The desire for landscapes that are “ecologically functioning” as well as beautiful is rapidly becoming mainstream. The techniques required to successfully design, plant, and maintain these landscapes, however, can differ dramatically from traditional practice. This six-hour course will span two days, and illustrate how to apply these altered practices in a variety of settings including meadows, shrublands, woodlands, and fine gardens.

Attendees will receive an extensive, digital, login-protected manual that documents all aspects of the program, including plant selection criteria, plant recommendations, and ecological process-based management specifications.

New Directions in the American Landscape

NDAL has presented programs throughout the US focusing on innovative theory, practical application, and an expansive vision of “Natural Design.” Programs also draw from a variety of disciplines, including agriculture, anthropology, history, and fine art.

In 2016, NDAL received the first Regional Impact Award from the Native Plant Trust (formerly the New England Wildflower Society).

Registration closes 24 hours prior to the live session start time.

Attendee materials - including session recordings - will not be for sale after this time.

Registration refunded only if notification received before five (5) working days prior to the event.

Instructors will use PowerPoint presentations.
Recordings shared with registrants for 3 months after the live date.

CEUs approved: APLD, ASLA-LACES, ISA, NOFA

Questions? Email info@ndal.org

From amazing content, to simple/attractive communications, to your spirit of value-in-education, NDAL is just a TOP NOTCH operation.

- JEFF MILLS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, CT CHAPTER OF AMERICAN SOCIETY OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS
Part One: Meadows

In this presentation we will explore real world techniques for meadow creation including site analysis, seed mix formulation (including species selection and quantification), and the integration of live plants. Planting and management techniques will also be covered for meadow plantings on a variety of scales, as well as “altered meadow” approaches that accommodate “not so wild” client preferences.

Part Two: Shrublands

To the wildlife ecologist, a patchwork of meadow, forest, and shrub thicket is the ideal landscape mosaic. In landscape design, however, the shrub component is often omitted, leaving both ecological and aesthetic potential untapped. On the macro-level we will illustrate the use of shrublands as a “connective tissue” between meadow and woods. On the micro-level we will discuss plant arrangement and spacing, including differing approaches for clonal and clump-forming species.

Part Three: Woodlands

Establishing new woodlands is as much the design of a process as a planting plan, where guided succession can foster the orderly transformation from an open field to a multi-tiered forest. In existing woodlands, increasing the diversity within a multi-layered structure has its own challenges, including shade, root competition, and the difficulty of direct seeding most woodland herbs on the ground layer. This presentation will include a detailed discussion of these and other key considerations that are unique to woodland landscapes.
In this presentation, native plant expert Ethan Dropkin will describe the location and salient characteristics of the eco-regions found in the New England states. He will also discuss the keystone species of each, including descriptions of their physical characteristics, proliferation strategies, habitat requirements, and role in the process of ecological succession - crucial information rarely found in horticulture literature. Ethan will conclude by describing a group of generalist species that can thrive reliably across eco-regions and habitat types, providing designers with some reliable “meat and potatoes” plant choices.

Ecological design need not be a bitter aesthetic pill that our clients must swallow to do the right thing. The order inherent in our wild native landscapes is widely considered beautiful. By translating that ecology-based order into the aesthetically-based language of fine garden design, the results can be much more universally embraced by our clients. In addition, Larry will illustrate how highly gardenesque - and even formal - elements can gracefully interact and intermingle with wilder woodland, shrubland, and meadow compositions. This approach can result in landscapes that are both ecologically productive and visually pleasing to clients with a variety of aesthetic preferences.
Ethan Dropkin, MLA, landscape designer at Larry Weaner Landscape Associates (LWLA), has an extensive and in-depth understanding of native plants, the patterns and processes they express in nature, and their effective use in the designed landscape. He has been involved with numerous private gardens and public projects including Riverwalk Park in Tarrytown, NY, and a planting plan for Kingsland Wildflowers in Brooklyn, NY. 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 BA in Secondary Education from the University of Vermont, a MA in Landscape Architecture, and a MPS in Horticulture from Cornell University.


I feel like I struck gold.

- 2019 DESIGN WORKSHOP ATTENDEE