arboriculture as a Certified Municipal Specialist and for Tree Risk Assessment. She has a long history of volunteer work with various organizations.*

*Steve Foltz (see above)*

## **Sustainable Urban Landscapes Panel Discussion**

### **All Speakers, 3:30PM-4:30PM**

All of the day's speakers will be on hand for continued conversation and structured Q&A session that can cover all the topics of the symposium.