

# Local landscape consultant focuses on tree health

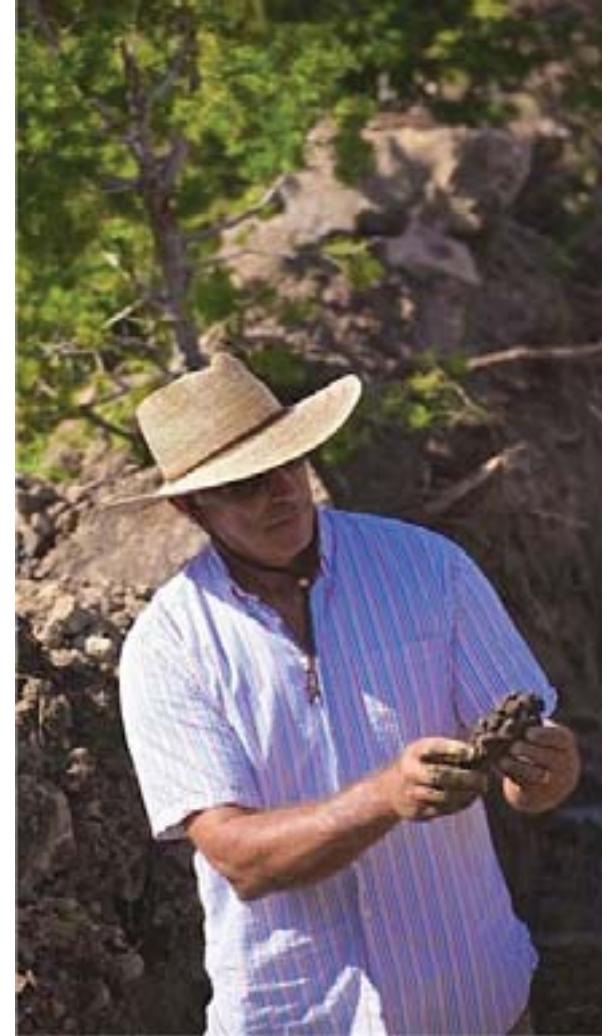
By John T. Miller

The lion's share of longtime Orinda resident Michael Baefsky's work for private clients is tree consulting. "The trees of Lamorinda and the greater Bay Area have a strong hold on me," says Baefsky, who owns the landscape consulting firm, Trees, Bugs, Dirt. "It's satisfying to work with the people here who love their trees as much as I do."

Recently, his work has been addressing concerns about bark beetles devastating the Monterey pine trees and sudden oak death

killing local species of homeowners' oak trees. "People don't realize that the presence of the pests isn't the only part of the problem. They are there and thriving because of other environmental factors, like insufficient water and excessive heat for the pine trees and excessive moisture, like fog or irrigation, in the oaks."

Another statewide problem, especially in many school districts, is ground squirrels undermining sidewalks and other structures. Using poisons to eliminate the pest can lead to secondary and tertiary poisoning, according



Michael Baefsky

Photo provided

to Baefsky. "The question became how can you design a landscape to avoid pests in the first place?" The correct type of fence can prevent or reduce the problem.

Baefsky was recently awarded the California Department of Pesticide Regulation first ever Lifetime Integrated Pest Management Achievement Award. He was given the award for his "ongoing dedication to Integrated Pest Management (IPM) implementation through professional, advisory and teaching endeavors [which] has enriched and will continue to benefit the people of California," according to the DPR.

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