



# Welcome!

## 2025 INTERNATIONAL MASTER GARDENER CONFERENCE

### Agenda



We're delighted to have you with us for this exciting event!

Explore the diverse topics on the agenda, and get ready to gain valuable insights from our experts as they share their knowledge, ideas, and experiences.

## MONDAY, AUGUST 25

### 10:00 AM – 10:30 AM | Live Zoom Training

Nicky Maddams, State Program Manager  
Ally Wittig, Program Coordinator

### 11:00 AM – 11:30 AM | Welcome and Opening Address

Dr. Jayla Fry, State Coordinator  
Nicky Maddams, State Program Manager  
Administrator, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service

### 11:30 AM – 12:45 PM | Keynote #1

**Anna Ball** – *Trends in Horticulture: Shaping the Future of Plants and People*

## LUNCH BREAK and TOUR

**Linda Larson** – *Remarkable Trees:  
A Global Journey*



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## There is no Planet B

1:30 PM – 2:30 PM

### Breakouts A (Select One)

1. **Dr. Andrew King** – *Medicine In Your Garden: How To Safely Utilize Medicinal Plants*
2. **Kari Hines** – *Wildfire Preparedness: Actionable Steps for Risk Reduction*
3. **Sue Kahl** – *Volunteer Impact: Finding the Whole Among the Pieces*
4. **Brad Voss** – *Earth-Kind® Sustainable Landscaping*
5. **Christopher Sheridan** – *Embracing the Spirit of the Night: Designing Vespertine Gardens*
6. **Kathie Clements** – *Strategies for Dealing with Deer*



2:45 PM – 3:45 PM

### Breakouts B (Select One)

1. **Coy Poiter** – *Master Gardeners: Cultivating Food Justice in the City (30 mins)*  
**Nancy Kuhajda** – *It is Not Thinking Outside the Box, It isn't Our Box to Start With: Serving the Under-served Audience (30 mins)*
2. **Andrew Crocker** – *Thanks for the Memories*
3. **Sue Kahl** – *Volunteer Appreciation: Cultivating a Culture of Gratitude*
4. **Brett Chisolm** – *The Farmer's Renaissance: How Modern Agriculture is Cultivating Mental Health and Community Connection*
5. **Dr. Esther McGinnis, Emily How and Rachelle Vetter** – *Getting to Know Gen Z Volunteers: Strategies for Recruitment, Communication and Recognition*
6. **Dr. Charlie Hall** – *Plants, Nature, and Health*

4:00 PM – 5:15 PM

### Keynote #2

**Dr. Cary Fowler** – *Seeds of Peace and Security*

6:00 PM – 7:30 PM

### Movie Night 1

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# 2025 INTERNATIONAL MASTER GARDENER CONFERENCE

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### TUESDAY, AUGUST 26

**8:00 AM – 8:15 AM**

**Welcome and  
Announcements**

**8:15 AM – 9:00 AM**

**Search for  
Excellence Awards 1**

The David Gibby International Master Gardener Search for Excellence Awards celebrate the outstanding volunteer work of EMG volunteers throughout the United States, Canada, and South Korea.

**9:00 AM – 10:15 AM**

**Keynote #3**

**Noel Kingsbury** – *Contemporary Garden Design*

**10:30 AM – 11:30 AM**

**Breakouts C (Select One)**

1. **Dr. Larry Stein** – *Pecans: How to Grow and Why to Eat Them (30 mins)*

**Dr. Tim Hartmann** – *Freaky Fruit Fusion: Inter-specific Stone Fruit Hybrids! (30 mins)*

2. **Adam Alexander** – *Meetings with Remarkable Seeds and the Amazing People who Nurture Them*

3. **Peggy Riccio** – *Beyond Parsley, Sage, Rosemary, and Thyme: Learn to Grow and Use Unusual Culinary Herbs*

4. **Dr. Mike Arnold** – *Coping with Climate Change in Plant Specifications for Built Environments*

5. **Brie Arthur** – *Foodscape Fusion: Pioneering a New Garden Era*

6. **Darryl Cheng** – *An Engineer's Approach to Houseplant Care*

### LUNCH BREAK and TOUR

**Brie Arthur** – *Wanderlust Chronicles:  
Exploring America's Gardens*



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1:00 PM – 2:00 PM

### Breakouts D (Select One)

1. **Dr. Garrett Slater** – *Innovations in Pollinator Protection: A Path Forward (30 mins)*  
**Louise Washer** – *Bee On It! How Pollinator Pathways are Connecting Landscapes and People (30 mins)*
2. **John Harper** – *Entropy in Landscape Design: A Brief Analysis of Landscape Projects Using Randomness & Disorder*
3. **Corbin Scholz** – *Starting with a Seed*
4. **William McKinley** – *Connected: Synergistic Designs*
5. **Dr. Mengmeng Gu** – *The Chinese (Plants) are Everywhere! And There are More!*
6. **Pam Bennett** – *Proper Planting of Trees for Longevity*



2:15 PM – 3:30 PM

### Keynote #4

**Gary Oppenheimer** – *America's Food Safety Net – How We Fight Hunger With One Hand Tied Behind Our Back*

3:45 PM – 4:45 PM

### Breakouts E (Select One)

1. **Stephen Brueggerhoff** – *Safety First – Outreach Event Planning and Emergency Management (30 mins)*  
**Xandra Powers** – *How to Expand Your Reach with a Podcast; Learn from the Makers of Nature Calls: Conversations from the Hudson Valley (30 mins)*
2. **Tom Packer** – *The Colorful History of America's Plant Hardiness Zones and What They Really Mean for Gardeners*
3. **Dr. Vikram Baliga** – *Using Our Space Wisely. Designing Multi-Purpose Urban Landscapes*
4. **Duane Pancoast** – *Adaptive Gardening For Seniors*
5. **Dr. Jay Maddock** – *How Spending Time in Nature Improves our Health*
6. **Haeley Giambalvo** – *Bring Your Yard to Life with Texas Native Plants!*



6:00 PM – 7:30 PM

### Movie Night 2



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# 2025 INTERNATIONAL MASTER GARDENER CONFERENCE

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### WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 27

8:15 AM – 8:30 AM

**Welcome and  
Announcements**

8:30 AM – 9:30 AM

**Search for  
Excellence Awards 2**

9:45 AM – 11:00 AM

**Keynote #5**

**Doug Tallamy** – *Next Steps for Nature: 500 Questions  
(and Answers) for How to Save Nature in Our Yards*

11:15 AM – 12:15 PM

**Breakouts F (Select One)**

1. **Mary Pearl Meuth and Hannah Ferguson** – *Texas Master Naturalists – Learn Here, Give Here (15 mins)*  
**Jen Loble, Laura Wilson, Mari Glatter, and Sarah Harris** – *Learn About Volunteer Management and Earn a Micro-Credential (15 mins)*  
**Eun Sook Noh** – *How to Start New Programs in South Korea (15 mins)*
2. **Dr. Greg Grant** – *Pine, Pawpaws, and Pocket Prairies*
3. **John Chivvis** – *Videos are for Reels*
4. **Jay White** – *From Print to Multi-Media – Transforming Texas Gardener Magazine*
5. **Dr. Kimberly Cochran, Brittney Meyer, and Hannah Ayala** – *Navigating the Noise: A Clear Look at the Science of Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs)*
6. **David Close and Curtis Friedel** – *KAI Track I of 3*

### LUNCH BREAK and TOUR

**Robert Pavlis** – *Plants From Around  
the World*



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**1:15 PM – 2:15 PM**

### Breakouts H (Select One)

1. **Luigi Cani** – *One Hundred Million Seeds (30 mins)*  
**Brenda Dyck** – *Embracing the Seedy Part of Gardening! (30 mins)*
2. **Dr. Jake Mowrer** – *Rehabilitating Traumatized Soil after Floods, Fires, and Mismanagement*
3. **Jana Milbocker** – *Satisfying Your Plant Lust*
4. **Lisa Whittlesey** – *Get them OUTSIDE: Growing kids in the Garden!*
5. **Shelby Dittman** – *Social Media for Master Gardeners 1 of 2: Cultivating Your Digital Experience*
6. **David Close and Curtis Friedel** – *KAI Track 2 of 3*



**2:30 PM – 3:30 PM**

### Breakouts I (Select One)

1. **Dr. Whitney Elmore** – *Master Gardener Volunteers & Mental Health First Aid (30 mins)*  
**Lorraine Johnson** – *Bylaws and Ordinances: Rogue Gardens and the Weed Police (30 mins)*
2. **Cathy Kavassalis** – *Let's Close the Garden Gateway: Reducing the Spread of Invasive Plants to Protect Our Environment, Economy, and Well-Being*
3. **Randy Seagraves** – *Learn, Grow, Eat & Go: Growing Kids and Gardens that THRIVE*
4. **Marc Frank** – *Plant Blindness*
5. **Shelby Dittman** – *Social Media for Master Gardeners 2 of 2: Cultivating Your Digital Experience*
6. **David Close and Curtis Friedel** – *KAI Track 3 of 3*



**3:45 PM – 5:00 PM**

### Keynote #6

**Brad Lancaster** – *Integrated Sun & Shade Harvesting for Buildings*

**6:00 PM – 8:00 PM**

### Movie Night 3

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# 2025 INTERNATIONAL MASTER GARDENER CONFERENCE

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### THURSDAY, AUGUST 28

8:15 AM – 8:30 AM

**Welcome and  
Announcements**

8:30 AM – 9:30 AM

**Search for  
Excellence Awards 3**

9:45 AM – 11:00 AM

**Keynote #7**

**Joe Lamp’l** – *Greening Your Garden While Protecting the Planet*

11:15 AM – 12:15 PM

**Breakouts J (Select One)**

1. **Samuel Baker** – *The Power of Earthworms (30 mins)*  
**Dr. Erfan Vafaie** – *Humongous Fungus: the Huge Role of Beneficial Fungi (30 mins)*
2. **John Forti** – *Heirloom Gardening with Traditional Plants and Skills for a Changing World*
3. **Peter Wigren** – *Using AI in Content Creation*
4. **Dr. David Creech** – *Climate Resilient Landscapes for a Changing World*
5. **Brian Bledsoe** – *Using Seasonal Forecast Information to Balance Horticultural Risk*
6. **Robert Glennon** – *Establishment and Management of Pollinator Habitat from Seed*

### LUNCH BREAK and TOUR

**Jana Milbocker** – *Gardens of the Gilded Age*

1:45 PM – 3:00 PM

**Keynote #8**

**Robert Pavlis** – *Gardening Myths*



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**3:15 PM – 4:15 PM**

### Breakouts K (Select One)

1. **Kerry Ross** – *Bringing Nature to the Roof: Green Roofs for Residential and Small Commercial Spaces (30 mins)*
2. **Stephen Kierstead** – *Making the Most of a Short-Season Garden (30 mins)*
3. **Dr. Jessica Atkin** – *Sustaining Life Beyond Earth: Cultivation of Healthy Crops in Space Exploration*
4. **Thomas J. Gilmore** – *Building a Future with Flowers: Lewisville's Journey to Re-Think the American Lawn*
5. **Christopher Sheridan** – *Capture The Spirit of the Garden: Designing with Fragrant Flowers and Aromatic Foliage*
6. **Eva Monheim** – *Assisted Plant Migration for Climate Change*



**4:30 PM – 5:45 PM**

### Keynote #9

**Nicole Stott** – *Back to Earth: What Life in Space Taught Me About Our Home Planet—And Our Mission to Protect It*

**6:00 PM – 6:30 PM**

### Closing Remarks and 2027 Announcements

**Dr. Jayla Fry and Nicky Maddams**

Thank you for being part of the **2025 International Master Gardener Conference**. We appreciate your participation and hope you leave with valuable insights, new connections, and inspiration to apply what you've learned.

The hosts for the **2027 International Master Gardener Conference** will present an exciting SIZZLE REEL offering a glimpse of what's to come!



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