

C T O & G

Connecticut Cottages and Gardens

COTTAGESGARDENS.COM | JULY/AUGUST 2016



INNOVATION IN DESIGN AWARDS 2016

Winner
LOUIS FUSCO
LANDSCAPE
ARCHITECTS

Country Attire The picturesque remains of an old apple orchard and the surrounding woodland are what attracted the clients to the property. Wildflower meadows replaced the former manicured lawns. See *Resources*.

LANDSCAPE

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Connecticut Cottages and Gardens

AT THIS WEEKEND HOME, OUTDOOR SPACES TAKE
A WALK ON THE WILD SIDE | BY SUSAN TAMULEVICH



PHOTOGRAPH BY SALVATORE CORSO



THIS LUSCIOUS VERNACULAR MEADOW SITE, adjacent to a mature apple orchard, horse trails and a nature preserve, is actually quite new—completed just two years ago by landscape architect Louis Fusco. The challenge was to create a new house and landscape with clients who were to be weekend residents. “I serve my clients, the land and the architecture,” notes Fusco. With this winning design for a naturalist landscape, entry court and pool, he has done just that.

Fusco kept the lines clean. “It’s all about transitions from the architecture to the wilder areas of the property,” he explains. A sinuous drive bordered with understory trees passes through the woodland edge of the nature preserve. Three new apple trees in the meadow echo the orchard next door. White-barked Himalayan *jacquemontii* birch dot the entry court. Overall, the feeling is refined, but backcountry and relaxed. And however simple things appear, the patio had to be flexible enough for entertaining parties of up to 100 guests.

Two large rain gardens sited within the meadow function as storm-water management; maintenance was a consideration. “We’ve done some elaborate gardens, but not here,” says Fusco. Weekenders have very specific times of the year that they are using the property: early spring and late August are the prime times. Plants reflect the owners’ schedule, with early heliobores in the spring, and for late summer: black-eyed Susans, native grasses, Rose of Sharon and crepe myrtle. Masses of lavender blur the transition into the wild. Easy and relaxed, it’s the ideal weekend home.

To see more, visit cottagesgardens.com/2016ctgidas

Sweet Synergy (OPPOSITE PAGE) Near the house, outdoor spaces became extensions of interior rooms. This terrace was maintained for special gatherings. The sloped edge of the lawn was planted with hydrangea and a perennial blend of white flowers and silvery-leaved plants. Lavender creates a transition between the manicured lawn and the wilds beyond the wall. **Cover Story** (THIS PAGE) A mass planting of evergreen *Carex*, or sedge, creates an easily maintained ground cover. In late summer, black-eyed Susans and coneflowers cavort in the meadow, courtesy of Hardscrabble Farms. See *Resources*.



Innovator 2
LANDSCAPE DESIGN
 ARTEMIS
 LANDSCAPE
 ARCHITECTS,
 INC.



A COASTAL CASUALTY TAKES ON NEW LIFE AFTER SUPERSTORM SANDY

THIS VULNERABLE POINT ON THE LONG ISLAND SOUND SHORELINE suffered mightily under Superstorm Sandy. The good news: The owners already had been planning to remodel. Tara M. Vincenta, of Artemis Landscape Architects, was engaged to design a new pool, spa and landscape.

After Sandy, the house had to be raised above newly established FEMA flood elevations. Vincenta's challenge was to connect the house and new garden back to the natural shore landscape. It was a complicated program in terms of restrictions, which included coastal regulations and lot-size requirements.

Central to the design, a new pool and spa with overflow edges was located on the upper-level decks. An adjoining curved terrace acts as a bulkhead, provides storm protection and extra seating. Below deck, custom raised planters, anchored in, create privacy and allow storm waters to flow beneath them.

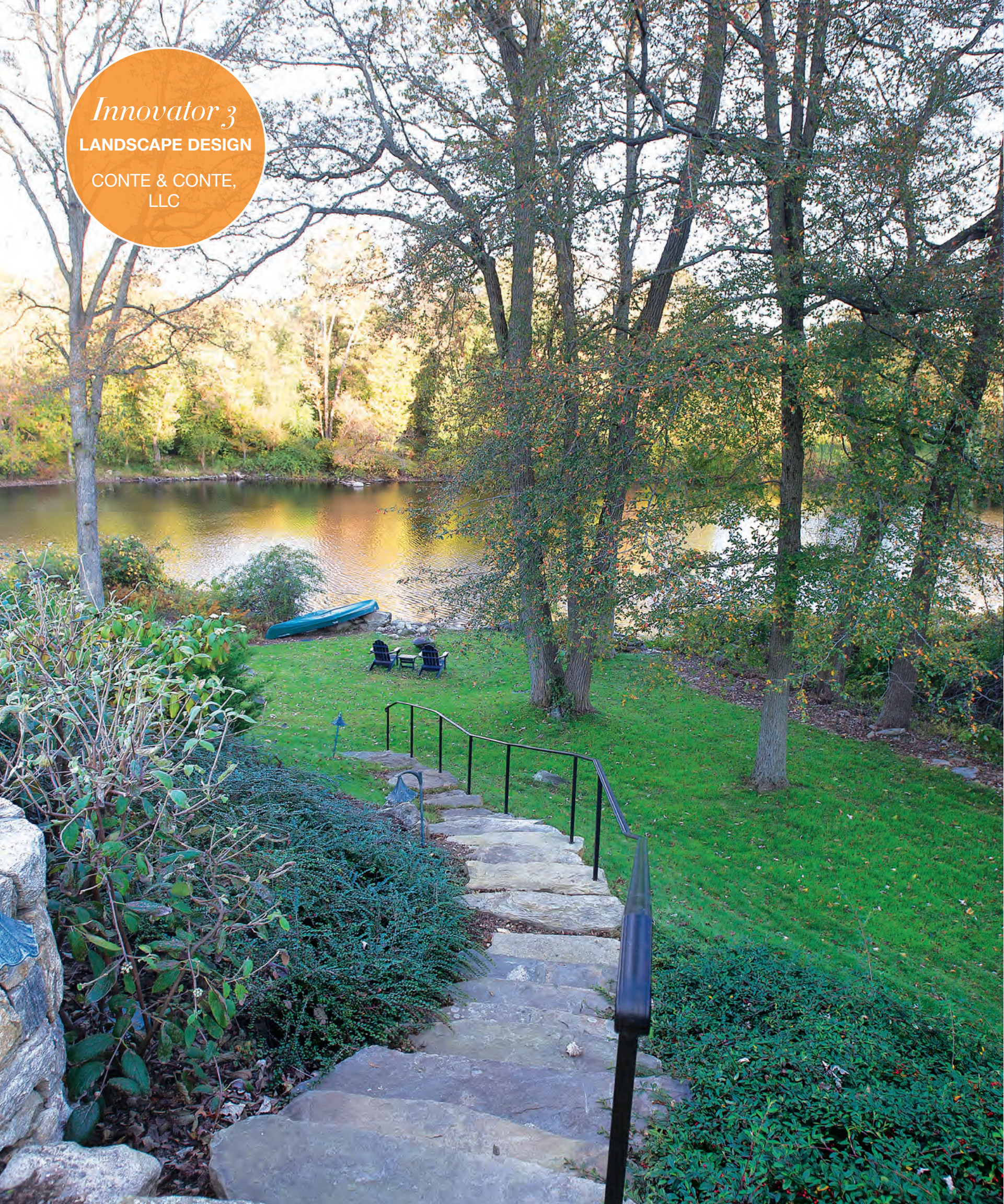
Dune-side, durable custom stainless bars brilliantly emulate dune fencing, enclosing the pool at beach level while maintaining views. By the shore, native materials were used so they wouldn't be replanting every time it flooded. It was completed one year ago, and despite some significant coastal storms, "only minor replantings were needed down by the beach. It's working out terrific," says Vincenta.

✦ To see more, visit cottagesgardens.com/2016ctgidas

Sound Design (CLOCKWISE ACROSS SPREAD FROM ABOVE)
 The infinity-edge pool is by Drakeley Pool Company; chairs and tables are from Janus et Cie. Loll Adirondack chairs through Design Within Reach surround a fire table through Concreteworks. Janus et Cie chairs and ottoman are backed by custom ipe planters through DeepStream Designs and shaded by a Tuuci umbrella. Freddy's Landscape Company did the masonry and the planting; Roberge Associates Coastal Engineers, LLC, specified the dune configuration. See Resources.



Innovator 3
 LANDSCAPE DESIGN
 CONTE & CONTE,
 LLC



A FAMILY RETREAT GROWS INTO A LUXE LAKEFRONT OASIS

HUSBAND AND WIFE JOHN AND KIMBERLY CONTE have been involved in this comfortable lakefront estate since 2006, developing the site from master plan to maintenance. With two complementary businesses—Fairfield House & Garden, a landscape construction company established by John’s father in 1937, and Conte & Conte, a landscape design practice established by John in 1997—the pair has handled the entire process, from soup to nuts. According to designer John R. Conte, managing both the design and the construction enabled him to maintain an unusual degree of control over the entire process.

Early design concerns included siting the new house atop a rise, where one catches the best views, and creating a graceful approach into the property. The clients wanted their children to have a rich home environment, hence requirements that included a swimming pool, golf green, tennis court, vegetable garden and seating area/boat launch beside the lake. Garden rooms were carefully sited for privacy. Setting the pool atop a four-foot retaining wall removed the need for a safety barrier; the surrounding low stone wall allows the spectacular views to be enjoyed.

John R. Conte tackled the project as planner, environmental consultant and artist. But he is most pleased that the property is now a complete and well-loved family retreat.

✦ *To see more, visit cottagesgardens.com/2016ctcoidas*

Lakefront Thrive (CLOCKWISE ACROSS SPREAD FROM OPPOSITE PAGE) Stone from Bedford Stone was used for building steps down to the lake. A pool by Signature Pools is surrounded by ‘blushing bride’ hydrangea, while ornamental grasses add a sense of informality to the borders. A grand set of sod steps ascends from the lake to a terrace of large stepping stones. The path to a custom picket-top wooden gate is lined with hydrangea and tall grasses. See Resources.

