

## Speaker Biographies & Topic Details



**Kim Eierman** is the Founder of EcoBeneficial LLC. She is an environmental horticulturist and ecological landscape designer specializing in native plants. Based in New York, Kim teaches at the New York Botanical Garden, Brooklyn Botanic Garden, The Native Plant Center, Rutgers Home Gardeners School and several other institutions. Kim is an active speaker nationwide on many ecological landscape topics, presenting for industry conferences, sustainability events, corporate events, environmental organizations, and other groups interested in environmental improvements. Kim also provides horticultural consulting and native landscape design to homeowners and commercial clients, including landscape architects and engineers. In addition to being a Certified Horticulturist through the American Society for Horticultural Science, Kim is an Accredited Organic Landcare Professional, a Steering Committee member of The Native Plant Center, and a member of The Ecological Landscape Alliance and

Garden Communicators International. Kim is the author of the book, *The Pollinator Victory Garden: Win the War on Pollinator Decline with Ecological Gardening*.

### **Topic #1 - BEYOND SUSTAINABILITY: USING OUR LANDSCAPES AS A SOURCE OF ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGE**

Our environment has never been more fragile, but our traditional landscapes are escalating the problem. A landscape is more than a combination of trees, shrubs and perennials – it's complex system where all living things are connected. Landscaping with an ecosystem approach contributes to species diversity, attracting and supporting the crashing populations of birds, butterflies, pollinators, and beneficial insects. Kim Eierman explains how the design choices we make, the plants we select, and the maintenance practices we use, can transition traditional landscapes into healthy ecosystems filled with life. Learn how our landscapes can go beyond sustainability and become a source of environmental change.

### **Topic #2 - THE POLLINATOR VICTORY GARDEN: WINNING THE WAR ON POLLINATOR DECLINE**

Countless pollinator species have suffered dramatic declines in recent years. It's a serious problem for all of us since pollinators are responsible for the reproduction of 80% of all flowering plants, and at least 30% of the food that we eat. Unfortunately, most of our landscapes offer little in the way of appropriate habitat and forage for these essential animals. With simple strategies, you can attract and support not just bees, but an array of pollinators that have different requirements. Learn best practices for pollinators from the author of *The Pollinator Victory Garden: Win the War on Pollinator Decline with Ecological Gardening*.



**Susan Betz** has been actively involved in growing and using herbs to educate the public about gardening and the natural world for more than 35 years. She's hard-pressed to name a favorite herb, however -- she loves them all and considers herbs a way of life! She is an Honorary Master Gardener, a member of the International Herb Association, Garden Communicators, the Ecological Landscape Alliance, and the National Garden Bureau. Susan is a life member of the Herb Society of America (HSA) and received The Society's Helen D. Conway, Little Medal of Honor, in 2018. She is a charter member of HSA's Native Herb Conservation committee and the Society's sustainable garden initiative. Susan currently serves on HSA's Notable Native Herb program and is a contributing author to HSA's native herb fact sheets published annually. She is the author of *Magical Moons & Seasonal Circles*, *Stepping into the Circle of the Seasons* and *Neighboring with Nature/Native Herbs for Pleasure and Purpose*. Susan lives and gardens in Jonesville, Michigan

**Topic: MAGICAL MOONS & SEASONAL CYCLES: GARDEN PHENOLOGY**

Phenology is the study of the timing of natural periodic events in the plant and animal world influenced by the local environment, especially weather, temperature, seasonal cycles, and climate. Plant and animal life cycles are predictors of reoccurring events in nature. Examples include the first dates of budding and blooming flowers, insect hatching, bird migration, and fall color. By tracking changes in the timing and cycles of seasonal events, scientists, gardeners, and nature lovers can better understand climate change and its effects on our regional ecosystems. Drawing from her decades of gardening experience and nature study Susan will discuss how to use "nature's calendar." When to plant and perform seasonal garden tasks and initiate preventive measures to control and prevent unwanted weeds, insects, and plant disease.



**Kevin Allison** is Marion County Soil and Water Conservation District's Urban Soil Health Specialist. The SWCD provides technical assistance and workshops for urban farmers and gardeners with a focus on utilizing conservation practices to improve soil health and productivity. The position is co-funded by the USDA – Indiana Natural Resource Conservation Service and Kevin consults with them to improve their technical and programmatic considerations for small farms. His background includes work with conservation cropping systems in both large and small-scale agriculture, 3 years of service in the Peace Corps Dominican Republic's Community Environmental Development sector, and a decade in the garden. Kevin holds a BS in Environmental Science from Indiana University and serves on the Indiana Soil Health Team.

Topic - **GARDENING FOR SOIL HEALTH**. Kevin will be talking about our living soils, testing, soil health, amendments and crop rotation.



**Heather Prince** has been a part of the green industry for more than 20 years, including experience at The Morton Arboretum, Chicago Botanic Garden, The Growing Place, The Pizzo Group, Wannemaker's Home & Garden, and the American Horticultural Society. She is a trained horticulturist specializing in trees, shrubs, and natives with a passion for connecting people with plants.

Currently she is the email marketing manager for The Garden of Words and co-founder of Midwest Garden Stories. In addition, her freelance writing includes Chicagoland Gardening, The Landscape Contractor, and numerous newspaper articles, blog posts, newsletters, and more. Heather also relishes sharing her knowledge and experience by teaching at The Morton Arboretum, Chicago Botanic Garden, Chicago Flower & Garden Show, Edith Farnsworth House as well as garden clubs, groups, and industry gatherings.

Topic: **Wonderful Woody Plants for Butterflies and Moths:** Did you know that an oak tree is the larval host for up to 500 species of butterflies and moths? Or that a beech tree is the host to North America's only carnivorous butterfly? Discover the myriad species of butterflies and moths from common favorites to rare beauties that depend on our trees, shrubs, and vines.



**Claire Lane** - As the urban conservationist at the Hamilton County Soil and Water Conservation District, Claire Lane manages the development and delivery of backyard and urban conservation programs to Hamilton County residents. The urban conservation program offers site visits and technical assistance, a tool loan program, development of educational publications, events and workshops, and more. Claire also manages the Hamilton County Invasives Partnership. Learn more about these programs at [www.hamiltonswcd.org](http://www.hamiltonswcd.org)

Topic: **SOAK UP THE RAIN WITH RAIN GARDENS** A 2,000 square foot house in Central Indiana will produce ~50,000 gallons of runoff every year. In most residential or urban neighborhoods, 20-30% of that water runs off to storm drains then, untreated, to our lakes, rivers, and streams. Join us to learn how we can create rain gardens on our properties to infiltrate some of that water back into the ground, reduce flooding, provide pollinator habitat, and protect our rivers and lakes.