

GEOMANCER

PERMACULTURE



MASTER NATURALIST

Leandro "Nachie" Braga

PRINCIPLES OF ECOLOGICAL DESIGN

NRE 390 - Fall 2018

PAST

Permaculture is a landscape stewardship and design methodology that uses the natural environment and natural processes as the most important elements of the design. Permaculture presents itself as the perfect synthesis between the varied ecological fields explored in the Kentucky Master Naturalist (KYMN) program and our ambition that the program will become a force for the improvement of Kentucky's natural areas. In order to promote these connections, for my KYMN capstone project I am authoring a Cooperative Extension publication about permaculture.

FUTURE

PRESENT

For as long as people have existed on the landscape, we have sought to alter it for our own benefit. Doing so in a way that maximizes the benefits of the natural processes already at work while minimizing inefficiencies in the system is an art form that exists at the intersection of ancient wisdom and cutting-edge science.

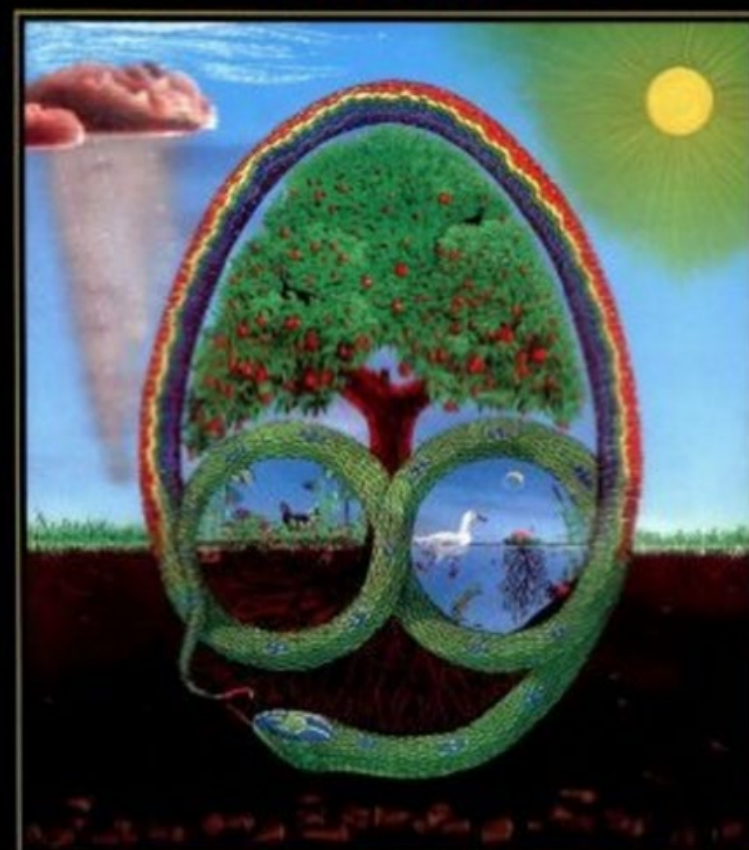


Several developments in recent years point to an opportunity for permaculture ideas to enter into the mainstream. One such example is the growth of interest in agroforestry and non-timber forest products, a field in many ways indistinguishable from permaculture forest gardening.



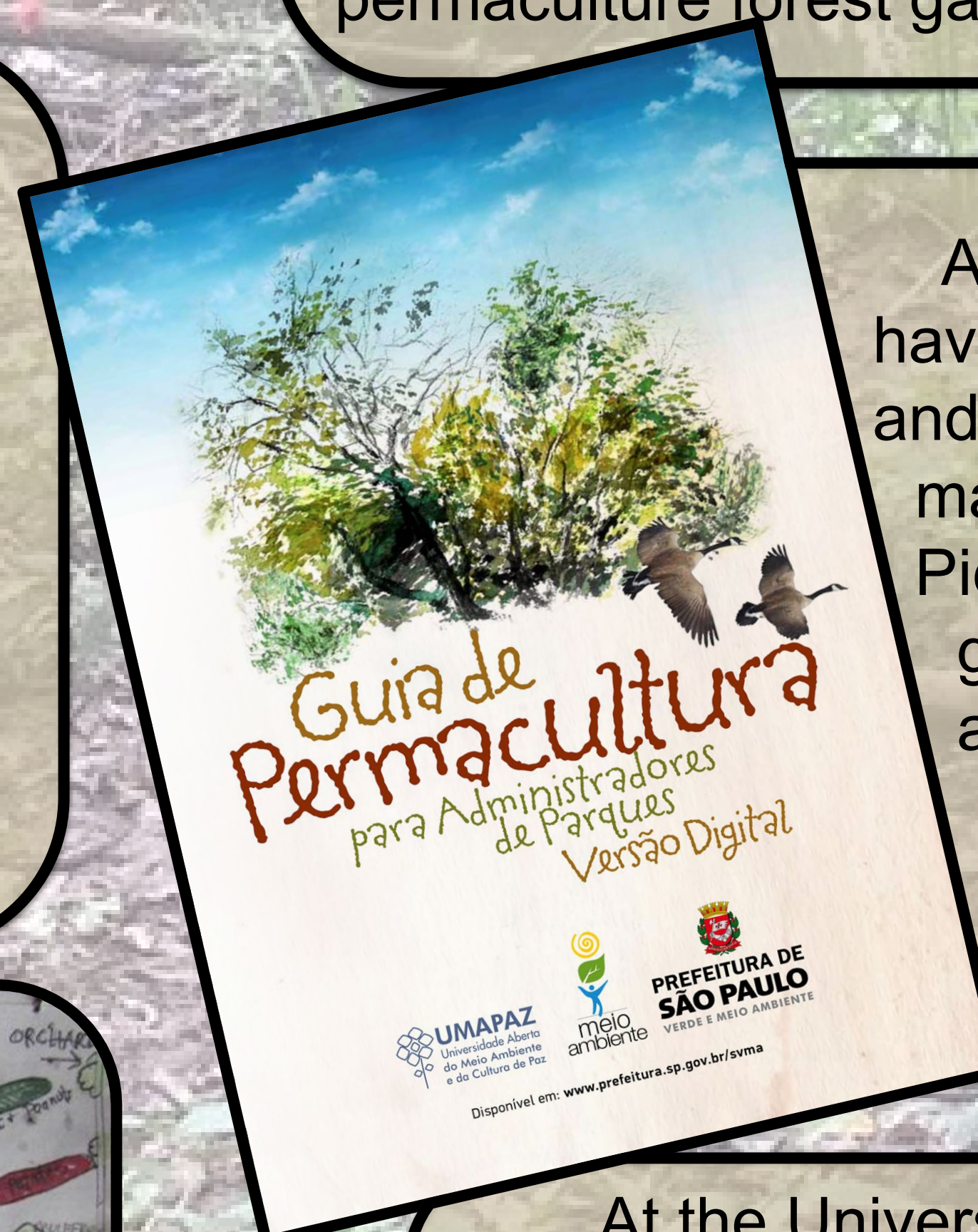
Once the "Introduction to Permaculture" article has been accepted for publication by Extension, it can be used to more effectively promote the ideas of permaculture and increase awareness about these design methodologies.

PERMACULTURE
A Designers' Manual
BILL MOLLISON



The term "permaculture" itself was coined by Australian biologist and researcher Bill Mollison in his 1978 Designer's Manual of the same name. Although Mollison's work focused on the tropical ecosystems of his home country, he laid the groundwork for a global movement that today still uses this textbook as the foundational piece of any beginning permaculture designer's certification course.

Another area where permaculture principles have found fertile ground is in green infrastructure and sustainable development, and the management of urban green spaces in particular. Pictured to the left is an official permaculture guidebook for city parks managers produced by a municipality of over 12 million inhabitants in Brazil. These ideas have been slow to reach the United States, but we can glimpse here a model of what could be achieved.



At the University of Kentucky South Farm, plans are underway to convert an unproductive area of the College of Agriculture's organic farming unit into a permaculture landscape and outdoor learning environment. The timely publication of this extension article contributes to that effort by raising visibility and providing technical guidance.

Permaculture has yet to reach Kentucky in a big way, although there are indications that this is changing. Susana Lein at Salamander Springs Farm in Berea has been utilizing permaculture principles on her land since 2002, and has been a powerful advocate for these ideas and the kind of benefits they can have for regional ecology and organic farming.



At the University of Kentucky, Emeritus Extension professor **Dr. Deborah Hill** has written about agroforestry in the past and done work to promote the ideas of permaculture to land managers throughout Kentucky. It is my great honor that Dr. Hill has agreed to serve as a coauthor in the production of this first extension publication about permaculture.



Because of its ability to bring together so many distinct ecological concerns in a holistic, integrative way that is accessible to anyone with an interest in the natural world, permaculture is well-positioned to act as a vehicle for public education and engagement surrounding environmental issues. It is my hope that more land managers throughout Kentucky will begin to see permaculture as a viable strategy for building the kind of resilient ecosystems we need for the future.



To see what else I'm working on and learn more about the principles of permaculture design, follow me at this Instagram account:



@geomancerpermaculture