



Kelly D. Norris

gardens@kellydnorris.com

kellydnorris.com

Available Lectures

KEY

(T)= lecture (and description) appropriate or customizable for trade shows and industry audiences

(C)= lecture (and description) appropriate or customizable for consumer audiences

New Naturalism: Designing and Planting a Resilient, Ecologically Vibrant Home Garden (C)

Kelly's popular new lecture that applies his passion for plants and planting to home gardens with practical, accessible and inspiring ideas for landscapes on the wild side.

In this era of purposeful and thoughtful gardening, planting is a powerful verb. Planting gardens inspired by nature promotes authentic connections with land, environment and humanity. Why not make a garden that works and looks good doing it? Landscapes at home and in the public realm can be beautiful and ecologically functional if we deepen our understanding of plants and place. In this lecture especially tailored to garden enthusiasts with examples from around the world, plantsman and author Kelly Norris challenges audiences to plant the world a more beautiful, functional place.

New Naturalism: Lessons from Wild Plant Communities (T)

An in-depth lecture that applies elements of plant ecology and real-world examples from wild plant communities to the built landscape; highly recommended for conferences and venues geared towards landscape designers and managers.

New Naturalism is a forward-looking, multi-disciplinary approach to ecological landscapes. Kelly's love for native plants and his experiences with wild plant communities have shaped his career in profound ways. As a so-called hort-ecologist, Kelly strives to interpret native ecosystems into beautiful, functional landscapes in the urban context. Too often, professional horticulturists appropriate plants as if they were inanimate objects, instead of truly understanding how plants interact and function within the landscape environment. Join Kelly in an exploration of wild plant communities and their constituents from across North America that will inspire and inform your professional practice whether as a grower, retailer or designer.

Practicing New Naturalism: Site-Specific Plantings in Public and Private Places (T)

A review of recent projects from Kelly's studio practice that emphasizes behind-the-scenes details and the mechanics of each design; highly recommended for conferences and venues geared towards landscape professionals in design and site management.

In recent years, the shift towards ecologically driven landscapes has created new opportunities and challenges, often accompanied by big questions for how we do business and engage with our audiences. How do we sell customers and stakeholders on wilder landscapes? How do we shift the narrative of the landscape design and build professions from construction and maintenance to cultivation and stewardship? How do we cultivate new practices and knowledge that can transform our industry's relevance and purpose? Join planting designer, artist and thought leader Kelly Norris for this vibrant exploration of recent and future work at the intersections of horticulture and ecology. His presentation will emphasize the pitch for each commission and the relative success or progress of each project to date with a preview of new developments in the seasons ahead.

Practicing New Naturalism: Site-Specific Plantings in Public and Private Places (C)

A review of recent projects from Kelly's studio practice that emphasizes behind-the-scenes details and the mechanics of each design; consumer version oriented towards residential gardening.

In recent years, the shift towards ecologically driven landscapes has created new opportunities and challenges, often accompanied by big questions for how we create and engage with a new kind of garden. How do we make space for habitat in landscapes close to home? How do we shift the narrative of the landscape design from construction and maintenance to cultivation and stewardship? How do we cultivate new practices and knowledge that can transform the meaning of a garden? Join planting designer, artist and thought leader Kelly Norris for this vibrant exploration of his recent and future work at the intersections of horticulture and ecology. His presentation will explore various projects, their narratives, plant palettes and the relative success or progress of each project to date with a preview of new developments in the seasons ahead.

citygarden™: The Future of Urban Planting (T)

An in-depth lecture that reveals new opportunities for planting in urban environments through an understanding of stress and disturbance in the landscape. Kelly discusses his trademark installation process for these difficult but prevalent conditions.

In an increasingly urban world, cities are gardens of the future. With research increasingly underscoring the importance of interconnected patches of urban habitats, opportunities to cultivate a biodiverse future exist in medians,

transportation infrastructure, parks, campuses, and empty lots. Activating these spaces requires reframing horticulture in practice and presentation. In this optimistic vision for a verdant future, plantsman and artist Kelly Norris imagines a ruderal aesthetic inspired from seemingly feral and forlorn places that host a kaleidoscope of interesting and unusual plants. This flora for tomorrow paves the way for ecological, resilient communities.

Plants with Style (T)(C)

Kelly's signature lecture that correlates to his book Plants With Style; easily tailored to any region with a place-appropriate planting list of new and underappreciated plants.

Gardeners need chic, sustainable, thriving plants for modern lifestyles. Why settle for lackluster gardens filled with dull, ho-hum plants? Plants after all are the very essence of fashionable gardening. In this spirited, provocative lecture, 20-something plantsman Kelly Norris calls for a garden revolution: out with boring plants and in with stylish alternatives that captivate and enthrall. A passionate horticulturist and lifelong gardener, Kelly is the ideal guide to the botanical riches available to today's gardeners. In chapters on environment, structure, seasonal standouts, and plant combinations he shines a spotlight on the A-list plants in every category—plants that will thrive, not merely survive. Along the way, he shows you how to forge a personal style in harmony with your garden's setting and local environment. As Kelly puts it, "A garden is the best way to savor life on earth." Let *Plants with Style* guide you to the plants that will provide a richer, more fulfilling connection between you and your own patch of soil.

Reimagining the Perennial Palette (T)(C)

A thorough review of popular perennials, including new varieties making waves with designers for their beauty, function and performance.

With all the interest in the New Perennial Movement and a market shift towards sustainable gardening, a new palette of plants has emerged at the intersection of form and function. Perennials used in this style of gardening thrive in social arrangements, translating their native ecologies into beautiful communities of plants that ultimately require less resources and incorporate more diversity into the modern landscape. While many old favorites continue to have a place in these contemporary designs, many underappreciated perennials, particularly natives, have a new context in which to be appreciated. Plantsman Kelly Norris will highlight several examples of sustainable, plant-driven gardens from across the country, comparing and contrasting them to the wild circumstances that inspired them, while introducing the audience to the perennials within them.

Everywhere Plants: Natives That Make Great Supporting Players (T)(C)

A hort-ecological review of broadly common, useful native plants from across North America that deserve awareness from gardeners and professionals alike.

Ecological generalists—plants with broad tolerances to where they root—power the planet. Many of these species lurk in the shadows of traditional gardens or sulk in obscurity on the garden floor. But prevalence is their virtue; they have adapted to a wide range of growing conditions across a considerable geographic footprint. In this immersive class, renowned plantsman Kelly Norris will introduce the audience to a wide range of ecological generalists from North America and explain what makes them important to the ecology of the garden. Participants will learn about varied plant communities, the ecological properties that define them, and how to translate them into gardening practice, as well.

More than Turf (C)

A consumer-directed presentation that explores the American relationship with lawn and the public policy that reinforces it, all while championing front yard gardening as an expressive way to build communities and increase biodiversity.

When Kelly bought his 1941 Colonial Revival home on a half-acre in Des Moines, Iowa in 2017, he immediately set to work making a garden. His Meadow Nord is now a 3,200 square foot planting between the house and street that features over 120 different kinds of plants and an ever-increasing amount of insect and bird diversity. While his garden might be a passion project at this scale, it has inspired neighbors, students and coworkers to plant bold, biodiverse gardens. In this lecture, Kelly will share his experiences of making a front yard garden and inspire audiences to plant with a greater sense of community, both for humans and all the creatures we share the landscape with.

A Life Among Plants (T)(C)

Over time, Kelly has been asked to speak about the culture of horticulture, his career and life among plants. This lecture presents a personal response to those questions while encouraging others to increase and maximize the horticulture in their lives and communities.

You might think that working with plants all day would lead one to find other ways to spend their time outside of professional pursuits. Yet, award-winning author and plantsman Kelly Norris lives a horticultural life at work, home and play. In this presentation, Kelly introduces the audience to his personal mission to plant the world a more beautiful, ecological place through a tour of gardens he's made and lived in. He chronicles his journey and revelations about designing and planting resilient gardens that resonate with a true sense of place.