

Forests in a Changing Climate:
 Impacts on trees and ecosystems with Dr. Ali Kosiba



Join Dr. Ali Kosiba, forest ecophysiology and Extension Assistant Professor of Forestry at the University of Vermont, for a talk on how climate change is reshaping our forests. How are climate-driven shifts already underway, from warmer winters to more frequent extreme weather, affecting tree physiology, health, and survival? What do these tree-level impacts mean in terms of broader forest ecosystem responses, including carbon storage, wildlife habitat, and long-term forest resilience?

The program is underwritten by the Lois Lofland Gould Native Plant Program Fund and sponsored by Rhode Island Wild Plant Society, Rhode Island National History Survey and University of Rhode Island Master Gardener Program.

Wild Plant
 How science, fieldwork, and time reshape our understanding of New England's flora
 Arthur Haines, Senior Research Botanist, Native Plant Trust




Arthur is a plant biologist specializing in the taxonomy and identification of New England taxa. He has authored the *Flora of New England* which established the authoritative taxonomic framework for understanding which plants occur in New England and how they are properly defined. He also published *Flora of Maine, A New Path* and two books on foraging medicinal plants. In addition to his work studying advancement in plant systematics, Arthur is an administrator for the Co Botany and Plant Share website and a *Flora of North America* regional reviewer.

The Second Edition Updating the *Flora of New England* manual and changes to the taxonomy and composition of Rhode Island plants.

The *Flora of New England* manual was first published in 2011. At that time, a new resource created to update the taxonomy and add the conservation of plants in New England. It formed the base for names used in the online Co Botany resource and informed the last update to *Flora of New England*. Now, 15 years later, the second edition of the manual will again bring a summary of new information for the region's higher vascular plants. This talk will discuss new research and discoveries in the northeast with an emphasis on Rhode Island.

WILDFLORA RI
 Seeds for the Next Generation



PLUS
 CoA with RIWPS members // Seed Starters are a mission // The Reestablishment of Massachusetts Garry

President's Message

Hello Fellow RIWPS Members,

Fiscal Year 2026, by all accounts was a success. We leaned-in on the core of our traditional RIWPS activities, delivering expanded opportunities for our membership and the community at large. We upped our game as a professional Non-Profit Organization, launching several very important new committee efforts, the intent of which is to position RIWPS for future success. We experienced a year with board leadership and trustee changes, and many new volunteers bringing their talent and vision to our efforts. Our FY26 financial results were in line with our budgeting, and we are well positioned to do the same in FY27.

On the topic of our core activities, this year saw a renewed and expanded Wildflora Committee effort, bringing in new talent and contributors. Our Education & Outreach Committee relaunched with a motivated team supporting expanded talks, on-line resources, collaboration and community outreach. Walks and Workshops overcame turnover in the team to roll out an outstanding schedule for this year. The eNews team has expanded content, improved execution and added new collaborators. Our communication team has implemented critical website/platform linkages enabling our Capital Campaign and 401Gives efforts. They have also increased exposure, content and usage of our social media platforms. In FY26 Seed Starters West had a very successful May sale, secured a new home in collaboration with the South Kingstown Land Trust and has built a hoophouse to be completed in April. Our volunteer carpentry team has ramped back up post blizzard with new volunteers and energy. In FY26 Seed Starters East had a very successful September sale including plugs that were a big hit, and they started construction of their shed/workspace, which will be up and running this Spring. ReSeeding RI expanded seed sales, community outreach and local collaborations all leading to more RI ecotypic seeds finding their way into our RI soil, to increase and support biodiversity.

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Wild Plant SOCIETY

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 Website: https://wildplant.org

Seeds for the Next Generation
 A CAPITAL CAMPAIGN



QR code and text: Scan this code to donate to our capital campaign or visit www.wildplant.org/capital

Nominating Committee Report

For the 2026-2027 Board of Trustees, the Committee (Mary O'Connor and Dan Rakosky) presented the slate of Trustees at Large for approval. Officers will be up for election in FYR27-28.

Officers:	Trustees at Large
Dan Rakosky, President	1 year term
Sue Theriault, VP	Amanda Freitas
Lynn Feiner, Treasurer	Susan Marcus
Mary O'Connor, Secretary	Brian Maynard
	Dave Vissoe
	2 year term
	Suzanne Borstein
	Sara McConnell
	Beatrice Pulliam
	Hilary Sowa
	3 year term
	Jessie Beckman
	Peggy Buttenbaum
	Paul Dolan
	Pam Thompson

Year in Review

President's Message continued from page 1

Regarding upping our game as a non-profit organization, we have launched a Fundraising Committee which has successfully delivered results beyond expectations, expanded our visibility in the RI non-profit organization community and they are just getting started. This year saw the launch of a Governance Committee with the intent of bringing RIWPS' organizational structure to a "funding-worthy" level of professionalism. This effort enhances operational efficiency in all areas, and will make leadership, and board membership transitions smooth and seamless. To ensure RIWPS' success over our next 39 years, we launched a Strategic Planning Committee, the output of which will be a detailed path to securing our future as an organization. Both good governance practices, and a successful fundraising, will fuel the attainment of our strategic goals. Your RIWPS board is working hard to deliver for our mission and our membership.

Without partners and collaborators, we would be a lesser organization. Our friends at the RI Natural History Survey, along with URI Master Gardeners, put on a compelling Lisa Lofland Gould program this year with speaker Dr. Ali Kosiba, University of Vermont Professor and Ecophysiologicalist. The "Survey" also has generously given us use of their facilities for board meetings, SSW seeding, RSRI seed storage, a board workshop and committee meetings. The Eastern RI Conservation District has provided SSE with their current home and are weaving RIWPS into many local collaborations at AgInnovation Farm. The South Kingstown Land Trust has leased a parcel to RIWPS, the new home for SSW's new hoop house and future foundation plots for RSRI. We are pursuing expanded collaboration opportunities with RI DEM, Audubon Society of RI, Northeast Seed Collective, and others that will help us amplify the impact of our efforts.

Our annual meeting was a great success including Arthur Haines, Plant Biologist and Author of *Flora Novae Angliae*, who gave a motivational and informative talk that capped off our year quite nicely. This event, and all that we do, would not be possible without the support and dedication of our volunteers. These talented, motivated and generous folks are the backbone of our organization, and they all deserve our gratitude and support.

On a personal note, I am grateful for the opportunity to serve. The responsibility is one which I do not take lightly. So many members, too many to list, have helped me in my role over the past year for which I am grateful. At the end of the day, we are called to action to do more for our RI native plants and their habitats. Working together we are making a difference. Reach out any time.

Cheers,
Dan

Seed Starters and Plant Sales in Review: 2025

2025 was a year of "shiny and new" for Seed Starters East and a year of "how, where, and what ifs" for Seed Starters West. As SSE settled into its new hoop house at AgInnovation in Portsmouth, SSW searched for a new location to the south.

This was the first year that SSW continued meeting through the winter, to seed another generation. By October, they had produced in excess of 100 trays of potted plants, along with some plugs to overwinter at SSE. These plants begin their second season of growth in advance of the May 2026 sale.

In May at Casey Farm, we sold more plants into the hands of our customers. We offered some significantly larger ferns, sold approximately 33 percent more woody plants than in past years, and notably sold ReSeeding RI seeds for the first time. We eliminated June and August sales and instead held one sale in September. For the first time, we offered plant plugs. Grown from ReSeeding Rhode Island seeds, these plugs represented RIWPS' shift towards producing from our own Ecoregion 59 seeds. Their lower price allowed customers to purchase more or a greater variety of species.

Seeds sown in the warmth of the Rhode Island Veterans Home in Bristol were immediately transferred to AgInnovation to slumber through the winter. In June, we transferred the resulting seedlings into pots or nurtured them as plugs.

At the end of 2025, Seed Starters East completed its first full growing cycle in residence at AgInnovation while Seed Starters West began construction of a new hoop house in their new leased location in South Kingstown. Our past successes informed us and allowed us to break new ground.

Pam Thompson, Plant Sale Chair



ReSeeding RI report

The ReSeeding Rhode Island initiative just finished its fourth year. It began in January 2022 with the hiring of a botanist to collect very small amounts of seed from targeted wild plant populations in Rhode Island. We continue to grow out these wild seeds and to plant the seedlings in groups of two hundred to re-wild land trust properties and to support organic farms with productive hedgerows that attract pollinators and predatory insects. These hardworking plants also act as foundation plots for seed collection over five years. Our team of volunteers, many from the Seed Starter ranks, finished their second year of seed harvest this fall. Highlights from 2025 include a foundation plot planting at Portsmouth AgInnovation with middle school students, the expansion of seed sowing workshops and the number of species distributed through the Northeast Seed Collective.

Sue Theriault, ReSeeding Rhode Island Steering Committee Chair



Walks & Workshops report

Walks and Workshops once again provided educational programs and habitat explorations across the state. While temperatures were still near freezing, we gathered around our screens to discuss *Crossings: How Road Ecology Is Shaping the Future of Our Planet* by Ben Goldfarb. Goldfarb offers an eye-opening account of the global ecological transformations wrought by roads.

Early in the year, Beth Dickson led a Plant ID workshop, guiding participants through the process of keying out plants using *Newcomb's Wildflower Guide* and GoBotany. She also demonstrated how to take the Mystery Plant challenge on the RIWPS Among-RI-Wildflowers website. In a similar vein, but outdoors, Nathan Lambstrom led a walk at Carter Preserve to demonstrate how commonly available field guides can be used to identify unknown trees, shrubs, and vines. Tom Hoagland taught participants how to identify and control common invasive plants—such as knotweed, porcelain berry, bittersweet, multiflora rose, and privet—during a walk through second-growth woodland heavily infested with invasive species. Keri Brule led two outings focused on identifying summer edible plants, exploring their uses, and learning sustainable foraging practices. →

Walks and Workshops report continued

We also hiked in specific habitats to witness the diversity of Rhode Island's landscapes. With Denise Poyer, we observed early ephemeral spring flowers deep within the Arcadia Management Area, including early violets, Rhode Island's state flower. Denise led a second spring walk at Grills Wildlife Sanctuary to see the elusive trout lily (*Erythronium americanum*), whose mottled gray-green leaves resemble the coloring of brook trout. Brian Maynard led an exploration of the varied habitats at the Great Swamp Management Area. Beneath power lines, we observed a wide variety of trees, shrubs, herbs, and grasses—and encountered ticks and deer flies. Roger Greene showed us a successful phragmites control project at the Simmons Mill Pond Management Area, achieved without the use of chemicals. The area is now a valuable wetland habitat supporting a high diversity of native plants. Ethan Paiva and Nathan Archer from the Audubon Society of Rhode Island guided us through multiple habitats at the Fisherville Brook Wildlife Refuge and ensured we didn't miss the birds and butterflies that call them home.

We also explored habitats where we could observe change or encounter unexpected contrasts. Doug McGrady led us through a large open wetland featuring old pastures, oak woods, and a beautiful pine grove that had been a beaver pond until a dam breach in late 2023. Snake Den State Park reflects a historical reversion from woodlot and pasture to forest; on this walk, Chris Modisette highlighted both dominant tree species and experimental fields promoting sustainable agriculture. At Neutaconkanut Hill Park—a well-maintained trail system within a dense oak and hickory forest in the heart of Providence—Joe Jamroz pointed out spectacular views of the city. In Cranston, Peter Del Tredici and Brian Maynard led a walk along the edges of a parking lot to observe the common urban species—both native and non-native—that colonize harsh, degraded landscapes. Native or not, these plants control erosion, sequester carbon, provide shade, and perform other ecological functions. They also represent a living laboratory for understanding how nature adapts to human impacts such as urbanization and climate change.

Susan Marcus, Walks and Workshops Chair



2025 Volunteer Awards



Lifetime Service Award
Susan Shuster



Volunteer of the Year
Award Recipients

Diana McDonnell



Dottie Dylag

2025 Grant Awards

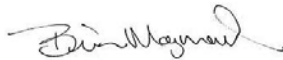
- Cynthia Gianfrancesco, Town of Scituate-Essex Hopkins Park - \$465
- Andrea Klimt, Edgewood Native Plant CO-OP - \$250
- John Marsland, Blackstone Valley Watershed Council - \$1,100
- Jeff Matteis, Empowerment Works Inc. - \$2,000
- Stacie Nichols, Serendipity Farm - \$735
- Elizabeth O'Connell, Warren Volunteer Gardeners - \$700
- Abigail Pauli, Coggeshall Farm Museum - \$1,800
- Madison Pitre, Warren Land Trust - \$1,000
- Katie Schortmann, ASRI & Southside Boys & Girls Club - \$1,200
- Brenda Woodward, Friends of National Wildlife of RI - \$1,000



RIWPS Budget
March 1, 2026 - February 28, 2027

	Activity	Budget
	Mar'25-Feb'26	FY 2027
Income		
Membership	\$ 27,375.00	\$ 26,000
Donations	29,485.64	\$ 32,500
Plant Sales	44,169.35	\$ 40,000
Education Programs	505.21	\$ 1,200
Grants	3,004.94	---
Miscellaneous Income	7,034.79	\$ 7,000
Total Income	\$ 111,574.93	\$ 106,700
Expenses		
Staffing	\$ 11,765.50	\$ 14,250
Phone	651.53	720
Internet	653.00	700
Office Supplies	734.96	800
Postage	3,269.00	4,264
Computer Service	4,199.35	4,350
Insurance	2,365.00	2,400
Web Site Service	2,517.28	3,500
Printing and PR	3,913.08	6,460
Data Base Management	4,817.76	4,860
CC/Bank Fees	1,693.62	1,500
Affiliations	---	800
Miscellaneous Expenses	15,518.39	60,000
Annual Meetings	1,505.43	2,400
Special Programming	---	1,950
Walks & Workshops	390.00	1,400
Grant Expense	10,000.00	10,000
Storage Rental	3,780.00	3,800
Plant Sales Expenses	27,849.16	26,750
Total Expenditures	\$ 95,623.06	\$ 150,904
Net Income	\$ 15,951.87	\$ (44,204)
ReSeeding RI Revenue	4,974.64	11,000
ReSeeding RI Expenses	\$ 7,267.71	11,000
Net Revenue	\$ 13,658.80	\$ (44,204)

Respectfully Submitted,



Brian Maynard, Treasurer



Assets as of Feb. 28, 2025

Bank Accounts	
Checking-Washington Trust	\$ 65,500.48
Washington Trust MM	24,678.83
Petty Cash - Cash Boxes	1,500.00
Paypal - Website	82.20
3-Yr CDs	135,738.38
Total Current Assets	\$ 227,499.89
Total Fixed Assets	\$ 718.68
TOTAL ASSETS	\$ 228,218.57

LIABILITIES AND EQUITY

Retained Earnings	\$ 231,905.32
Net Revenue	\$ (3,734.54)
Total Equity	\$ 228,170.78
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	\$ 228,170.78

Assets as of Feb. 28, 2026

Bank Accounts	
Checking-Washington Trust	69,956.23
Washington Trust MM	25,238.44
Petty Cash - Cash Boxes	1,050.00
Paypal - Website	302.23
CDs	140,271.15
Fidelity Brokerage Settlement	2170.33
Cash on Hand	-300
Total Current Assets	\$ 238,688.38
Total Fixed Assets	\$ 431.68
TOTAL ASSETS	\$ 239,120.06

LIABILITIES AND EQUITY

Retained Earnings	227,883.78
Net Revenue	11,236.28
Total Equity	\$ 239,120.06
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	\$ 239,120.06

2025-26 Board of Trustees

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 Brian Maynard, Treasurer
 Mary O'Connor, Secretary

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Jessie Beckman	Susan Marcus
Suzanne Borstein	Sara McConnell
Peggy Bittenbaum	Beatrice Pulliam
Paul Dolan	Hilary Sowa
Amanda Freitas	Pam Thompson
Nicole Hagen	David Vissoe
Lizzie Hunt	Brenda Woodward
Elizabeth Lennon	