

2025 Pennsylvania Botany Symposium • Presenter Bios

Friday & Saturday • November 14 and 15

The Penn Stater Hotel & Conference Center

Friday Evening Social Presenter **Shelley DePaul** is a language revitalizer, ethnobotany researcher, and Clan Mother of the Lenape Nation of Pennsylvania. She has taught classes and authored books on the Lenape language and traditional uses of plants.

Banu Subramaniam is the Luella LaMer Professor of Women's and Gender Studies at Wellesley College. Trained as a plant evolutionary biologist, Banu engages the feminist studies of science in the practices of experimental biology. Author of forthcoming *Botany of Empire: Plant Worlds and the Scientific Legacies of Colonialism* (University of Washington Press 2024), *Holy Science: The Biopolitics of Hindu Nationalism* (University of Washington Press, 2019) *Ghost Stories for Darwin: The Science of Variation and the Politics of Diversity* (University of Illinois Press, 2014), Banu's current work focuses on decolonizing botany, nativism in plant biology and the relationship of science and religious nationalism in India.

James Lendemer is a scientist and educator whose career has focused on the interconnectedness of lichens, forests, ecosystem health and more generally biodiversity conservation. Much of his work has focused on eastern North America, including the physiographic regions that converge in Pennsylvania, where he is from. He is the Curator of Botany at the New York State Museum, part of the New York State Education Department. He has authored and coauthored several hundred peer-reviewed scientific papers, identification manuals and field guides. At home in rural Columbia County, New York he is an avid outdoorsman with a passion for conservation, natural history and public land.

Scott Ward is a Research Botanist at North Carolina Botanical Garden, working closely with Alan Weakley and Michael Lee (among many others!) on the Flora of the Southeastern United States (FSUS) project. Their primary goal is to "reinvent" plant identification resources for the many users of The Flora (aka "Weakley's Flora") through continued enhancements of The Flora's three main products: the PDF, FSUS website, and suite of field-ready FloraQuest mobile apps, the last of which now covers 19 states in the eastern United States.

Mason Heberling is the associate curator in the Section of Botany at Carnegie Museum of Natural History. Heberling is a plant ecologist studying deciduous forest understories in the context of environmental change. As a museum-based scientist, he uses herbarium specimens in his research and as a curator, he facilitates innovative and longstanding uses of natural history collections by other researchers.

Ron Lance has held posts in land management, biology, forestry, botany and horticulture since 1975. He served on the Board of the International Oak Society for 12 years and has authored and co-authored numerous publications dealing with native woody plants of the Southeastern U.S., including "Woody Plants of the Southeastern U.S., a Winter Guide" by the Univ. of Georgia Press and *Pyracantha* in *Flora of North America*, volume 9. His interest in hawthorns has yielded 15 separate publications on *Crataegus*.

Roger Latham has worked as a research ecologist, conservation biologist, and environmental planner in Pennsylvania and surrounding states for 52 years. After earning a PhD in biology at the University of Pennsylvania, he served as Pennsylvania Director of Science and Stewardship for The Nature Conservancy, post-doctoral researcher in biogeochemistry and fire ecology in Penn's Department of Geology, and faculty member in the Department of Biology at Swarthmore College. Since 2000 he has been a full-time consultant, conducting applied research and planning for agencies and organizations involved in wildlands stewardship and endangered species recovery.

Emily Sessa is the Patricia K. Holmgren Director of the William and Lynda Steere Herbarium at the New York Botanical Garden. She is a botanist whose research focuses on the ecology and evolution of ferns and lycophytes. She earned her B.A. from Cornell University in 2005 and her Ph.D. from the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 2012. She was a faculty member at the University of Florida from 2013-2022, when she moved to New York to join the NYBG Science leadership team. She continues to conduct research on fern systematics, historical biogeography, and responses to environmental change.