The Middlesex Fells Reservation has an impressive diversity of 30 different habitat types that spring from its unique geology, topography, hydrology, soil, and climate. These habitats support a rich biodiversity that is unusual for a metropolitan setting. Come learn about the flora of this exceptional urban forest, first set aside as a reservation in 1894. We will then consider how these local plant communities can enlighten the design of our own gardens. Dr. Bryan Hamlin is the lead author of a nine-year study of the Fells’ flora, and is President of the New England Botanical Club.

Explore how ecology can inform landscape design—creating environments that are experientially rich, ecologically sound, and “of their place”—while they are dynamic systems that change over time. Mr. Morrison has been inspired by many notable figures including Jens Jensen, Aldo Leopold, and others, and the native landscape itself with its patterns and processes. Come learn about his exceptional projects: the Native Plant Garden at the University of Wisconsin Arboretum, the recent Native Flora Garden Extension at Brooklyn Botanic Garden in New York, and many others.

Our American Oaks are extraordinarily diverse, display complex ecological relationships, and play an important planetary role in ecosystem stability. Join Tim Boland to examine this wonderful genus, with an emphasis on the oaks of eastern North America. He will discuss their evolutionary history, importance to other flora and fauna, and their challenges today in a rapidly changing climate. They also have a deep connection to humanity, and are revered for their resilience, age, and multiple uses. Tim Boland is a botanist who has studied oaks from Mexico to New England.

The cooperative management of invasive species requires creative new approaches—whether working with your neighbors or navigating town hall. Tonight, we explore innovative ways to start grassroots control efforts, discussing effective outreach methods and the importance of public education. The Westfield River Watershed Invasive Species Partnership will illustrate effective organizational collaboration and coordinated control methods. Other towns’ efforts will be discussed. Dr. Julie Richburg is the Chair of the Westfield River Watershed Invasive Species Partnership.

The overabundance of white-tailed deer is a growing problem. A keystone species of forest ecosystems, they have a disproportionate impact on other species—wildflowers, tree seedlings, songbirds, and even insects. Come learn about the extensive damage caused by deer overpopulations on the Blue Hills Reservation and in forests throughout our region. This is a problem that we humans have caused, but one we can solve by restoring the predation that once kept deer populations in check. Tom Rawinski is a US Forest Service botanist based in Durham, NH.

**Thank you to the Cambridge Community Foundation, Cambridge Public Library, and to all of our members for making these programs possible.**

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**EVENINGS WITH EXPERTS: 2014**

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Events are free and open to all.

**February 5**  
*Wildness in Our Midst: The Middlesex Fells*  
Bryan Hamlin, Botanist and Chairman, Friends of the Fells

**March 5**  
*Landscape Design as Ecological Art*  
Darrel Morrison, FASLA, Preeminent Designer of Native Plant Landscapes

**April 2**  
*American Oaks: A Genus to Love*  
Tim Boland, Director of the Polly Hill Arboretum

**May 7**  
*Managing Invasives: From Garlic Mustard Pulls to Tupperweed Parties*  
Julie Richburg, Ecologist, The Trustees of Reservations

**June 4**  
*Scentless Spring: Ecosystems Under Siege by White-tailed Deer*  
Thomas Rawinski, Botanist, USDA Forest Service

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*Every garden matters ~ Every landscape counts*