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NHLA

NEWSletter

Vol. 41 No. 1

Informing and educating members of the Green Industry

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ASSOCIATION



NHLA 2025 Winter Dinner Meetings

NHLA dinner meetings bring new ideas, insights, and tools to help your business thrive. The first 2025 Dinner Meeting is **January 22: A Practical Approach to Organic Turf Care** with Pam Newcomb, PJC Organics. You may be reading this just before or after the event. We hope you took advantage of this opportunity to learn how to diversify and increase revenue with organic fertilization services. PJC Organic's "Practical Approach" has simplified turf care to help landscapers offer All-Natural Organic Turf Care (OTC) programs – it's not hard, just different!

February 12: Transform Your Frontline Operations with CrewHero Software: CrewHero is a powerful software solution designed to streamline and enhance the operations of service-based businesses like yours! We understand the chaos of running a landscaping business-managing crews, equipment, unpredictable weather, and constant communication challenges. CrewHero tackles these daily struggles and connects your frontline teams with your administrative operations, improving productivity and efficiency across the board. Details and registration at nhlaonline.org

Save the Date: 2025 Safety Day, March 26: NHLA's annual Safety Day brings safety to the front of your crew's mind as we enter the spring season. Join us March 26, 2025 at Stephens Landscaping in Moultonborough, NH, for this year's Safety Day. 🌿

The **NHLA Newsletter** is published by the New Hampshire Landscape Association for its members, free of charge, 10 times a year.

Memberships:

See enclosed application or the website for a membership application.

Additional Subscriptions: Firms desiring additional subscriptions, can purchase them at \$40.00 each. Contact Kathryn Sicard.

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The **NHLA Newsletter** seeks to encourage a lively discussion of topics of concern to NHLA members. Opinions and proposals presented in the newsletter are those of the writers to whom they are attributed and are not a statement of official policy by NHLA, unless so stated.

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President's Notes

by Andrew Pelkey

A Fresh Start to the New Year

As we begin the new year, it's a time to reflect on our past achievements and set our sights on the opportunities ahead. The landscape industry in New Hampshire continues to thrive thanks to the dedication and passion of our members. Looking back at the challenges and successes of the previous year, we've seen firsthand how important it is to stay adaptable and committed to the growth of

our businesses and communities. With the winter months ahead, now is the perfect time to plan for the busy seasons to come, setting goals and strategies to keep moving forward.

This year, we are focused on further strengthening the network of professionals in our Association. The landscape industry is constantly evolving, and we must stay ahead of trends and regulations that impact

our work. The New Hampshire Landscape Association will continue to provide valuable resources, training opportunities, and connections to ensure that our members are well-prepared for the future. Whether through educational seminars, workshops, or networking events, we're committed to offering the tools you need to succeed.

Looking forward, I encourage all of us to take advantage

of the exciting opportunities the new year brings. Together, we can support each other and continue to build a vibrant, sustainable landscape industry in New Hampshire. Let's work together to make 2025 a year of growth, innovation, and community. Thank you for your continued commitment to the Association and the landscape profession! 🌱🌱🌱

This year, we are focused on further strengthening the network of professionals in our Association. The landscape industry is constantly evolving, and we must stay ahead of trends and regulations that impact our work.... we're committed to offering the tools you need to succeed.

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Celebrating New Hampshire's Big Tree Champions

from UNH Extension

The New Hampshire Big Tree Program locates, measures, records, and recognizes the largest trees of each species throughout New Hampshire. Dedicated volunteers run the program in partnership with UNH Cooperative Extension, the NH Division of Forests and Lands, the Society for the Protection of NH Forests, and New Hampshire

citizens interested in Big Trees. The list of recorded trees now includes over 1,000 county, state, and national champions.

The process begins when a citizen finds a big tree and takes the time to identify the tree as best they can and measure its circumference. If the tree's circumference is as big or bigger than the current county or state

champion of that species, the tree then gets nominated for further measurement. A County Team of Big Tree volunteers reaches out to the tree's owner and with permission measures the tree using a set of guidelines developed by the National Big Tree Program, administered by American Forests.

Did you find a big tree and want to see how it compares to others of the same species? Use the guidelines below to see if it might qualify as a New Hampshire Big Tree, and if it does, complete and submit the nomination form at www.nhbigtrees.org/nominate.

1. Identify the species of tree as best you can.
2. Using a tape measure, measure the circumference of the trunk in inches at 4 1/2 feet off the ground. (If there is more than one trunk, measure around the main or largest trunk of the tree.)

3. Compare your circumference measurement to the same species of tree in the New Hampshire Big Tree Listings at www.nhbigtrees.org/trees.

4. If the circumference of the tree you measured exceeds or is close in size to a tree of the same species on the listing, submit your nomination.

Once you submit a completed nomination form, it goes to the Big Tree State Coordinator. They will compare your information and if the tree is close enough in size to an existing champ, they will assign a measuring team to complete the measurements and to find out whether or not it is a new champion.

Many of the state's Big Trees are on public property. Check out the map of publicly accessible Big Trees and plan a visit! bit.ly/4a7iabb ↑

Did you find a big tree and want to see how it compares to others of the same species? Use the guidelines above to see if it might qualify as a New Hampshire Big Tree.





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UMass Extension's 2025 Mass Aggie Seminars


The 2025 Mass Aggie Seminars begin on February 15 via Zoom. Mass Aggie is a series highlighting the agricultural expertise and innovation available through the University of Massachusetts Amherst's Extension Fruit team. This series of seminars and workshops provides a platform for small scale backyard growers and agricultural enthusiasts of all types. Cutting-edge information will be shared, curated to empower individuals with the tools and knowledge needed to navigate the ever-evolving landscape of agriculture.

Topics include:

Insects, Pests, and Beneficials; Ecological Home Orchard; Weed Management; Orchard Sustainability Through IPM; Orchard Pruning; Orchard Establishment

More info at ag.umass.edu/fruit/news/announcing-2025-mass-aggie-seminar-series

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Dogwood Anthracnose Pathogen

from UMass Extension

The non-native fungal pathogen *Discula destructiva* causes dogwood anthracnose leaf blight and canker.

Hosts:

Dogwood anthracnose primarily affects flowering (*Cornus florida*) and Pacific dogwoods (*C. nuttallii*). Kousa dogwood (*C. kousa*) is also susceptible to infection but is highly resistant to the disease and typically suffers only minor leaf spotting. Other common landscape dogwoods, such as Tatarian dogwood (*C. alba*) and redosier dogwood (*C. sericea*) are also resistant to the disease.

Symptoms & Disease Cycle:

Discula destructiva was introduced into eastern North America from Asia in the late 1970s and quickly spread throughout the region, decimating natural populations of flowering dogwood in southern New England. Because *D. destructiva* is non-native in

North America, flowering dogwood has no natural defense against the pathogen, allowing the fungus to spread unchecked within the tree. Under ideal environmental conditions, dogwood anthracnose can be the sole cause of death. Foliar symptoms of infection range from angular-shaped leaf spots and blotches, marginal leaf scorch and a complete blight of infected foliage. Leaf spots are round to blotchy and have tan centers with reddish-purple margins. Additionally, succulent shoots and small stems can be killed and perennial cankers can develop on larger branches. Stem and branch cankers disrupt water and mineral transport, leading to a progressively worsening canopy dieback. Vascular cambium infected with dogwood anthracnose is chocolate brown in contrast to the pale tan color of healthy sapwood.

Another common symptom of infection on flowering dogwood is the prolific formation of epi-

cormic sprouts adjacent to large branch cankers. This creates an abundance of small-diameter stems within shaded, interior portions of the canopy that are readily attacked by the fungus, increasing overall inoculum. The fungus requires abundant moisture, humidity and shade to cause disease. Thus, lower canopy branches are most susceptible to infection. Once established, the pathogen spreads upward within the canopy. *Discula* overwinters within diseased foliage and stem cankers, initiating new infections in the spring. Early in the growing season, fruiting structures erupt through the bark of infected twigs and on the underside of spotted leaves. During wet weather, copious numbers of spores are extruded and spread via splashing water and wind to nearby shoots, leaves and flowers.

Management:

There are a number of resistant species and varieties of dogwood

available that greatly reduce the need for disease management. Principally, Kousa dogwood is naturally resistant and provides many of the same landscape features that have made flowering dogwood so popular. Numerous *C. kousa* x *C. florida* hybrids and disease-resistant *C. florida* cultivars are also available. Dogwood anthracnose severity is inversely related to available sunlight. Therefore, trees should be planted only in full sun with no surrounding plantings. Prune and discard blighted shoots and stems as they develop and remove any epicormic sprouts that form as a result of the disease.

Large, perennial cankers on scaffold branches are more difficult to manage, since removal may seriously degrade the aesthetic value and overall health of the tree. Collect and discard all infected leaves that are shed throughout the growing season. Limit additional stresses, such as string trimmer and mower damage, that may attract secondary pests (e.g. dogwood borer) and pathogens (e.g. stem canker pathogens like *Phomopsis* and *Cytospora*). During extended dry periods, provide trees with a soaking irrigation of the root zone and maintain a 2-3 inch layer of composted mulch over the root zone. During periods of wet spring weather, fungicide use may be warranted to protect green shoots and leaves on high-value flowering dogwoods. Begin fungicide applications when buds open and continue with additional treatments per label directions to maintain protection. 🦋

— More information at ag.umass.edu



A Healthy Dogwood Blossom Photo by Bernd Dittrich on Unsplash



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How to Understand the Two Main Business Valuation Types

by Phil Harwood, Tamarisk Business Advisors

One of the most common questions business owners ask me is to explain the different business valuation types and to guide them to the one that's right for their situation. While there is a broad range of business valuation methodologies, there are essentially two types of valuations – estimates and appraisals.

Business valuation estimates

The first type of valuation is an estimate of value. This is simply a calculation of business value using basic financial information and multipliers. It's less precise than an appraisal but may be the perfect solution in the right situation.

For example, owners at an early stage of business succession often only need an estimate of value to assist them in their financial and strategic planning.

Often, these owners are discovering for the first time what their business is roughly worth and what factors would make their businesses more attractive to potential buyers. As such, they are usually more interested in learning about value drivers to strategically increase their business' value. The precise value of their business at this early stage is less important because they expect it to change dramatically in future years.

Having an estimate provides these owners with a baseline. With an understanding of what their business is worth and what it could be worth, they can embark on strategic business planning initiatives to close what is commonly referred to as the



value gap.

In addition, these owners are often beginning to learn about their readiness to exit, business succession components, and exit options. However, their main focus in the near term is on value-building.

The benefit of an estimate is that it's inexpensive and easy to calculate. Armed with some financial history and an understanding of market demand, an estimate may be calculated within minutes because the process is mechanical and doesn't require much analysis or judgment.

Business appraisals

The second type of valuation is a business appraisal, also referred to as a certified valuation. Business owners who have advanced from the discovery phase and are preparing for succession often require a more accurate business valuation than what an estimate provides.

A formal business appraisal also affords an owner a more defensible valuation due to the appraiser's expertise, objectivity,

and credibility (assuming your appraiser is objective, credible and an expert). Plus, a formal business appraisal process may ensure that legal and reporting compliance requirements are met.

For example, a business owner preparing wealth transfer or estate planning strategies may require a formal business appraisal to satisfy IRS rules regarding valuation methodology, professional judgment, discounts, premiums, documentation and independence. Alternatively, an owner planning to transfer the business to a family member, key employee(s), or a third party may also be best served by a formal business appraisal. Each situation is unique, and qualified valuation experts will assess the circumstances and employ one or more valuation methodologies, depending on the type of transfer and level of detail required by the buyer.

As expected, a formal business appraisal requires a more in-depth analysis. The appraiser will need to understand the nature of the business, its history,

and its management. A financial analysis will need to be performed based on balance sheets, income statements, and cash flow statements. An analysis of industry and market trends, the regulatory environment, and economic factors will be conducted. Tangible and intangible assets will be evaluated. A risk assessment will be performed, and complete explanations and documentation will be provided.

Considerations

When deciding what type of business valuation best meets your needs, consider the following factors:

- **Purpose of the valuation** – Is the valuation for your own understanding, to provide you with a baseline for value-building or in preparation for your succession?
- **Stage of your business** – Are you at the learning and discovery stage or preparing for a transaction?
- **The audience** – Is the valuation for you, a family member, a key employee, or a third party?
- **Precision required** – Is an estimate sufficient for your needs, or do you need a more precise valuation to meet the requirements of your audience?

— This article originally appeared on [LandscapeManagement.net](https://www.LandscapeManagement.net) December 24, 2024. If you're interested in learning more, email Phil.Harwood@TamariskAdvisors.com to receive a complimentary copy of "Valuation Guide from Discovery to Exit," a 15-page document that expands on this article.

Learn What Your Customers are Talking About

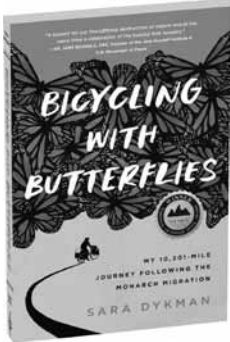
by Cris Blackstone

Topics popular in the media, as well as information you may have been discussing with your clients’ lawn and garden plans, include pollinators, gardening to attract birds, and lawn and gardening considerations for wildlife habitat.

At this point in the pop culture cycle, you might be finding your customers are catching up to your professional knowledge and applied best practices. This article contains three reviews of books to read for additional information, from a nontechnical point of view, by current popular authors. Your knowledge will be helpful during client conversa-

tions this spring about lawn and garden plans to attract and support butterflies, to sustain bird populations, and create habitat supporting beneficial wildlife.

In *Bicycling with Butterflies* Sara Dykman documents her multi-year interest in the life cycle of Monarchs. Imagine cycling 10,201 miles, following the migration route of the butterflies. Imagine studying the route and the many cultures along the route. In this book, no matter where you are in your interest around Monarchs specifically, you will learn about the geography and topography of Mexico through mountains, deserts, and wide



open spaces as well as urban areas, as the butterflies live, migrate, breed, and continue the life cycle unparalleled by anything else in nature. While bird migrations are dazzling for the time and distances traveled, these butterflies are also the sole creatures

who have multiple life cycles on the migration routes.

Your first thoughts about the butterflies might turn to your own clients’ lawns or gardens. This book will reinforce the importance of “think globally, act locally” but in addition open your mind to understanding how each plot of lawn in suburbia, as well as each derelict pocket between buildings in urban areas, contribute to healthy migration pathways. We’re beginning to hear about actions taken by various U.S. state authorities, such as reduced highway speeds in Texas during butterfly migration to help decrease vehicle impact on the

butterflies. We have learned about projects in Pennsylvania where butterflies are tagged and then tracked across the countryside by detection devices to see how many are crossing those pathways during different migration periods.

Sara Dykman got the idea to write this book as a tangent to her research centered on amphibians. Over several years, beginning in 2013, she studied the feasibility of leaving her research by the side “temporarily” and biking through the southern California and Mexican sanctuary areas for the Monarchs. The trip became a reality in January 2017. Reading this book, you will learn about the cultural and economic impacts habitat preservation has made in several Mexican states – and about the political dramas that have followed the development of ecotourism for the benefit of the butterflies as well as the families offering tours to the wintering locations.

While it’s also an adventure story – reading how Dykman rode through treacherous mountain passes as well as diversions avoiding busy highways – the adventures are also centered on the interactions she had with the wide array of people she met along the way. Humble, delicious meals shared in one room farm houses; sourcing safe drinking water; being a guest in schools to help reinforce curriculum about pollinators and the human side of this bicycling feat, are all highly engaging aspects of this story.

Reading this book will help you see how your clients, or your town’s conservation commissions, garden clubs, and planning boards, each have a role to play

in preserving and even increasing healthy habitat for butterflies – as well as all insects and wildlife in our stewardship.

Taking advantage of lectures, workshops, newsletters and conference sessions from vetted sources such as UNH Cooperative Extension will help increase the common goals between you and your clients. There is no danger to your bottom line as you increase your best management practices to be mindful of issues mentioned such as pesticide use, lighting, and even the “leave the leaves” movement. Seeing how you can position your business as being known for conscientious practices will serve to increase client satisfaction. The outreach you establish with other businesses related to lawns and gardens will be beneficial. Check out certifications lawn and garden lighting experts earn to help them guarantee four-season enjoyment of the gardens they care for while protecting life cycles (from feeding to breeding) of the creatures sharing the spaces.

Working in tandem with your clients’ preferences, increased knowledge and awareness of the connections their spaces have with the natural world will enable you and your crew to meet their expectations. Beyond that, thousands of butterflies can affect your understanding of the directions you’d like to see the landscaping profession follow!

The second of three books suggested for your winter reading is *Birding to Change the World* by Trish O’Kane. O’Kane comes at this topic from a completely different angle. Not originally

Continued next page 20



Reading this book will help you see how your clients, or your town’s conservation commissions, garden clubs, and planning boards, each have a role to play in preserving and even increasing healthy habitat for butterflies – as well as all insects and wildlife in our stewardship.

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Pruning Needled Evergreens

from UMass Extension

Needled evergreens that are not grown for hedges or topiary usually don't need much pruning other than to remove dead, diseased, or damaged branches. When removing these branches, cut back to their point of origin on the main stem or to a healthy lateral branch.

Keep in mind that junipers, arborvitae, chamaecyparis, hemlocks, pines, spruce, and firs generally do not have live buds on old wood. Therefore, pruning to control shape or size should be light and confined to a portion of the new growth. Never cut shoots back into the old leafless wood.

Most needled evergreens should be allowed to develop their natural form. They should

not be sheared except to create formal shapes since shearing results in a very dense shell of needles at the outer regions of the plant and causes excessive shading of the interior regions. This in turn leads to premature dropping of inner needles creating what's often called a dead zone in the center of the tree. The above mentioned evergreens do not regenerate new branches or needles from old wood to fill in the dead zone.

Corrective pruning of pines, spruce, and firs should be done while the trees are still young. Once they are overgrown, corrective pruning cannot be done without destroying their natural shapes. If the main stem of young specimens of these trees have



unusually long internodes, which creates a very open plant, pinch off about one half of the new growth on the lateral branches in early June before the new needles have lengthened. This will promote more branching and a denser plant. However, this pinching should only be done once or twice and not routinely every year since it may lead to excessive shading of the interior of the tree. To restrict the upright growth of these trees, similar pinching of the terminal growth may be done. If a young tree should develop more than one leader or terminal shoot, remove all but one. If a leader is damaged, it can be replaced by tying one of the branches in the top whorl to a vertical brace.


Low-growing and creeping junipers can sometimes become overcrowded. In that case, remove

entire branches by selective thinning, or cut back stems to lateral branches pointing outward. Do this in early spring and do not leave stubs. If some pruning is needed because of winterkill or disease, cut out the affected shoots as just described.

Of the needled evergreens, yews and hemlocks are the most tolerant of shearing, which is why they are so often used for evergreen hedges. Shearing of these should be done in spring after most of the growth has occurred, but be careful not to cut back into the dead zone with hemlocks. Since they produce live buds all along their stems, yews can be cut back as far as desired. However, if hard pruning is needed to rejuvenate an old plant, it should be done prior to new growth in spring.

— UMass: ag.umass.edu

Most needled evergreens should be allowed to develop their natural form and not sheared except to create formal shapes as shearing results in a very dense shell of needles at the outer regions of the plant and causes excessive shading of the interior regions.



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Shifting Gears to Accelerate your Business

by Greg Herring, The Herring Group

Just like driving a vehicle with a manual transmission, in business, you must shift gears as you accelerate.

You don't want to upshift too early because you will waste time and money and will focus on the wrong things. You do not want to shift too late because you will burn out your team members. And you cannot skip gears.

Consider the various "gears" in a landscaping business — also known as stages of development. Do not get hung up on these revenue and employee numbers; they are not hard-and-fast rules. They are soft ranges. Focus on the progression of the stages.

What it takes to own and operate a stage one landscaping company is much different

STAGE	REVENUE	EMPLOYEES
Owner as doer	< \$500k	< 5
Owner as manager	\$500k to \$1 million	5-10
Owner as leader of 1-2 managers	\$1 million to \$2 million	10-20
Owner as leader of 3-7 managers	\$2 million to \$20 million	20-200
Owner as leader of executives	> \$20 million	> 200

than what it takes to oversee a company in stage five. But we often do not think about what it takes to shift from stage one to stage two, stage two to stage three and so on.

One of the most important changes is the owner's role. As

the company grows, the owner must become more of a leader and less of a manager. The owner will hire managers to manage and "get stuff done." As a leader, the owner will set the direction, values, culture, and pace.

As the company continues to grow, the owner will become the leader of executives. An executive is someone who functions independently in their responsibilities. The owner and the executives establish the goals and priorities together, and the executive determines how to make it happen.

As the owner makes these changes, the company will require new software, processes, and people. Here are some questions to ask as your company moves from one stage to the next:


- Can you and others see financial and operational results clearly?
- Do you have reports that help people make decisions easier, faster and better?
- Do your people hold themselves to standards like labor efficiency?
- Is overhead expense efficiency increasing? Is your use of software increasing? Does your team have a process-improvement mindset? Are people documenting processes?

- What is your hiring strategy?
- Where are you innovating?
- Where are you investing for the future?

Some owners do not want to make the changes necessary to get to the next stage. That situation works if they are content with the current revenue level.

Here is another option: You can drive all the way across the country in second gear. It will be a loud, miserable experience, and you will eventually damage the engine (and the company and its people), but you could do it.

The other approach is upshifting. In business, it takes knowledge, discipline, and diligent work from the owner and others to do so.

Do you know what it will take for you and your company to shift into a higher gear? 

— This article originally appeared on LandscapeManagement.net on August 28, 2024. Greg Herring regularly writes for *Landscape Management*, providing financial analysis and insights tailored to landscape business owners. He has served as a CFO of both public and private companies and is founder of *The Herring Group*, financial leaders in the landscape industry. Read his blog at herring-group.com.

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LEARN WHAT YOUR CUSTOMERS ARE TALKING ABOUT

Continued from p. 13

a naturalist, she was an investigative journalist, focused on human rights. When Hurricane Katrina destroyed her home in New Orleans, she was faced with many decisions and long story short, moved to Madison, WI, to pursue a PhD in environmental studies.

This book has more attraction to readers interested in technical aspects of understanding the links between healthy habitats and human needs for property development and expansion. Where Dykman left her amphibian research behind to pursue interest in butterfly migration, O’Kane applied all of her appreciation of data and analysis to the topic of birds and the environment.

Each chapter has a lead-in with a quote pertinent to the chapter:

“You must do the thing you think you cannot do.” (Eleanor Roosevelt);

“We create wonderful places by giving them our attention.” (David George Haskell);

“Scientists saw we are made of atoms. A little bird told me we are made of stories.” (Eduardo Galeano).

These represent a few of the chapter headings that are woven into this book. Each chapter can

also stand alone to be read and then put the book down, not being read cover-to-cover in a more conventional way. For those short on time, but high in interest, this is the book to read if you have only one on your list this winter. With its focus solely on North American birds and habitats, this book is also more directly applicable to your landscape customers as they may be considering birds in their yards or birding as a hobby. There’s a lot of interest in birding these days, with ample internet jokes and memes about how birding isn’t just for senior citizens anymore.

Multiple chapters reference zoning and urban planning topics. From lighting during migration and breeding periods, to window decals visible only to birds to prevent bird strikes causing the loss of millions of birds annually, the book is heavily science-based. Civic engagement is a repeating theme in this memoir of Professor O’Kane’s. The book doesn’t offer recipes for success in dealing with municipal affairs to help birds, but it does offer real life examples of community groups having a major effect on policy and practices after persuading arguments in support of bird habitats.

Homeowners across New

Homeowners across New Hampshire are expressing a greater increase in feeding birds, evidenced by the increase in sales of birdfeeders for windows and to place in yards. Watching close up or from further away, this interest translates to landscape professionals being able to offer suggestions for plants that will feed birds with flowers and seed pods.



In 2022, birdwatchers in the U.S. spent \$107.6 billion and in turn supported 1.4 million jobs, according to the latest report from the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.

Hampshire are expressing a greater increase in feeding birds, evidenced by the increase in sales of birdfeeders for windows and to place in yards. Watching close up or from further away, this interest translates to landscape professionals being able to offer suggestions for plants that will feed birds with flowers and seed pods. A step further in the conversation with the client, and you

can see the ways you can increase sales by suggesting plants that will offer habitat (which birds need nesting spaces in taller plants, and which prefer lower, thicker plant forms) and how to replace some plants that may be beautiful but aren’t offering additional benefits to birds.

There are plant collections offered by The National Wild Turkey Federation, for instance, which will enhance the food sources for turkeys but also their preferred habitat for breeding and protection. There are songbird plant selections displayed in garden centers enticing homeowners with promises of attracting birds to watch and listen to – and the health benefits have been proven by research. Through these trends, we have great opportunities to work with clients to improve habitat and increase sales and continue maintenance of the properties in the client base.

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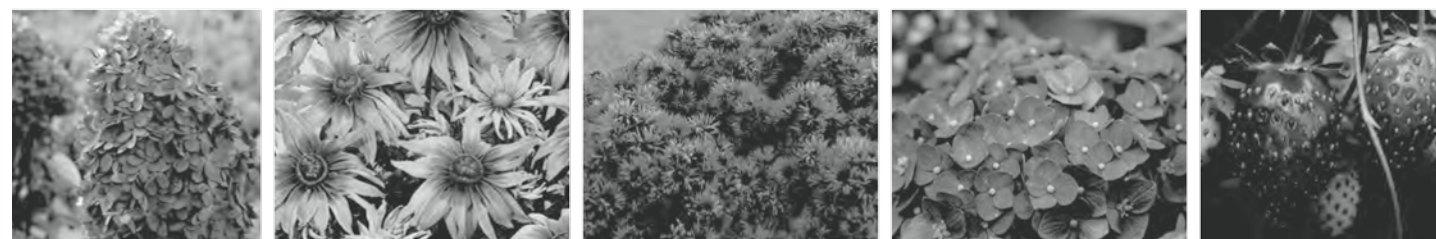


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LEARN WHAT YOUR CUSTOMERS ARE TALKING ABOUT

Continued from p. 20

Trish O’Kane’s writing style is to the point, quick and easy to understand. While she relies on a lot of data-driven conclusions, the book doesn’t have charts and graphs to decipher, but relies on reader involvement with the storyline to get the information most interesting to individual readers. There’s no preaching, no melodrama – but there is an underlying encouragement for the reader to consider and take action. If your client has a fear of rodents thriving in the thicker grasses or in the meandering wildflower areas, you can point out the attraction owls will have to the area and take care of the rodents organically.

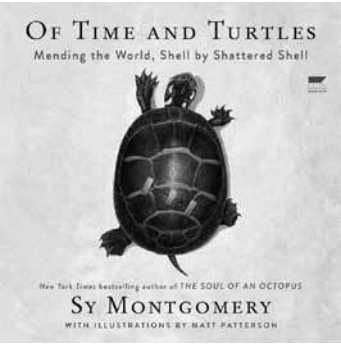
By understanding how birds eat their weight in insects, pesticide use can be diminished or taken more seriously to learn about seasonal applications. You can read it cover-to-cover and enjoy it and maybe even think about some of your favorite birds or as mentioned, read in spurts and get some new ideas about bird habitat and the importance of birds in the ecosphere. It’s another example of “think globally, act locally.”

The third book in this article’s suggested winter reading is by



New Hampshire resident and author, Sy Montgomery. Montgomery has a long history of writing for adults and adolescents on so many different birds, sea and land animals! This book, *Of Time and Turtles* is subtitled “Mending the World, Shell by Shattered Shell.” It might at first seem gloomy, since it’s centered on how caring for turtles is remarkable and meaningful. Many of the stories in this book are a bit intense, describing injuries turtles suffer from human interaction – run ins with vehicles and problems created with encroaching habitat being dismantled, but the positivity is woven in and palpable.

The direct connections to New Hampshire are evident in our daily lives. Wherever you live in New Hampshire, you are probably aware of projects from the NH Department of Transportation, or your town’s Department of Public Works, to replace or renew culverts. The projects to redesign culverts will help turtles stay connected to their swamps, marshes, and waterways without having to cross paved roads. Sediment layers will be removed, and better footings will be available for turtles as well as other creatures sharing turtle habitat. Notable projects include Newmarket’s Ash Swamp Road, which began with traffic calming designs painted on the sides of the road to increase driver



awareness about turtle crossings. These painted designs as traffic-calming indicators have been effective in other parts of the world, such as in New Zealand. Kudos to the town’s embracing these relatively simple means to protect wildlife as well as working on grants with conservation minded organizations to garner grant funding to improve culverts and roadways.

UNH has, over the years, worked extensively with students and projects on increasing land use to improve habitat quality for wildlife. Many presentations offered by NHLA have given the most up-to-date research findings on pollinators, lawn care, and wildlife benefits to urban populations. Lauren White, UNH Masters’ degree student, has offered presentations to different groups, among them, Newmarket’s conservation commission, about wetlands’ importance to turtles and turtle crossings interrupted by pavement. Her work factored in the successful grant proposal underway now for an improved crossing in that town.

If you have some familiarity with birds and birding, this book will be a logical extension to your interests. Turtle nesting habits are included and described in great detail – offering differences between the nests of different types of turtles, too. Who hasn’t seen snapping turtles making their sluggish but determined way, across a road to nest or “simply to get to the other side.” Many towns celebrate turtles’ seasonal heavy traffic periods along with

amphibian crossing celebrations in the spring. These actions filter down to your clients’ curiosity about their own immediate habitats. Reading this book will catch up to what they might have heard from the visibility and media Sy Montgomery has received from this book and as a resident/author from New Hampshire.

Helping your clients who have built ponds or have seasonal vernal pools on their properties continue the water cycle for turtle habitat can be interesting. While you can’t “import” turtles to live in a specific back yard, you can help create and entice some turtles who may be in the vicinity. Just as you may lay broken pottery on its side to offer shade for frogs’ safety, you might suggest some low branching ground covers for turtles. Designing an area where turtles can bask in the sun – a place with some sandy gravel south-facing – could help attract them if you have a client fitting those parameters. With a large property, maybe with a stream, leaving some logs across the water for basking in the sun will be a turtle magnet.

Check the website turtlerescue-league.org to learn more about how you might help clients attract turtles. Montgomery shares a lot about the Massachusetts group, Turtle Rescue League, in this book. Their care for injured turtles is based on successfully understanding turtle lifestyles and their needs. It’s a lot of work, but the joy the experts and their dedicated volunteers put in for turtle benefits is invigorating. This book gives a balance of emotion and hard facts, resulting in an overriding sense of positive outcomes and an educated understanding of how all results are based in nature.

Being aware of any one of these three books will be helpful during conversations with your clients. Listening to their interests,

Continued on page 23

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Please complete the information below:

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☐ Yes ☐ No



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A renewal notice will be sent to you when your membership is near expiration.

I hereby apply for membership and I agree to abide by the By-Laws established by the New Hampshire Landscape Association.

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“Winter is a season of recovery
and preparation”

—Paul Theroux, novelist and travel writer (b. 1941)

See the NHLA website for Newsletter copy and advertising deadlines:
nhlaonline.org/nhla-newsletter/



Calendar

■ **FEBRUARY 4**

Genest Bootcamp 2025, The Point Community Center, S. Portland, ME. See page. 6

■ **FEBRUARY 5**

Genest Bootcamp 2025, Regatta Conference Center, Eliot, ME. See page 6

■ **FEBRUARY 12**

NHLA Dinner Meeting, See page 1

■ **FEBRUARY 26-28**

2025 ELA Annual Conference & Eco Marketplace. This year's conference will remain virtual on days 1 & 2; on day 3, in-person member meetups will take place. ecolandscaping.org/event/ela-2025-annual-conference-eco-marketplace/

■ **MARCH 1**

NHCLP Exam, nhlaonline.org/register/nhclp-application-for-examination/

■ **MARCH 26**

NHLA Safety Day, more info in next month's *Newsletter*