

News from the Institute



2015 SUMMER COURSES at The Nature Institute



Out and About

It's been a busy half year for Nature Institute staff, not only at the Institute itself, but also (as noted below) at locations near and far—from the United Nations to the Amazon river basin, and from local Hudson Valley farms to a United Kingdom college. For the Amazon story, please see the article on page 3. Also, be sure to note the events still upcoming, described at the end of this listing and in “Fall and Winter Events at the Institute” on p. 11.

- **Harmony With Nature – At the United Nations.** In April, the United Nations General Assembly in New York City held a dialogue on “Harmony With Nature.” Craig Holdrege was invited to moderate the dialogue, which was both an honor and a recognition of the Institute’s work to bring human thought and action into greater alignment with the wisdom of nature. The event was the fifth dialogue of its kind that the UN has sponsored as an annual commemoration of International Mother Earth Day. You can find out more about the “Harmony With Nature” initiative at: <http://harmonywithnatureun.org/index.html>. We were also invited to contribute a brief position paper concerning harmony with nature and its relation to the United Nations’ sustainable development goals.

- **Consulting with Local Farms.** In May, Bruno offered composting consultations to two organizations in the Hudson Valley that integrate farming into their special missions. One, the Center for Discovery, in Harris, is dedicated to serving children and adults with severe disabilities or with autism-spectrum disorders. The other, Stewardship Farms, is a rural development company in Stuyvesant that features a model farm to demonstrate best practices adapted to the ecology of the Hudson Valley.

- **At the Land Institute: Ecospheric Studies.** In June, the Land Institute and its president, Wes Jackson, hosted thirty-five scientists, educators, and artists from around the country and abroad at the Institute’s Salina, Kansas, headquarters. The event was a two-day working conference on “Ecospheric Studies.” The basic question was: what would an education program look like that is truly holistic and interdisciplinary? What are the best ways to foster greater awareness of the earth’s ecology and to align human activities with it? Craig was asked to speak on Goethe’s ecological/phenomenological approach. He emphasized that it is not only a matter of knowing *about* dynamic interconnectedness, but of transforming our ways of perceiving, knowing, and acting so that we ourselves become more dynamic.

- **Soil Fertility and Military Veterans.** In September, Bruno gave a half-day workshop at the Heroic Food Farm in Ghent, New York, on “The Art of Farm-Scale Composting.” The Heroic Food Project is a non-profit organization with the mission of preparing and training military veterans for careers in sustainable farming, agricultural trades, and food entrepreneurship in a veteran-supportive environment.

- **Phenomenological Science and What Plants Can Teach Us.** In September, Craig taught a week-long course for students in the Masters of Science program in Holistic Science at Schumacher College in the United Kingdom.

- **Evolving Science.** In October, Craig delivered one of the keynote talks at an international conference concerned with the evolution of the Goethean approach to science. The conference was organized by the Science Section at the Goetheanum in Dornach, Switzerland, and was attended by scientists from around the globe.

- **Goethe in Texas.** Also in October, Craig gave two talks at Texas State University on Goethe’s approach to science. He spoke to faculty and students.

- **Sustainability Education.** In November, Craig gave a public talk at the Waldorf School of Moraine Farm in Massachusetts on “Tending the Roots of Sustainability: Education and our Responsibility to Children and the Earth.” He also led an all-day professional development workshop for educators: “Forming Living Ideas and the Significance of Experience-based Learning.”

Still Ahead

- **Compost and Soil Health at Ecofarm Conference.** Bruno has been invited to be the main speaker at the pre-conference of the 36th annual Ecofarm Conference in Pacific Grove, CA (January 20-23, 2016). The theme of the pre-conference is Compost and Soil Health. He will also be giving a workshop at the main conference, which is the oldest and largest sustainable agriculture gathering in the western United States.

- **New Two-Year Program in Brazil: “Seeing Nature Whole.”** Henrike and Craig have been invited to develop and teach a course in the Goethean approach to science, to be held in Brazil. They will be offering a four-week program during July 2016 and 2017 at the Associação Sagres, a center for adult education in Florianópolis in southern Brazil (<http://www.assagres.org.br/>). They will teach in English, and all classes will be translated into Portuguese. The course is for people who seriously wish to apply the Goethean scientific methodology in their own work and carry it further.

Fall and Winter Events at the Institute

Highlights from our Trip to the Amazon in June 2015

Impressions and slides shared by Bruna Fogaça, Bruno Follador, Craig Holdrege, and Henrike Holdrege
Wednesday, September 16, 7 pm

Monday Nights with the Stars

A course in four sessions with Henrike Holdrege
Mondays, 7 pm: September 21; October 19;
November 16; December 14

Outer and Inner Warmth

Talk by Henrike Holdrege
Friday, September 25, 7:30 pm

Outer and Inner Warmth — Phenomenological Studies

Workshop at The Nature Institute with Henrike Holdrege and Nathaniel Williams
Saturday, September 26, 9:00 am – 4:00 pm

An Introduction to Projective Geometry

A workshop in eight sessions with Henrike Holdrege
Tuesdays, 9 – 10:30 am, October 13, 20, 27; November 3, 10, 17; December 1, 8
Continued from the spring; new participants welcome.

Coming Alive to Nature: Plant Studies

A short course with Craig Holdrege
Mondays, 9 am – 12:30 pm, October 19, 26;
November 2

Hands-on Farm-scale Composting

A workshop with Bruno Follador
Friday – Saturday, October 30 – 31

Volunteer Work Day

Saturday, November 7, 9 am – 1 pm

Coming Alive to Nature: Images, Color, Light and Darkness

A course with Henrike Holdrege
Monday mornings, 9 am – 12:30 pm, November 9, 16, 23, 30; December 7, 14

Plants and the Living Earth

Winter Intensive for farmers, gardeners, and apprentices, with Craig Holdrege, Henrike Holdrege, and Bruno Follador

February 7 – 12, 2016

Our interactions with nature will become ever healthier, and support a productive co-evolution of humanity with the natural world, when they are based on a deeper understanding of nature. Can we truly see and experience nature as dynamic, interconnected and whole? That is an underlying question that will inform the week's activities. The work will include careful sensory observation and just as careful attention to how we think about and judge the phenomena we are observing. We will focus our attention on these topics:

Earth, water, air and warmth

Practical exercises and observations to understand the essential qualities that inform all life on earth.

Plant study

Metamorphosis; plant growth and development in relation to the environment, with a focus on soil; domestication characteristics of food plants; assessing quality through our senses.

Soil, Compost, and Phenomenological Chemistry

Integrating composting into the organism of the whole farm; qualitative assessment; experiencing the qualities of the chemical elements carbon and nitrogen.

Mathematics Alive!

Weekend workshop for teachers with Henrike Holdrege and Marisha Plotnik
March 18 – 20, 2016

For more information, please visit our Calendar of Events: <http://natureinstitute.org/calendar>.