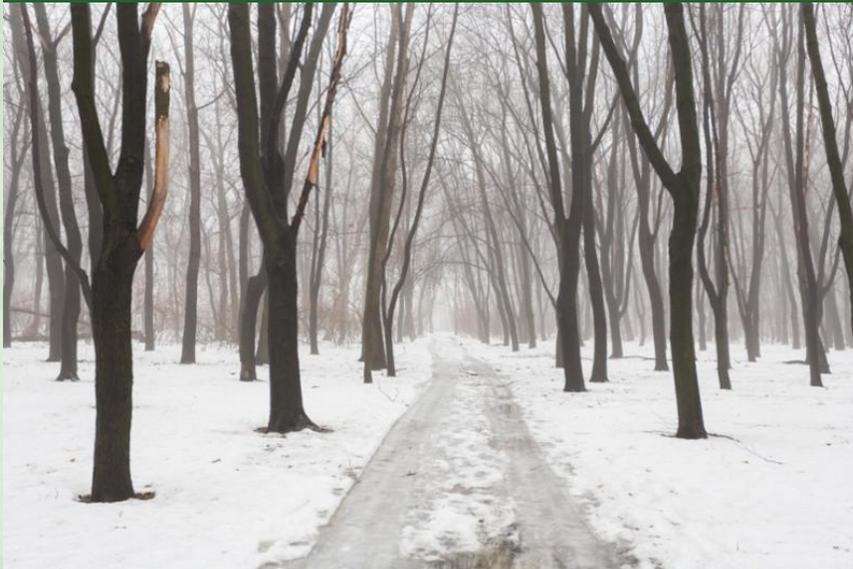




# north carolina urban forest council

*Protecting, Sustaining, Advocacy*

January 2022



North Carolina  
Urban Forest Council  
P.O. Box 37416  
Raleigh, NC 27627



## CONNECTIONS:

**COMMENTS FROM THE CHAIR**





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Happy 2022 to all NCUFC members, and I wish all of you a healthy and successful year! I'm Jeff Kish and I'm privileged to be the Board Chair for this year. I would like to begin by personally thanking Mark Foster for his dedication to the Council serving as past chair. We are lucky to have him still serve and be involved in the Board. Thanks again Mark.

A big welcome to three new faces serving the Council and membership. Kelly Blair and Bill Jones will begin their service as board members, and Stevin Westcott has been hired as the program assistant. As you will read below, all three individuals bring a tremendous amount of knowledge and experience.

The NCUFC is an awesome organization. We offer education, training, industry networking, tree plantings and more. All of this is offered from the coast to the mountains. The coolest part to me is that all of the programming is organized and executed by volunteers who are passionate about the preservation and establishment of our state's Urban Forests.

I would like challenge all members to take full advantage of the programs offered for 2022. We truly have exciting stuff on the calendar. Please stay involved. Keep up with our newsletters and our social media sites. Keep an eye out for upcoming events and spread the word of the great opportunities the Council provides.

I look forward to my service as Board Chair and a big thank you to all NCUFC members.

Jeff Kish  
Board Chair, NC Urban Forest Council  
Bartlett Tree Experts, Raleigh

## COUNCIL EVENTS

### WORKSHOPS

#### **Carolina Canopy - Urban Pest Management Update**

*Davidson, NC*

*February 24*

*(Registration information to come)*

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#### **Certified Arborist Prep Course**

*Greenville, NC*

*March 9-10, Exam on March 11*

*(Registration information to come)*

## PARTNER EVENTS

#### **NC Forest Service's Urban & Community Forestry Grant Webinars**

*January 19 and 21*

*Online Webinar*

Registration Now Open

[Register Here](#)

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#### **Southern Chapter ISA Annual Conference**

*March 26-29*

*Winston-Salem, NC*

[More Info](#)

## COUNCIL MEMBER SPOTLIGHT



## **Chris Diffley, Heartwood Tree Service**

Mr. Diffley manages the Plant Health Care department for Heartwood Tree Service, a residential/commercial tree service company in Charlotte and Asheville. A typical workday for Chris means "spending far more time in front of a computer" than he would have ever imagined. Outside of the administrative duties, he performs most of the tree risk assessments, appraisals, inventories, and more.

He says urban trees and their management are important to him because..."beyond being my livelihood, our urban canopy provides numerous benefits from alleviating the heat island effect in urban areas and stormwater management, to the psychological benefits of trees and greenspaces. They are a vital component to a healthy, vibrant city."

Chris has been an NCUFC member for a couple years. "Seminars, workshops, and other educational opportunities that are provided are what I enjoy most about the NCUFC," he said.

His advice to others in the field is to never stop learning. "The day-to-day of production can create a bubble that is hard to breach," said Chris. "Use educational opportunities to pause and reflect on the bigger picture of what we do and why. I find having a greater sense of purpose helpful."

His favorite urban tree (at the moment) is the Eastern Redbud, *Cercis canadensis*. "It's native, has relatively few problems, and lets me know spring is arriving. You can check back some other time though and it'll probably be different," said Diffley.

## **COUNCIL NEWS**

### **TREES AND STORMS: TOP 10 REMINDERS FOR 2022**

*By Barbara Fair, PhD, Associate Professor and Landscape Extension Service, Raleigh, NC*

You may or may not be aware that over the past few months the Urban Forest Council has been involved in education programs related to trees and storms. Of course, this is timely as we enter the winter season where the chances of heavy winds, snow and ice loads are certainly increased- even in light of the 70-plus degree temperatures during the last week of December and early January!

I thought I would refresh your minds on some of the key points about trees and storms I garnered while preparing the brochures for the Council's education efforts. As David Letterman used to do, here are the top 10 points (all being really important).

10) Pines may show no immediately visible damage after a hurricane or high winds, but may decline or die years later. **Sad, but not surprising.** In addition to this, trees may lose their entire canopy of foliage, but not die. **Trees are tough cookies!**

9) The higher the wind speed the more likely trees will fail- **DUH!** However, here is some data to support that. Hurricane Erin had wind speeds of 85 mph and an 11% loss of urban forest canopy; Katrina had 23% lost canopy, at wind speeds of 125 mph, and Andrew had wind speeds of 165 mph, and a 38% loss of canopy. **Palms are pretty tough, too bad they are not really trees, and some places get just a wee bit too cold!**

*Note - While wind speed is a factor, other conditions during the hurricane such as the amount of precipitation and length of time the storm hangs around are also important. Tree species, age, health, and structure are also important considerations. You should also factor in the site conditions, such as soil moisture and compaction.*

8) Unhealthy trees are predisposed to damage - **another duh moment!**

7) Trenching near the trunk and waterlogged soils make trees more prone to wind throw - **NO KIDDING!!! Really, no kidding!**

6) Damage to exposed lateral roots, loss of descending roots and soil compaction are often factors that predispose trees to failure during or right after a storm. **We knew this all along!**

5) Trees with 33% of their roots missing or decayed are at a high risk of failure. So are those with trunk girdling roots that affect more than 40% of the root collar. Trees or branches with cavities or cankers affecting more than 40% or more of the cross-sectional area are at higher risk of failure. **We knew something about this, but maybe not the actual numbers.**

4) After hurricane Matthew in 2016, urban forest managers found that trees with dead branches, poor architecture (vertically oriented branches and those with narrow branch unions and bark inclusions), those planted too deeply, had severe trunk girdling roots or were previously damaged were more likely to have severe damage or fail. **It is nice to have the data to back up what we have always suspected. This goes to show you that young tree training does work, and there is no excuse not to do it! Plus, proper planting and root ball management are important practices to employ.**

3) Along with number 4, Ed Gilman found that crown raising, thinning and reduction pruning reduce movement of the canopy and main stem (trunk) significantly. This is an important point to keep in mind why we need maintenance schedules. It also means that reduction pruning can help alleviate some of the load caused by wind, snow, and ice, so get to it. **Got to love that Ed Gilman!**

2) Plant trees in groups of five or more and provide trees with more rooting space, and you will increase their chances of coming out of the storm unscathed (or less scathed). **Even trees need some body.**

And, 1) Plant trees species that are resistant to winds and those that are pretty tough in the decay resistance department: Highly resistant species - hedge maple, muscledwood (also decay resistant), hickory, fringetree, Kentucky coffeetree, American and yaupon hollies, crape myrtle (**boo!**), magnolias, and pond and bald cypress. Some that resist decay are catalpa, live oak, American elm, crape myrtle (**still boo!**) and black locust. **Notice red maple is not on the list. Yea! Just kidding ;-)**

Try some of these species if you have not already. The list is much longer than this, just check out the storm brochures for more information.

So, lots of stuff we think we know, right? Right! It is great when the data supports the information we share. If you have data from your tree surveys after storms have hit your area, please share them with me, so we can keep telling the story.

Keep planting trees, and more importantly, keep doing good management works!

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## **COUNCIL WELCOMES NEW BOARD MEMBERS:**

### **Bill Jones and Kelly Blair**

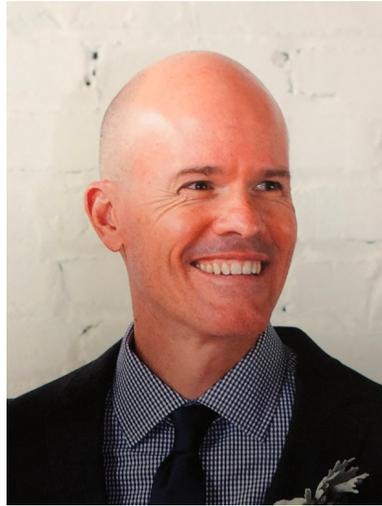


**Bill Jones** is the President and Founder of Carolina Native Nursery. He founded Carolina Native to aid in the preservation of the plants, birds, butterflies, bees, and the rest of the flora and fauna that make Western N.C. one of the truly special places in the world.

Bill resigned from sales and marketing with AT&T in 1991 to

be the founder and President of Terra Systems in Charlotte. Terra Systems Specialized in organic-based lawn and shrub care services before selling to Scotts. Inc in late 2001. he is a member in good standing of the Sierra Club, the N.C. Nurseryman and Landscape Association, the S.C. Nurseryman's Association, International Plant Propagators Society, and the Asheville Rugby Club. Bill has served on the Charlotte Tree Commission, Earthday Charlotte Festival (chairman), the Asheville Tree Commission (chair for four years), the Strategic Planning Council for the N.C. Cooperative Extension Service for NC A&T University, and the Asheville Civic Center Commission.

Bill lives in Asheville with his wife Jill and two sons.



**Kelly Blair** is the Tree Crew Supervisor for the City of Wilmington, NC and has been involved in professional tree care since 2005.

He began his career with the Town of Carrboro, NC, where he worked for 12 years as a municipal groundskeeper. While tending to the beautiful grounds and trees of Carrboro, Kelly became an ISA Certified Arborist, Tree Worker Climber Specialist, Municipal Specialist, Board Certified Master Arborist, Tree Risk Assessment Qualified, and a PGMS Certified Grounds Manager. He is an ISA professional member, ISA Southern Chapter member, PGMS member, and NCUFC member. In the upcoming year, Kelly looks forward to exploring his graduate level options for higher education in urban forestry.

Kelly resides in Wilmington during the workweek, then commutes back home to the Triangle, where his wife and three children reside in Pittsboro.

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## **WESTCOTT APPOINTED PROGRAM ASSISTANT**

Stevin Westcott joins the NC Urban Forest Council as the new Program Assistant. Stevin brings 17 years' experience in conservation and forest-related communications to the position.

Westcott retired from the USDA Forest Service in 2015 where he served as Public Affairs Officer for the four national forests in North Carolina. From 2008 to 2011, he served as Press Officer for the Forest Service's Southern Research Station in Asheville where he managed the media affairs program across the 13 Southern States. From 2002 to 2008, Stevin served as a public affairs specialist at USDA Farm Service Agency headquarters in the nation's capital where he disseminated information about federal farm and conservation programs. From 2000-2002, Westcott served as Director of Communications for American Forests where he wrote about the nonprofit organization's urban forest and Global ReLeaf programs. Before joining American Forests, Stevin worked as Producer of The Environment Show, a nationally syndicated radio show broadcast on 175 NPR and ABC affiliates, Armed Forces Radio, and Voice of America. He holds a bachelor's degree in English Literature from Oswego State University in New York and a certificate as a Legal Assistant.

Stevin lives in Asheville with his wife, son, and two dogs.

**REGIONAL NEWS**



## **Risk vs. reward: How towns care for trees varies**

When a hurricane or other violent storm blows through a community, one of the first pictures you're likely to see is a fallen tree.

But downed trees and limbs aren't just a byproduct of storms—they are an everyday occurrence that can often be avoided with the right efforts. According to a new study by researchers at the University of Georgia, the perceptions residents have about these risks can greatly influence a community's response.

As a result, there's often a gap between perception and reality that puts large parts of communities at risk.

[\*\*Link to the full story\*\*](#)

### **MORE INFO**



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NCUFC Members receive a 15% discount on purchases. Email [ncufc1@gmail.com](mailto:ncufc1@gmail.com) for the code!!

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