

Michael P. Spravka

Professional Experience

Private Consultant/ Landscape designer, June 1984 to present. Working with clients to select desirable plant material for their chosen sites and designing a landscape plan that best utilizes these chosen plants. Specific designs with pertinent information about the plants represented are provided for areas that need new landscape solutions. Special training in proper selection, culture, and maintenance is always provided to clients. Determining identification, health status, and proper treatment of existing plant material on property is also provided for clients.

Research Technician, The Morton Arboretum, Lisle, Illinois, May 1981 to February 1996 (fulltime) and February 1996 to present (part-time). Conducted research studies on root systems, soil conditions, all various types of mulches and their effectiveness, construction issues regarding trees, insect pest and disease problems, and proper tree planting procedures. Coordinator of the following programs:

- Members Cooperative Research Program (providing unusual noteworthy trees, shrubs, perennials, etc. then working with members to obtain insightful homeowner feedback on offered plants).
- International Seed Exchange Program (collection and distribution of 100's of species of tree/shrub seeds in a cooperative exchange with over 70 countries).
- Arbor Day tree seedling distribution program (in conjunction with the Illinois Arborists Association) for the annual distribution of over 30,000 trees.
- Research tree distribution program (coordinate the distribution of 100's of promising new varieties of trees to a wide range of recipient groups and sites each year).
- Field supervisor, plant health evaluator, and record keeper of the following plant collections: all research plant material in the greenhouse, quonsets, nursery beds, research test plots, Arboretum collections, and any research trees or shrubs distributed to community sites in northern and central Illinois. On site supervisor of three to ten research interns or summer assistants, and over 100 volunteers throughout the year. Creator and coordinator of several educational tree and seed distribution programs for schools, scouting groups, recycling centers, and other community organizations. Coordinator of Plant Clinic staff and services involved in diagnosing disease and insect pest problems for the public. Original cofounder (with Dr. George Ware) in 1981 of the annual Arboretum Plant Sale. Co-writer/designer for several Arboretum publications.

International Society of Arboriculture Certified Arborist and Illinois Arborists Association Certification Board Member, Illinois Arborists Association, December 1989 to present. Instructor of tree identification, taxonomy, and tree selection at arborist skills workshop sessions. Evaluator and revisor of certification exam study guide and program. Proctor of State/National Arborist Certification exams 1986 to present. Tutor for students needing assistance in preparation for arborist exam. Instructor of tree health care (diagnosis and treatment of diseases and pests, proper maintenance, etc...) for garden clubs, municipal forestry departments, student classes, and other community groups. Instructor of arborist training sessions for both the Chicago Bureau of Forestry and the Cook County Forest Preserve District. Teacher of tree/shrub seed propagation classes for College of DuPage 1990 to present.

Ornithology Instructor (Morton Arboretum, Chicago Field Museum, Spring Valley Nature Center, and various other institutions), March 1986 to present. Subjects covered in classroom sessions include: bird identification by both sight and sound, life cycles and corresponding behavior patterns, taxonomic grouping, and geographical range and population fluctuation over time. Group leader of walks and field trips to view birds in a variety of habitats and seasons. Record keeper of bird sightings/bird behavior at the Morton Arboretum and other DuPage, Kane, and Cook County sites.

Education

Bachelor Degree: May 1982
Northern Illinois University, DeKalb, Illinois

Membership in Professional Organizations

Illinois Arborists Association

Awards Received:

Honorary Lifetime Membership Award in 1991

Special Recognition Award in 1995

International Society of Arboriculture

International Oak Society

'Plumages' (Mike's personal consulting service) is a featured business on Angie's List (<http://www.angieslist.com>) 2005 to present

Recipient of Angie's List Super Service Award in 2007 and 2008 (less than 5% of businesses on Angie's List receive this award)