

# RESTORING THE URBAN JUNGLE: STEWARDSHIP FOR THE FUTURE

November 18, 2021 | 9 AM – 12:30 PM

2021 Annual Horticulture Symposium

**MADISON SQUARE  
PARK CONSERVANCY**

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# BACKGROUND

## *Restoring the Urban Jungle: Stewardship for the Future*

Madison Square Park is located on Lenapehoking, the ancestral homeland of The Lenape (Delaware) people. We recognize that this land was forcibly taken, resulting in the displacement and genocide of the Lenape (Delaware) Nations. The Conservancy honors the Lenape (Delaware) people, the original stewards of this land, through our commitment to a series of sustainability and restoration initiatives.

Humans are at the crossroads of ecological collapse. A recent UN report predicts that as many as 1 million species will disappear from planet Earth because of human activities. Many of these are insects, a keystone in our food chains. Insects have already declined 45% since 1974. We are at a critical point of losing so many species from local ecosystems that their ability to produce the oxygen, clean water, flood control, pollination, pest control, carbon storage, will no longer function. Gardens are essential in restoring balance.

# PROGRAM

## Panel Discussion

### *Moderator*

Heather Chun, Credit Suisse and Sustainability Committee, Co-Chair

### *Speakers*

Dave Smoke McCluskey, Mohawk Chef

Hadrien Coumans, Co-founder & Co-director Lenape Center

## Panel Discussion

### *Moderator*

James Ulan, Credit Suisse and Sustainability Committee Member

### *Speakers*

Jessica Kaplan, Horticulture Manager, Madison Square Park Conservancy

Nathan Bartholomew, Director of Horticulture, Two Trees Management Company

Rebecca McMackin, Director of Horticulture, Brooklyn Bridge Park

Doug Tallamy, T. A. Baker Professor of Agriculture, Department of Entomology and Wildlife Ecology, University of Delaware

## Local Initiative

The NYC Pollinator Working Group

Emily Fano, Senior Education Manager, National Wildlife Federation in New York City

Chrissy Word, Director of Education, City Parks Foundation

# KEY-NOTE PRESENTATIONS

## ***Decolonize Your Green Spaces***

Dave Smoke McCluskey, Mohawk Chef

## ***A Guide to Restoring the Little Things That Run the World***

Doug Tallamy, T. A. Baker Professor of Agriculture, Department of Entomology and Wildlife Ecology, University of Delaware

## ***Building a Sustainable Madison Square Park***

Emily Dickinson, Senior Manager, Climate and Sustainability Initiative, Madison Square Park Conservancy

Jossue Velasquez, Park Manager, Madison Square Park Conservancy

## BIOGRAPHIES



**Mohawk Chef Dave Smoke McCluskey** has over 35 years in the food and beverage industry and is the Executive Chef of Local Pop Catering, A local Chef's Collective. As well as co-founder of Akwe:kon- One Spoon Food Society and Creator of the recently formed Corn Mafia Hominy and Lyeing Mohawk Masa, a company devoted to producing the finest small-batch hominy and dried masa from indigenous and heirloom corns.

He also travels the country speaking and teaching about indigenous foodways, as well evangelizing The Three Sisters Diet, and the importance of nixtamalizing corn. Chef also travels the Southeast leading teams of chefs for traditional style Cajun Boucherie. He is also one of the founders of The Augusta Boucherie. Follow him on Instagram as @codchef, @cornmafia, and @augustaboucherie. He's also followable on Facebook as Dave Smoke McCluskey.



**Doug Tallamy** is the T. A. Baker Professor of Agriculture in the Department of Entomology and Wildlife Ecology at the University of Delaware, where he has authored 104 research publications and has taught insect related courses for 40 years. Chief among his research goals is to better understand the many ways insects interact with plants and how such interactions determine the diversity of animal communities. His book *Bringing Nature Home* was awarded the 2008 Silver Medal by the Garden Writers' Association. *The Living Landscape*, co-authored with Rick Darke, was published in 2014; *Nature's Best Hope*, a New York Times Best Seller, was released in February 2020, and his latest book *The Nature of Oaks* was released by Timber press in March 2021. Among his awards are the Garden Club of America Margaret Douglas Medal for Conservation, the 2018 AHS B.Y. Morrison Communication Award and the 2019 Cynthia Westcott Scientific Writing Award.



**Emily Dickinson** is the Senior Manager of the Climate and Sustainability Initiative at Madison Square Park Conservancy in New York City.

Since 2019 she has helped develop and manage the Conservancy's Neighborhood Carbon Challenge - a scalable tool combining resources, programs, and strategies for community members, businesses and other land managers to preserve ecosystems and protect NYC's green spaces from climate change.

Emily graduated with a Masters of Environmental Policy and Sustainability Management from the New School where she focused on strategies to reduce food waste. She grew up in the Adirondack Park in Upstate New York.



**Hadrien Couman** is Co-Founder and Co-Director of Lenape Center. The Lenape Center has the mission of continuing Lenapehoking, through community, culture and the arts.



**Heather Chun** is a Vice President at Credit Suisse. She is the Equities Technology Global Communications & Business Manager responsible for internal and business communications, employee engagement, talent development, and organizational management. In addition to her role, Heather is deeply involved in community building with a focus on sustainability and social justice. Currently, she is the Credit Suisse Sustainability Network's co-lead of the Education & Employee Engagement Committee as well as the co-chair of the Madison Square Park Conservancy's Sustainability Committee. Heather is a Climate Reality Leader. Prior to joining Credit Suisse in New York, Heather worked in Toronto as a management consultant at Mezzanine Consulting and as a corporate insurance broker at Aon. Heather is an enthusiastic hiker and outdoor rock climber and feels at peace in nature.



**James Ulan** is an enthusiastic gardener and aspires to learn more about mushrooms and fungus. Outside of work he likes to ride his bike, go to the beach, watch TV, build things, and wander around NYC's parks. James joined the Madison Square Park Sustainability Committee in 2021 and is excited to work on new projects that reduce the Flatiron district's consumption levels.



**Jessica Kaplan** holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Environmental Humanities and a minor in Anthropology from Stony Brook University. As a Horticulturalist for the past 7 years specializing in native plants she is dedicated to educating the public on the benefits of incorporating native species into their spaces. She has worked in several different gardens as both a designer and gardener. As the Horticulture Manager at Madison Square Park Conservancy she is responsible for the health and upkeep of the Park's 7 acres of shrubs, trees, and a wide variety of perennials. With a deep interest in the connection between public spaces and people, she has kicked off the individual volunteer program for MSPC. This has encouraged neighbors to get out and support their local park and welcomed individuals seeking to expand their horticultural skills. She is committed to creating an environment that facilitates learning and curiosity in the exciting world of horticulture.



**Jossue Velasquez** is a Park Manager at Madison Square Park Conservancy in New York City, an Urban Naturalist Certificate candidate at the New York Botanical Garden, budding birder, and wildlife photographer on a mission to make urban green spaces more ecologically friendly.

In addition to managing the day-to-day operations of the park, Jossue manages the wildlife survey projects and iNaturalist accounts for the Conservancy to help document, support, and promote the native flora and fauna found in Madison Square Park.



**Nathan Bartholomew, MAB**, is Director of Horticulture for Two Trees Management Company, which is responsible for Domino Park in Brooklyn, New York. Nathan holds a Bachelor of Science in Ecology and Environmental biology; his undergraduate work focused on sustainable development and passive solar greenhouse construction. His Masters of Agribusiness program focused on public park management, and developing visitation models for public spaces using environmental cues such as weather to predict visitation patterns in parks.

At Domino Park, Nathan oversaw the initial landscape installation of the park's 175 trees, 500 shrubs and over 30,000 perennials in 2018. Since opening to the public, his work includes establishment of a public food scrap composting site, a 5,000 square foot pollination prairie, the planting design for the climate-change themed mini-golf course, multiple rooftop garden designs, public programs, youth mentoring and day-to-day landscape management. Nathan began his horticulture journey at the United States Botanic Garden as the Gardener of Medicinal Plants and later a Gardener at the Highline in NYC. Nathan is passionate about ecological horticulture, naturalistic planting and sustainable development.



**Rebecca McMackin** is an ecologically obsessed horticulturist and garden designer. She is the Director of Horticulture at Brooklyn Bridge Park where she oversees 85 acres of organic parkland with the dual aims of cultivating beauty and encouraging biodiversity. Brooklyn Bridge Park's meadows, wetlands, forests, and ornamental beds are managed as wildlife habitat for birds, butterflies, and soil microorganisms. Her writing has been published in The New York Times and Landscape Institute. McMackin has served on the boards of the Metro Hort Group, the Ecological Landscape Alliance, and the Torrey Botanical Society.

## **ABOUT THE NYC POLLINATOR WORKING GROUP**

The NYC Pollinator Working Group networks and collaborates to conserve beneficial pollinating insects and the resources they need to survive. Our members work on a variety of projects that support pollinator habitat in public and private spaces, provide educational outreach on pollinator protection, and develop advocacy programs and policies around pollinator conservation. Our goal is to be a model for creating pollinator sustainability in urban environments.

## **SUPPORT**

Madison Square Park Conservancy's Horticulture program is made possible by Bailey's Nurseries, Credit Suisse Americas Foundation, Con Edison, Columbia Property Trust, Greenacre Foundation, Sony Corporation of America, and Madison Green Condominium.

## **ABOUT MADISON SQUARE PARK CONSERVANCY**

Madison Square Park Conservancy cultivates and enlivens Madison Square Park, a dynamic, seven-acre public park in New York City's Flatiron District and one of the city's most treasured greenspaces. Through its public art commissions, horticultural stewardship, sustainability initiative, and engaging programming, the nonprofit creates an urban oasis that welcomes a diverse community of over 60,000 visitors each day.

Since 2015, the Conservancy has become a leader in New York City public horticulture. Led by Stephanie Lucas, the horticulture program elevates Madison Square Park's vegetation to create a beautiful urban oasis focusing on plant excellence, conservation, and experience. The Conservancy invites visitors to enjoy a uniquely urban garden experience through its annual exhibitions, programs, and living collections. In 2021, Madison Square Park's Arboretum was upgraded to Level 2 recognition by The ArbNet Arboretum Accreditation Program, joining 143 institutions worldwide. Madison Square Park remains the only arboretum located in Manhattan and it is also a member of the American Public Gardens Association.

For more information, or to get involved with our horticulture program, contact Stephanie Lucas at [slucas@madisonsquarepark.org](mailto:slucas@madisonsquarepark.org).

For more information, or to get involved with our sustainability program, contact Emily Dickinson at [edickinson@madisonsquarepark.org](mailto:edickinson@madisonsquarepark.org).