

EVENINGS WITH EXPERTS: 2011

A Public Lecture Series at the Cambridge Public Library

First Wednesdays
April through August
7:00-8:30 p.m.

PLEASE JOIN US!
Events are free
and open to all.



★ **April 6**
Life on the Wing in an Era of Human Dominance
Wayne Petersen, Director of the Mass Audubon Important Bird Areas Program

It is easy to take birds for granted. They cheer us with their songs in spring, engage us with the wonders of their flight, and grace our landscapes throughout the year. Yet, these idyllic images belie the serious impact of human activity on many bird populations. Come learn what we must do to help ensure their survival—what might comprise an avian wish list for human behavior. Wayne Petersen is a nationally known ornithologist, and a contributor to numerous field guides and publications. This talk will be the next best thing to birding with him in the field.

★ **May 4**
Going Native: 50 Favorite Plants for Local Gardeners
William Cullina, Director of Horticulture at Coastal Maine Botanic Gardens

Why are native plants so critical to our ecosystem? Learn about the importance of “going native” with expert botanist Bill Cullina, who has spent a lifetime studying plants in their indigenous habitats. As an expert plant propagator and one of the country’s most distinguished authors on the subject of native North American plants, he will share his list of 50 favorite species for local landscapes. Bill Cullina also served as the Director of Horticulture for the New England Wild Flower Society. He is a delightful speaker who easily engages audiences in the life of plants.

★ **June 1**
Nibbling on Natives in Your Backyard and Beyond
Russ Cohen, Expert forager and author of “Wild Plants I Have Known... and Eaten”

Many native “wild” plants are edible and nutritious—suitable for growing in your home landscape or found in other locales. Come learn to identify the species most suited to your culinary adventures, selecting only the edible portions of each plant. Become familiar with seasons of availability and guidelines for environmentally responsible foraging. Russ Cohen has been pursuing edible wild plants since high school and teaching others to forage for thirty-seven years. With luck, you may win a taste of his black walnut baklava, made from locally gathered nuts!

★ **July 6**
Getting the Real Dirt on Soil Ecosystems
John Swallow, Ph.D., Director of Environmental Sciences at Pine & Swallow Environmental

If healthy, the earth beneath our feet is full of robust biological activity—with microbes, fungi, nematodes, and other life. Tonight, we explore the interconnection between soil ecosystems and the physical and chemical characteristics of soil. After this talk, you will have newfound awe for what you might have thought was just “dirt.” Dr. Swallow is an internationally recognized pioneer in horticultural soil management and soil preparation for ecological restoration. His firm created the six unique soil types for Lusitania Meadow at Fresh Pond Reservation.

★ **August 3**
Native Ferns of New England
Don Lubin, Noted fern expert, collector, and educator

Learn about the life cycle of ferns and their evolutionary history, spanning 400 million years. From among New England’s 68 native species, we will examine twenty of those most commonly found. This survey will include detailed photographs, techniques for field identification, and a look at the adaptive niche that each species occupies. Don Lubin has been teaching about ferns for over a decade and he grows 44 species in his small yard in Allston. He has collected more than 50 herbarium specimens and has identified previously unrecorded taxa at several locales.

Thank You to the Cambridge Community Foundation and Cambridge Public Library for supporting these programs.

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