

GENERAL SESSION SPEAKERS

Linda Chalker-Scott, PhD – Linda Chalker-Scott is an Associate Professor and Extension Specialist at Washington State University. Linda has developed a series of Horticultural Myths where she identifies the myth, presents the reality, and gives you a bottom-line alternative. She has also developed a series of audio podcasts known as “The Informed Gardener” which are intended to educate and inform urban gardeners on a broad variety of topics—including addressing some misconceptions borne of “old wisdom” that can sometimes be more hearsay and conjecture than scientific fact. She has authored/co-authored many publications surrounding landscape management, environmental plant stress, Ultraviolet-B research. She has received her PhD in Horticulture from Oregon State University and is an ISA certified arborist.

Paul Cowie - Paul Cowie is a graduate of the Rutgers University forestry program and has over 35 years of experience in arboriculture and urban forestry. He is a NJ Licensed Tree Expert, ISA Certified Arborist, and Past President of the NJ Arborists, Chapter ISA, and currently sits on the NJSTF Board. Paul served eleven years in commercial arboriculture before becoming founder of Paul Cowie & Associates, a professional consulting firm providing expert advice in the preservation, enhancement and long-term management of shade trees and urban forest resources. Paul’s personal areas of expertise include assisting in the development of innovative and sustainable urban planting designs, tree and shrub diagnosis, tree inventories, and community forest management planning.

Greg Dahle, PhD - Greg Dahle is an Associate Professor at West Virginia University where he teaches courses in urban forestry & arboriculture. Dr. Dahle’s arboricultural research seeks to understand how trees grow and survive environmental loads. He is the program coordinator for the WVU Sustainable Forest & Biomaterials program. Greg was a practicing arborist in California, working with municipal, commercial and utility clients and is an ISA Board-Certified Master Arborist and Qualified Tree Risk Assessor.

Peter Del Tredici, PhD - Peter Del Tredici is a botanist specializing in the growth and development of trees. He retired from the Arnold Arboretum of Harvard University in 2014 after working there for 35 years in a variety of capacities including Director of Living Collections. He taught in the Landscape Architecture Department at the Harvard Graduate School of Design from 1992 through 2016 and the Urban Planning Department at MIT from 2016 through 2019. He has published over a hundred scientific articles on a wide variety of subjects including, the ecology and taxonomy of hemlocks, magnolias and stewartias, the history of plant introductions from Japan and China, and the natural and cultural history of the Ginkgo tree. Since 2004, his research has focused on urban ecology and climate change, and in 2010 he published the widely acclaimed, “Wild Urban Plants of the Northeast: A Field Guide” (Cornell University Press; 2nd edition 2020).

Michael Galvin – Mike Galvin is Director of the SavATree Consulting Group. He has over 30 years of experience in arboriculture in the public, NGO, and private sectors. He is a Past President of the American Society of Consulting Arborists, and received the 2011 True Professionals of Arboriculture award from the ISA. He has also received the 2004 Pat Felix Volunteer of the Year Award from TCIA. He has completed urban wood use projects and studies for the USDA Forest Service Baltimore Field Station, USDA Forest Service Forest Inventory and Analysis program, the Virginia Department of Forestry, and led the Urban Wood Network’s 2021 strategic plan. He is lead author on the USDA Forest Service’s Urban Wood Workbook.

Richard Hallett, PhD – Richard Hallett is a research ecologist studying forests across the urban to rural continuum with the USDA Forest Service’s Northern Research Station and, in particular, the New York City Urban Field Station. He has spent his career studying tree and forest health in the northeastern U.S., working towards earlier detection of tree stress caused by acid rain, exotic insects and diseases. In 2009 he shifted his research focus from ex-urban forests to urban ecosystems. He continues to work on tree health assessment, including working with a team to develop remote sensing technology to map urban tree health. He also conducts research on urban forest restoration and afforestation. His most recent project involves working with TNC’s (The Nature Conservancy) Healthy Trees, Healthy Cities initiative to engage citizen scientists in cities using novel science-based tree health assessment methods.

Phillip Kelley – Philip Kelley is leader of team development and training for Wright Tree Service. He has also been the lead instructor for North American Training Solutions. He is a contract climber and owner of Samara Tree Preservation and Training and has had 28 years of active field experience. He continues to be head technician at the International Tree Climbing competition and has also been head judge for the North American Tree Climbing competition as well as the Aerial Rescue International Tree Climbing competition. He has served as head technician at the Georgia Arborist Association Tree Climbing competition and is a past president of the Georgia Arborist Association. He is a Certified Arborist, a Certified Line Clearance Tree Trimmer, an approved TCIA ASTI trainer, as well as a qualified ISA Tree Risk Assessor.

Carrie Sargeant - Carrie Sargeant, is the NJDEP Forest Service’s Regional Forester for the Urban & Community Forestry program (NJUCF) and No Net Loss compensatory reforestation program (NNL). NJUCF strives to create more sustainable communities by engaging, educating and empowering individuals and local governments to manage their forests and trees. Prior to coming to the State, Carrie worked in the non-profit sector on urban & community forestry, community redevelopment, green infrastructure, and park and playground development. She holds a Master of Forestry degree from Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies and a BS in Wildlife Ecology from the University of Wisconsin, Madison. She served as a Peace Corps Volunteer with the Uganda Forest Department. Carrie is an ISA Certified Arborist and a New Jersey Licensed Tree Expert.

Carole Stanko - Carole Stanko has been with the NJ Division of Fish and Wildlife for 20+ years and currently holds the title of Chief of the Bureau of Wildlife Management (BWM). The BWM is responsible for all game species other than fish in the State. Prior to her serving as Bureau Chief, she was on the BWM’s White-tailed Deer Research Project for 13 years, 11 of those serving as project leader. She is a graduate of Rutgers University, Cook College.

Emelie Swackhamer - Emelie Swackhamer has served as a horticulture Educator for Penn State Extension in southeastern Pennsylvania for 25 years. Her primary programming focus is the commercial green industry and consumer horticulture audiences. She has been on the educational front line of the spotted lanternfly invasion since its discovery in 2014 and is participating in several research projects to learn more about this unusual insect. She has a lifetime of practical experience from working on her family's farm. She is an avid vegetable gardener, loves edible landscaping crops like tree nuts and hardy persimmons, and in her spare time enjoys making wheel-thrown stoneware pottery.

Rosa Yoo - Rosa Yoo is the Forest Health Specialist with the NJ Forest Service, monitoring, surveying, and suppressing invasive forest health threats. She has worked for the NJ forest service since 2004, starting her career with the Urban and Community Forestry Program. She is a graduate of SUNY-ESF and has a bachelors and masters degrees in forest resource management.