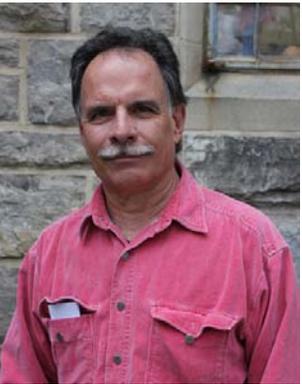


Guest Speakers, February 16, 2017



Tradd Cotter

Cotter is a microbiologist, professional mycologist, and organic gardener who has been tissue culturing, collecting native fungi in the Southeast, and cultivating both commercially and experimentally for more than 22 years. In 1996 he founded Mushroom Mountain, which he owns and operates with his wife, Olga, to explore applications for mushrooms in various industries and currently maintains over 200 species of fungi for food production, mycoremediation of environmental pollutants, and natural alternatives to chemical pesticides. His primary interest is in low-tech and no-tech cultivation strategies so that anyone can grow mushrooms on just about anything, anywhere in the world. Mushroom Mountain is currently expanding to 42,000 square feet of laboratory and research space near Greenville, South Carolina, to accommodate commercial production, as well as mycoremediation projects.



Alex X. Niemiera

Niemiera is Professor, Department of Horticulture at Virginia Tech, where he directs the undergraduate curriculum and serves as assistant dean of student programs in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences. For three decades, he has taught woody landscape plant courses (identification, culture, management) while pursuing his research focus—water and fertilizer use in container-grown plants toward the goal of maximizing growth while minimizing water and fertilizer use. In 2016 he received Virginia Tech's most prestigious teaching award, the William E. Wine Award for Teaching Excellence.



David Culp

Culp is the creator of the gardens at Brandywine Cottage in Downingtown, Pennsylvania and has been lecturing about gardens nationwide for more than 15 years. His articles have appeared in *Martha Stewart Living*, *Country Living*, *Fine Gardening*, *Green Scene*, and many other publications. He is a former contributing editor to *Horticulture* magazine and served as chairman of the Mid-Atlantic Hardy Plant Society. David is Vice President for Sunny Border Nurseries in Connecticut and a herbaceous perennials instructor at Longwood Gardens in Kennett Square, PA. David's acclaimed book, *The Layered Garden*, (Timber Press) was selected by the Garden Writers Association as 2013 Best Overall Book.



George Coombs

Coombs is the Research Horticulturist at Mt. Cuba Center, Hockessin, Delaware. His work includes trialing new and old cultivars of native plants to determine their horticultural and ecological value. Prior to joining Mt. Cuba Center, he worked in the nursery industry at both the wholesale and retail level.