



## Speakers Bios

**DAVID TRACEY** is dedicated to helping people connect with nature. He holds a Master Degree in Landscape Architecture and is a ISA Certified Arborist. His company EcoUrbanist provides environmental design and consultation. Whether providing a site design or advising on policy his strategy is always rooted in the fact that an ecological approach to healthy development is best for now and future generations. He leads a small environmental nonprofit organization called Tree City which aims to "help people and tree grow together." As well he appears regularly on the CBC North by Northwest radio show as its "urban forest correspondent".

David is an educator. For Gaia College he teaches learners interested in holistic land management and ecologically-based technologies. For the Native Education College he teaches the Indigenous Land Stewardship program, providing another rich source of material regarding how to grow and live based on the notion that all things are connected. He also is an occasional teacher for Simon Fraiser University's Continuing Studies program.

David is a writer. His latest publication, *Vancouver Tree Book*, made the BC Books Bestseller List. Other books include *Guerrilla Gardening: A Manual*, *Urban Agriculture: Ideas and Designs for the New Food Revolution* and *The Earth Manifesto*.

**MEGAN BLACKMORE** is a Learning Coordinator with the Invasive Species Council of BC, certified horticulturalist and passionate naturalist born and raised in Kamloops. Outside of work she enjoys volunteering for the Thompson Shuswap Master gardeners, Thompson Rivers University Friends of the Gardens, Kamloops Naturalist Club, and Living Lakes Canada. She continually strives to find new ways to bring awareness of invasive species and their impacts to those around her.

**The Invasive Species Council of B.C.** is a registered charity and non-profit society that helps concerned stakeholders work together to stop the spread of invasive species. We prevent and manage the spread of invasives through education and outreach, organizing and uniting efforts, research, and training.

ISCBC website: <https://bcinvasives.ca/> Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/iscbc/?hl=en>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/BCInvasives/>

**JO TOBIAS** is a Regenerative Soils and Living Compost Specialist who helps land stewards understand their role in building and maintaining soil health. She founded RootShoot Soils in 2015 and has since collaborated with farmers across Western Canada, homesteaders and backyard gardeners in the Lower Mainland, and the City of Vancouver.

Jo's primary tool for regenerating degraded landscapes is biodiverse, carefully managed compost that jumpstarts nutrient cycling, decomposition, and healthy plant development. Composting is her craft: she meticulously tends each batch to create an ideal habitat for a wide range of beneficial microorganisms. She uses microscopy to monitor their presence and guide her restoration work. Over the years, she has taught farmers and gardeners how to use compost as their primary input to rebuild soil life and reduce reliance on synthetic inputs.

To learn more about Jo and RootShoot Soils, visit [www.rootshootsoils.com](http://www.rootshootsoils.com)

**ERIN BERKYTO** is the creator behind The Knotty Garden, a Vancouver based platform celebrating gardening, sustainability, and seasonal living. With 15+ years of hands-on experience, she transforms everyday spaces into thriving, wildlife-friendly ecosystems and inspires her audience to do the same.

With a background in speech-language pathology and medical education, Erin combines science-informed expertise with approachable storytelling across gardening, DIY, cooking, home, and wellness. Her community of 270,000+ Instagram followers trusts her for practical, creative, and mindful living advice.

Erin's Instagram account: @theknottygarden.

**PAUL SPRIGGS** has been rock gardening for roughly 27 years and building crevice gardens for about 20 years. He is an avid plant explorer, photographer, mountaineer, owner of Spriggs Gardens Landscaping company, and past President of the Vancouver Island Rock and Alpine Garden Society. He has a passion for all wild plants especially those of dwarf stature and collects and cultivates them at various gardens in his hometown of Victoria, BC, Canada. Paul has learned the craft of crevice garden building directly from one of it's innovators, Zdenek Zvolanek, of the Czech republic, and in the past decade and a half, has built many gardens in public parks and private homes that range in size from small feature troughs, to large installations involving many tonnes of stone. Paul is passionate about spreading the word of this style, through speaking to garden clubs all over the world, and by giving workshops for those keen on learning the finer points of this developing art form. He is co-Author (with Kenton Seth of Colorado), of the first North American book on Crevice gardening, entitled *The Crevice Garden. How to make the perfect home for plants from rocky places*, released Summer 2022

Instagram: paulspriggsrogkgardener    Facebook: Paul Spriggs

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