



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Botany Story Slam; Scientists, Authors, Botanists from New England and beyond share unusual encounters in the world of plants in live event; audience to vote for the best tale

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Media Contact: Courtney Allen, Director of Public Programs, callen@NativePlantTrust.org

Framingham, MA- Native Plant Trust, the nation's first plant conservation organization and the only one solely focused on New England's native plants, announces **Tales from the Field: A Botany Story Slam**, a live virtual event taking place on Saturday, February 20, 6-8 p.m. A story slam is a storytelling competition in which each storyteller has minutes to share an experience on a chosen theme.

Moderating the event is Michael Piantedosi, Director of Conservation at Native Plant Trust. Audience members will have the opportunity to interact with the storytellers and cast a vote for their favorite tale. **Tales from the Field** will showcase professional botanists, farmers, horticulturists, and others recounting their most harrowing and hilarious moments in the world of plants for a one-of-a-kind performance of humor and adventure.

Storytellers include:

Wambui Ippolito, horticulturist and landscape designer. She develops programming for museums, public gardens, and parks focusing on the horticulture intersections between migration, culture, history, and science. She lectures in the USA and internationally and is the principal designer of her own New York-based landscape design firm. She is the founder of the BIPOC Hort Group, a multicultural organization with members from the African-American, Asian, African, Native American, and Caribbean professional horticulture community.

Ted Elliman, botanist and author of *Wildflowers of New England* and co-author of *Grasses, Sedges, Rushes: An Identification Guide* (winner of the 2020 Library Journal Best Reference Pick of the Year in Science and Technology).

Kelly D. Norris, award-winning plantsman, author, and former Director of Horticulture and Education at Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden. One of the leading horticulturists of his generation, Kelly's work has been featured in *The New York Times*, *Organic Gardening*, *Better*

Homes and Gardens, Martha Stewart Living, Fine Gardening, Garden Design, and numerous local and regional media. His passion for planting at the intersection of horticulture and ecology has culminated in a new book, *New Naturalism: Designing and Planting a Resilient, Ecologically Vibrant Home Garden*.

C.L. Fornari, host of GardenLine, WXTK FM radio, and co-host of the podcast Plantrama (winner of the Gold Media award from GardenComm). She is the author of eight books, including *Sand & Soil: Creating Beautiful Gardens on Cape Cod and the Islands* and *The Cocktail Hour Garden: Creating Evening Landscapes for Relaxation and Entertaining*.

Dwayne Estes, Executive Director of Southern Grasslands Initiative. He is Professor of Biology and Director of the Herbarium at Austin Peay State University, as well as Principal Investigator for the Center of Excellence for Field Biology. He has authored dozens of publications, including *Guide to the Vascular Plants of Tennessee*.

Tickets for Tales from the Field: A Botany Story Slam now available at www.NativePlantTrust.org.

ABOUT NATIVE PLANT TRUST

Native Plant Trust is the nation's first plant conservation organization and the only one solely focused on New England's native plants. We save native plants in the wild, grow them for gardens and restorations, and educate others on their value and use. We are based at Garden in the Woods, a renowned native plant botanic garden that attracts visitors from all over the world. From this flagship property in Framingham, Massachusetts, 25 staff and many of our 1,500 trained volunteers work throughout New England each year to monitor and protect rare and endangered plants, collect and preserve seeds to ensure biological diversity, detect and control invasive species, conduct research, and offer a range of educational programs. Native Plant Trust also operates a nursery at Nasami Farm in western Massachusetts and manages six sanctuaries in Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont that are open to the public. Native Plant Trust is among the first organizations worldwide to receive Advanced Conservation Practitioner accreditation by London-based Botanic Gardens Conservation International (BGCI), which included an endorsement by an International Advisory Council representing six continents. Please visit www.NativePlantTrust.org.

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