



2012-2013 SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

“...advocating for environmentally responsible stewardship of land and natural resources in landscaping and horticultural practices...”

ECOLOGICAL LANDSCAPING ASSOCIATION

www.ecolandscaping.org

BACKGROUND

Who We Are

The Ecological Landscaping Association (ELA) began in **1991** with the mission of reducing the environmental impact of landscaping. Since then, ELA members have been at the forefront of **exploring and practicing ecological landscaping** and ELA continues to serve a network of professionals, businesses, and individual who value responsible and sustainable landscaping practices. As more businesses and consumers choose sustainable land care practices, ELA's educational programs and advocacy work can meet the demand.

Residing in over 20 states and three countries, ELA members are involved in **all aspects of land care** and include professionals, educators, homeowners, suppliers, and designers. Our membership includes those who practice organic land care; those who strive for the most ecological methods available while balancing industry and client demands; and those who simply want to learn more about creating a backyard native habitat. Our highly knowledgeable members are enthusiastic about gaining and sharing information, thus creating a dynamic, forward thinking organization.

During a time of economic decline, ELA's membership has continued to show growth. As more professionals come to appreciate the desirability of offering land care services with a sound ecological basis, ELA remains positioned to provide quality educational experiences in sustainable and ecological practices.

What We Do

In an industry where businesses are starting to discover both the economic and environmental benefits of moving to a sustainable landscaping model, ELA is a much needed **advocacy and educational partner**. Focusing on the growing number of professionals interested in sustainable practices, ELA is committed to delivering the **practical and informative education** needed to **help businesses learn and apply** the principles of sustainable landscaping and gardening.

ELA has a reputation for providing high-quality education across many disciplines with a focus on the practical application of sustainable practices in the landscape. At the same time, ELA provides venues that encourage the review of new and leading edge technologies not just the tried and tested. As a result, the educational events hosted by ELA go beyond the traditional to include topics such as Permaculture, Biochar, and Living Walls.

ELA is also focused on ensuring that its members are introduced to **new research, products, and services** that can help advance the profession and allow businesses to deliver better quality and more effective services while competing effectively.

ELA ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Annual Conference

The ELA 18th Annual Conference & Eco-Marketplace was attended by over 350 professionals, conservation leaders, and community members and featured two full days with 22 presentations, two keynote speakers, a unique trade show featuring sustainable products and services including interactive exhibits; and provided networking opportunities for the diverse group of attendees.

Regional Eco-Tours

Throughout the year, ELA has offered more than **25 Eco-tours in addition to the traditional roundtable presentations**. Eco-tours brought people into the field with experts to examine successful, sustainable landscapes and to teach the sustainable techniques unique to each site. The popularity of Eco-tours is continuing to grow as reflected by **increasing annual attendance** at Eco-tour events.

In many cases, ELA partnered with other organization for the tours, expanding our cooperative efforts with other non-profit groups. In its introductory year, **more than 350 people** attended ELA's Eco-Tours.

Season's End Summit: Taking Stock and Looking Forward

ELA will host its **third annual year-end gathering in November** (the ELA Season's End Summit: Taking Stock and Looking Forward). This forum is designed to provide land care professionals with an interactive opportunity to review the current realities of the Green Industry and to explore future opportunities. Both prior events sold out and received enthusiastic support from attendees.

Online Presence

ELA **expanded its online presence** by increasing its exposure using social media, including LinkedIn, Facebook and Twitter (find us there and join the discussions!). Participation by eco-professionals around the country and around the globe continues to expand.

ELA's on-line and **expanded newsletter readership has grown to over 7,500**.

ELA ACCOMPLISHMENTS Continued

Partnerships

ELA has partnered with over 30 groups and organizations with similar audiences and goals to extend outreach. Partners include:

Professional Organizations:

Association of Professional Landscape Designers (APLD)
CA Native Garden Tour Group
California Native Garden Foundation
California Native Plant Society
Central Coast Greywater Alliance
Central Coast Wilds
Desalinization and Alternatives Group
Division of Ecological Restoration, Massachusetts Department of Fish & Game (DER)
Eco-Farm
Ecology Action
Greywater Action
Greywater Alliance
IPM Voice Committee in Washington, DC
Massachusetts Association of Conservation Commissions (MACC)
Midwestern Ecological Landscaping Association (MELA)
Massachusetts Watershed Coalition (MWC)
Mauby Naturals
New England Organic Farming Association (NOFA)
New England Wildflower Society (NEWFS)
Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC)
Rana Creek Restoration
Rincon-Vitova Insectaries
Society for Ecological Restoration (SER)

Soquel Creek Water District
The Arnold Arboretum
The Garden Faire
The Landscape Institute
Trustees of Reservation (TTOR)
University of New Hampshire Stormwater Center (UNHSC)
US Green Building Council

Consumer Outreach Groups:

Boston Flower & Garden Show
Green Decade
Grow Native Cambridge

Environmental Vision Award

ELA has developed and presented the **new Environmental Vision Award** at the Boston Flower and Garden Show, the largest gardening event in the region. Now in its third year, ELA Board members served as judges as we bring ecological landscaping concepts into the main stream of designer/participants at the oldest flower show in the nation.

WHY YOU SHOULD SUPPORT ELA

In order for ELA to grow and have a greater impact on the adoption of responsible ecological and horticultural practices, we have outlined the following initiatives for the upcoming year.

1) Expand existing educational programs

While ELA has been successful at running an annual conference as well as many Roundtable and Eco-tour events in New England, there is a demand for education at a national level. ELA plans to extend our educational programs outside of New England in collaboration with community leaders striving to adopt more sustainable practices in their towns and counties.

In an effort to make training available to people around the country, ELA is exploring options for delivering distance education. Webinars and online classes afford great opportunities to reach a wider audience. Partners have already expressed an interest in the development of online curriculum; however, ELA will require additional resources to create and deliver this type of education.

2) Expand existing outreach and advocacy programs

Opportunities exist to increase our advocacy and outreach programs with consumer-focused, non-profit organizations that are aligned with our values and mission. There is a great need for demonstration projects showcasing sustainable and ecological practices in motion.

3) Increase staffing

ELA relies primarily on volunteers for program delivery. Expanding programs and advocacy will require additional support staff, including increasing staff for Web-based Initiatives, Outreach, and Education.

4) Improve digital communications

With the proven effectiveness and ecologically responsible electronic communication, the importance improving ELA's web presence is essential. Equally important is a well-designed digital marketing program and a strong social media strategy. ELA needs to continue to advance its website and improve all aspects of its digital communications to effectively meet its goals.

5) Updating materials

ELA distributes a variety of materials to assist with outreach and advocacy. Review and revision of these educational materials is required to provide the most valuable resources to ELA's community of users.

6) Expand membership campaign

ELA has the ability to grow its membership both regionally and nationally. With members in 20+ states, ELA expects to double membership over the next few years. ELA has a very active membership group in California, and a growing interest in other regions of the country. The ELA Board has approved the ELA Ambassador Program which identifies local advocates to grow membership in a region. Dedicated campaigns to increase membership require additional resources.