



ISA developed True Professionals, a communications program, to specifically help members better relate to their customers, promote their services, and educate their communities. Arborist News is featuring the next True Professionals of Arboriculture Award recipients who serve as examples to all members.

You may read about all the award winners by visiting the True Professionals section of the members-only PR and Marketing toolbox at the ISA website ([www.isa-arbor.com](http://www.isa-arbor.com)).



## Mike Galvin: A Profile in Professionalism

Mike Galvin believes his most important contribution to arboriculture is his work on the Urban Tree Canopy. In fact, it's a project this ISA Certified Arborist<sup>®</sup> from Washington, D.C., has developed that can be looked upon as a "best practice" by his fellow arborists. Now a 2011 True Professional of Arboriculture, Mike defines the idea behind the initiative.

"The Urban Tree Canopy assessment is a process of combining information from high resolution remote sensing," Mike says. "The Geographic Information System (GIS) layers tell us the amount of tree canopy in a city or any part of a city, down to individual parcels."

### Where Are the Trees?

For Mike, the challenge began in 1999 when Parks and People Foundation (PPF) (Baltimore, Maryland), a non-governmental organization (NGO) he had worked with for years, came to the Secretariat of the Maryland Department of Natural Resources where he was working as an urban forester. The PPF of Baltimore was not pleased with the agency's new Green Infrastructure (GI) map. The GI map showed some key natural resource hubs and corridors across the state of Maryland, but the PPF was complaining because the city of Baltimore showed up as a blank spot.

"The Parks and People group made it clear that natural resources in urban areas are very important to people in cities," Mike recalls. "After discussing it, we found that the GI map used a filter of 500 contiguous acres as a minimum for identification of included lands. We all agreed that we would like to include finer scale environmental features, but it was a scale issue; data sets for the entire state are too coarse to include single trees or small parks.

"We agreed that we had to find an appropriate data set and the resources to acquire and interpret it."

### What Can We Learn From Mike Galvin?

- **An old Irish saying: "two ears, one mouth."** When work began on the Urban Tree Canopy initiative, there was no mandate or funding, just the promise of technical help. In order to be successful, broad support and participation was needed from all sides. As much time was invested in identifying, engaging, and listening to stakeholders as were in undertaking the technical aspects—this was the key to success.
- **Never stop learning.** Every project allows arborists to grow and build on past successes. Experts for Urban Tree Canopy were needed in arboriculture, planning, geospatial image interpretation, social science, and other disciplines. Projects like this require a team of collaborators with diverse expertise. Be willing to learn about the team's needs as well as what's necessary for the project.
- **Success takes time.** Perseverance and adaptive management are often required to move any project forward. Missteps are going to happen and the Urban Tree Canopy plan was far from perfect, mostly due to its sheer complexity. Patience was a necessity. It took time to get initial grant money, and then there were months of negotiations for the state procurement process to understand why foresters needed to buy satellite photos from space. At one point the request ended up being rescheduled because of the events of September 2001.
- **Partnerships deliver results.** The Urban Tree Canopy involved federal financial and technical assistance, state technical assistance, municipal funding and technical assistance, and NGO financial and technical assistance. Cooperation from all parties was essential to achieve the goal. If any of these contributions failed, the initiative would have slowed or stalled.

### Planting Trees Where it Makes Sense

This put Mike on a course to obtain a federal grant, allowing for the purchase of satellite imagery to see those finer environmental features within resolution of one meter. The improvement allowed for a better view of the land cover and led to the 2001 Strategic Urban Forest Assessment. Mike and the State of Maryland worked with federal, local, and NGO officials, planting trees around Baltimore using the map as a guide for where to place them.

"It was proof that the one-meter imagery made a big difference," Mike recalls. "The traditional 30-meter data can see the forests but not the trees, and individual trees account for a large percentage of the canopy cover in most cities."

## Enlisting Support

Mike maintains the process of improving the urban tree canopy had gained momentum when researchers from the Baltimore Ecosystem Study came on board.

Morgan Grove of the U.S. Forest Service Northern Research Station and Jarlath O'Neil-Dunne from the University of Vermont Spatial Analysis Lab brought their expertise to the project. Grove and Dunne boosted the project's success, Mike says, by bringing in more refined image interpretation tools and techniques. They also combined the results with various GIS layers so that existing and potential canopy could be quantified at various scales and categories of interest, from the city, ward, neighborhood, or parcel.

Mike believes the strategic capabilities of the imaging tool benefited greatly because of their support.

## Pollution Control: Chesapeake Bay Watershed

Mike was fully involved in the Urban Tree Canopy project when the Baltimore Ecosystem Study was analyzing related issues. The group's research showed that because of buried streams, disconnectivity, altered hydrology from imperviousness, and other factors, the riparian forest buffers—also known as stream-side forests—were not effective tools for cities to maintain water quality improvement. Mike was already aware of a solution: improving a city's watershed-wide tree canopy cover can improve poor water quality.

"This emerging research and the fact that we had developed an efficient, reliable, replicable way to quantify canopy cover led the Chesapeake Bay Program to pilot an Urban Tree Canopy initiative," Mike comments. "The pilot program spread Bay-wide fairly quickly because it was well-accepted by elected officials and the general public.

"As the Chesapeake Bay Program now moves from a voluntary to a regulatory program, many of the participating states have committed to using Urban Tree Canopy goals to meet Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDL) or "pollution diets" set by the EPA under the Clean Water Act."

## Making it Work

Mike says municipal and NGO arborists can incorporate this into practice by advocating for Urban Tree Canopy goals to meet TMDL with locally elected and water quality officials.

This means planting and protecting more trees so that commercial arborists definitely

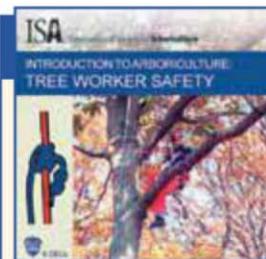
have a role to play. In just about all of the cities where Mike has worked on such goals, most of the existing and potential tree canopy was on private residential property. Commercial arborists are the people who care for these trees. Some commercial firms have also begun to provide image acquisition, interpretation, and analysis services for a fee.

Now director of the Consulting Group at SavATree, Mike looks back on what he learned from his urban tree experiences. By listening to the partners involved in a project, Mike says it's possible to improve processes and products—even when they are not solid concepts

in the first place. He says partnerships between NGOs, municipalities, states, and federal agencies can result in something positive that would not occur had the parties involved not worked together.

"Feedback loops between science, policy, and practice can improve conditions on the ground," Mike believes. "And always remind them that trees are good for the environment. While this is evident to arborists, it is a tougher sell to engineers. But they are making progress."

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## INTRODUCTION TO ARBORICULTURE

# ISA's Tree Worker Safety CD-ROM

Available in both English and Spanish languages, ISA's Tree Worker Safety CD-ROM is an interactive learning tool for arborists and tree climbers. The CD includes lessons on general safety, climbing, and rigging. There are also detailed sections on knots. The Introduction to Arboriculture: Tree Worker Safety CD thoroughly discusses aerial rescue as well.



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## Wood Decay Fungi

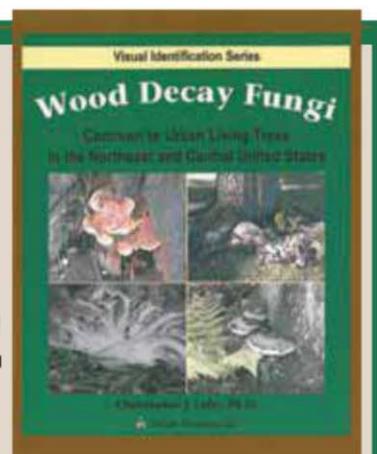
By Christopher J. Luley



This booklet provides a straightforward approach to identifying decay fungi common to trees. Specifically, this book observes and analyzes decay fungi common to living trees in the northeast and central United States. This manual is designed to simplify the difficult task of identifying common fungi that threaten the structural stability of urban trees.

Divided into two sections, the book's first portion explains the causes and types of decay, while the second section profiles each wood decay fungus as an aid in fungus identification.

(©2005, softcover, 58 pp., full-color, index, 7.9 x 6.8 x 0.2 inches)



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