

2021 Fall Symposium Speaker Biography and Topic Description

Flowering Shrubs for All Seasons

David G. Stevens

David is curator of Longenecker Horticultural Gardens, the living collection of woody plants at the University of Wisconsin-Madison Arboretum. The Gardens, first established in 1935, contain Wisconsin's premiere collection of woody ornamental plants with approximately 4,000 specimens representing over 2,600 taxa. His work background includes tree breeding and selection, greenhouse facility management, public garden supervision, and commercial vegetable production. He has a Bachelor's degree in Horticulture from Virginia Tech and a Master's degree in Horticulture from U.W.-Madison. When not at the Arboretum, he helps run a 130-acre certified organic farm by Baraboo, WI with his wife Jane, with whom he was awarded the prestigious Organic Farmer of the Year by the Midwest Organic and Sustainable Education Service in 2020.

While often associated with spring, flowering shrubs can add color and interest throughout the year. David will highlight some of his favorite flowering shrubs from the U.W. Arboretum's extensive collection.

More Than Turf

Kelly D. Norris

Kelly D. Norris is one of the leading horticulturists of his generation. An award-winning author and plantsman, Kelly's work in gardens has been featured in *The New York Times*, *Organic Gardening*, *Better Homes and Gardens*, *Martha Stewart Living*, *Fine Gardening* and *Garden Design* and in numerous local and regional media appearances. His passion for planting at the intersections of horticulture and ecology has culminated in a new book *New Naturalism: Designing and Planting a Resilient, Ecologically Vibrant Home Garden* which debuts 2021 from Cool Springs Press. Kelly also presents plants for Cottage Farms Direct on QVC and lectures widely to consumer and industry audiences.

When Kelly bought his 1941 Colonial Revival home on a half-acre in Des Moines, Iowa in 2017, he immediately set to work making a garden. His Meadow Nord is now a 3,200 square foot planting between the house and street that features over 120 different kinds of plants and an ever-increasing amount of insect and bird diversity. While his garden might be a passion project at this scale, it has inspired neighbors, students and coworkers to plant bold, biodiverse gardens. In this lecture, Kelly will share his experiences of making a front yard garden and inspire audiences to plant with a greater sense of community, both for humans and all the creatures we share the landscape with.

Have Plants, Will Travel

Michael Jesiolowski

As Director of Horticulture of Rotary Botanical Garden, Jesiolowski leads horticulture staff and volunteers, where they balance the creation of display gardens, with building plant collections with diversity. Jesiolowski has spent most of his career at public garden institutions, previously as Garden Supervisor at Missouri Botanical Garden in St. Louis, Missouri. At Chicago Botanic Garden, where he was Senior Horticulturist of the Entrance Gardens, spearheaded the creation of gravel garden beds in the Parking Lots, and added hundreds of new taxa to the collection. Jesiolowski received his formal training through the University of Illinois, where he earned a Bachelor's Degree in Horticulture. He also has experience working at The Morton Arboretum (Lisle, IL), Bernheim Arboretum (Clermont, KY), Epic Systems (Verona, WI), and the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater.

Up, down, and all around the winds have carried our Director of Horticulture, Michael Jesiolowski all over the country on a quest for stunning horticultural finds. From the crapemyrtles of the Carolinas to the cacti of the Sonoran Desert, this presentation will highlight the most inspirational gardens and plants he has encountered in the Midwest and beyond.