

# Austin Water Center for Environmental Research



Austin Water – The University of Texas – Texas A&M University  
A Partnership for Urban Ecology and Sustainability: Community, Education, Research  
located at the Hornsby Bend Biosolids Management Plant  
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Website: [www.austintexas.gov/cer](http://www.austintexas.gov/cer)  
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## The CER Lunchtime Lectures 2025

By Dr. Kevin M. Anderson, AW Center for Environmental Research

## The Geography of Urban Nature

The 2025 Lunchtime Lectures will explore the complex relationship between the city and nature in America. Our American narrative of nature celebrates wilderness or “pristine nature” and rural or “pastoral nature” in contrast to the degradation of urban landscapes. However, we are now predominately a country of urbanites who have only recreational contact with wilderness or pastoral nature. To compensate for our urban “nature deficit”, we have incorporated “green space” into our cities - preserves, parks, farms, and gardens - to allow for contact with officially sanctioned approximations of wild and pastoral nature in the urban landscape. The urban nature that lives outside of these green spaces (or that “invasively” assaults them) is seen as a “degraded” type of nature. The resulting warlike narrative sets good nature that obeys its role in the American city against bad nature which has its own cosmopolitan plan for urban landscapes. The writer John Tallmadge describes urban nature as “just too mixed up, chaotic, and confused to fit our established notions of beauty and value in nature...Maybe it’s not really nature at all, not a real ecosystem, just a bunch of weeds and exotics mixed up with human junk.” Ecologists are called on to mediate and to assess whether it is a real ecosystem, and thereby add another chapter to the narrative entitled “urban ecology” in which science measures ecological cycles and ecosystem functionality in the city. The 2025 Lunchtime Lectures are an attempt to disentangle this complex story of ecology, culture, and the American City. Join us on this journey through the Geography of Urban Nature!

### Concepts of Urban Nature

January	Urban Lifeworlds: Perspectives on Nature and the City
February	The Urban Wilderness: Wildness and the American City
March	The Urban Pastoral: Parkland and the Garden City
April	The Elemental City: Cycles, Services and Urban Ecology

### Urban Natural History, Ecology and Encounter

May	The Nonhuman City: Urban Habitats and Unnatural History
June	The Aquatic City: The Nature of Urban Waterways
July	The Terrestrial City: Greenspace and the Urban Forest
August	The Aerial City: Denizens of the Urban Sky
September	Unnatural Encounters: Writing Urban Nature

### The Proper Place of Urban Nature

October	Nature Out of Place: Biological Slumming and Urban Ecology
November	Design with Nature: Urban Management and the Ecological City
December	Marginal Nature: Urban Wastelands and the Geography of Nature

### Locations, Day of the Month, Times –

Every 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday (except January 23) – University of Texas Peter O'Donnell Building (POB) Room 2.402 – 1230-2pm  
Every 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday – Austin Water Center for Environmental Research (CER) at Hornsby Bend – Noon-1pm  
Every 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday – Senior Activity Center-Lamar (SAC-Lamar) at 2874 Shoal Crest Ave, South Room – Noon-1pm

## **The CER Lunchtime Lectures 2025 Schedule by Location and Date**

**UT – Every 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday (except January 23) – University of Texas Peter O'Donnell Building (POB) Room 2.402 – 1230-2pm**

**CER – Every 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday - Austin Water Center for Environmental Research (CER) at Hornsby Bend – Noon-1pm**

**SAC – Every 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday – Senior Activity Center-Lamar (SAC-Lamar) at 2874 Shoal Crest Ave, South Room – Noon-1pm**

<b>January Lecture – Urban Lifeworlds: Perspectives on Nature and the City</b>	<b>Jan 9 SAC Jan 13 CER Jan 23 UT</b>
<b>February Lecture - The Urban Wilderness: Wildness and the American City</b>	<b>Feb 6 UT Feb 10 CER Feb 13 SAC</b>
<b>March Lecture - The Urban Pastoral: Parkland and the Garden City</b>	<b>Mar 6 UT Mar 10 CER Mar 13 SAC</b>
<b>April Lecture - The Elemental City: Cycles, Services and Urban Ecology</b>	<b>Apr 3 UT Apr 10 SAC Apr 14 CER</b>
<b>May Lecture - The Nonhuman City: Urban Habitats and Unnatural History</b>	<b>May 1 UT May 8 SAC May 12 CER</b>
<b>June Lecture - The Aquatic City: The Nature of Urban Waterways</b>	<b>Jun 5 UT Jun 9 CER Jun 12 SAC</b>
<b>July Lecture - The Terrestrial City: Greenspace and the Urban Forest</b>	<b>Jul 3 UT Jul 10 SC Jul 14 CER</b>
<b>August Lecture - The Aerial City: Denizens of the Urban Sky</b>	<b>Aug 7 UT Aug 11 CER Aug 14 SAC</b>
<b>September Lecture - Unnatural Encounters: Writing Urban Nature</b>	<b>Sep 4 UT Sep 8 CER Sep 11 SAC</b>
<b>October Lecture - Nature Out of Place: Biological Slumming and Urban Ecology</b>	<b>Oct 2 UT Oct 9 SAC Oct 13 CER</b>
<b>November Lecture - Design with Nature: Urban Management and the Ecological City</b>	<b>Nov 6 UT Nov 10 CER Nov 13 SAC</b>
<b>December Lecture - Marginal Nature: Urban Wastelands and the Geography of Nature</b>	<b>Dec 4 UT Dec 8 CER Dec 11 SAC</b>