Landscaping with native plants is becoming the rule rather than the exception, but good examples can be hard to find. Come for a visual tour of some truly instructive native plant gardens, large and small, public and private. A diversity of styles, ranging from formal to naturalistic, will illustrate the usage of a wide range of native plants in both residential and public landscapes. Our tour will travel from Sara Stein’s Garden in Pound Ridge NY, to the High Line in NYC, and include many others along the way—accompanied by design and how-to tips for everyone from novice gardeners to seasoned professionals.

Carolyn Summers is an adjunct professor at Go Native U, a joint project of Westchester Community College and The Native Plant Center.

If we are to make our residential landscapes truly living ecosystems once again, we need to understand the specialized relationships that make plants and animals interdependent. Who better to take us on an in-depth journey into this fascinating and complex world than Doug Tallamy? He will elucidate these co-evolutionary relationships, showing how they determine the stability and complexity of local food webs—providing birds with insects and berries, dispersing bloodroot seeds, pollinating goldenrod, and more. This knowledge equips us to knowingly select plants and to construct landscapes that restore nature’s relationships at home. Doug Tallamy is a Professor of Entomology and Wildlife Biology at the University of Delaware. His groundbreaking book, Bringing Nature Home, has had national impact and received numerous awards.

Our native spring wildflowers evolved in the once contiguous forests that stretched the length of the East Coast and west to the prairies. Their flowering coincides with increased sunlight and warmth before the forest canopy leaves out, and their associations with the early-flying insects of spring are remarkable. Come learn about the life cycles of selected species—and why many populations are in a marked decline due to human activity. By understanding their evolutionary relationships to forest habitat, we can better protect these ephemeral beauties on all lands, and integrate them into our woodland gardens. Carol Gracie is a botanist and skilled photographer. In addition to Spring Wildflowers of the Northeast: A Natural History, she has authored several field guides.

Few wild places remain in today’s world, making it ever more important to bring ecological principles back into the design of our managed landscapes. Much more than simply using native plants, this work necessitates understanding plant communities and embracing a new form of design that marries horticulture with ecology. Join us as we translate the ecological principles of wild plant communities into design and management tools to inform our native plantings. Using the work of several European ecologists and planting designers, we explore the science behind stable and lasting plant combinations—to help you create the landscapes you envision. Claudia West is the Ecological Sales Manager at North Creek Nurseries.

Thank you to the Cambridge Community Foundation, Cambridge Public Library, and to all of our members for making these programs possible.

Every garden matters ~ Every landscape counts™