



Season 1 Episode 7 – Pollinators

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Narrator

From the Ground Up, a podcast of the Alabama Extension Home Grants to you, educating you about home landscapes, gardens and home pests

Brian Brown

Pollinators play a vital role in not only your food supply, but also maintaining our rich biodiversity in our ecosystem as well. Today we're joined by Allyson Shabel, Urban Region Extension Agent in North Alabama, and she's here to talk about pollinators in your garden and landscape and how to provide food protection and a healthy environment. So welcome.

Allyson Shabel

Hey, thanks for having me. I'm glad to be here.

Brian Brown

Awesome. Well, we're glad to have you on. And I know you're you're really.

Allyson Shabel

Passionate...

Brian Brown

Passionate.

Allyson Shabel

...about Pollinators.

Brian Brown

Yeah. There you go. Passionate about pollinators. And I you know, I know a little about them, obviously, but I'm not as well versed in pollinators as you. So tell me all you can about pollinators.

Allyson Shabel

Well, pollinators are super important. You know, pollinators can be lots of different things, lots of different species. Brian, You could be a pollinator. People could be pollinators. Yes. Wind can be pollinator. But the majority of our pollination is done by animals, specifically insects. About 80% of our plants are pollinated by insects and other animal species, things like bats, hummingbirds, bees.

Allyson Shabel

Bees are probably the workhorse. Our pollinators, birds, butterflies, flies, moths. Those can all be pollinators. There's lots of different species. Anything that visits a flower can pollinate that flower.

Brian Brown

Typically, when we say pollinators, people think of, Oh, butterflies or bees or. Right. And that's the two big ones, which obviously, you know, they do, I guess, the majority of the work. But, you know, things like bats, who thinks about bats being pollinators?

Allyson Shabel

Well, you know, so many there are many flowers that are only open at night. So flowers have figured out ways to attract specific pollinators by doing specific things. So, for instance, the flowers are open at night, generally are white to attract things like bats and moths to pollinate them. Flies like to pollinate things that have a stinky smell, smell like rotten meat.

Allyson Shabel

So flowers have figured out these ways to attract pollinators that work well for them. So one thing I will say is that pollinators, some of the best pollinators, are those that are hairy things that have a little extra body hair on them, like bees are really great at picking up pollen when they go to a flower accidentally and carrying it from one flower to the next.

Allyson Shabel

So usually the harrier the pollinator, the better it's going to be.

Brian Brown

So how do we create a habitat for pollinators? What's the best practice for us to do? Obviously, planning different kinds of flowers. What else?

Allyson Shabel

Sure. So you think about habitat , habitats are the same for any creature. They need food, shelter and water. So if we can give all three of those things to pollinators, then we can. We can go a far way to keeping them in our garden altogether. So as far as shelter, we'll start there. Everything needs shelter. Pollinators need shelter during the day when they are not busy pollinating, they they tend to rest, They light somewhere and they need somewhere safe.

Allyson Shabel

So somewhere that's close to their food source, but somewhere that's protected. Said something such as? Like an evergreen bush that has lots of small limbs on it. So that insect can light there and not get eaten by a bird. They also need shelter for their young. They need somewhere for their to raise their their young and generally somewhere like think about I think about a butterfly.

Allyson Shabel

They have to have somewhere to leave their chrysalis, somewhere that's kind of got lots of branches around it. So a bird can't find it somewhere, can camouflage in with that shrub. So lots of shrubbery next to your flowering plants is helpful for the pollinators to keep them protected, give them shelter. A lot of pollinators and I probably talk about bees a lot.

Allyson Shabel

Native bees are just about my favorite thing. A lot of native bees, they spend the majority of their life in phases that are not their adult phase. So they need places. They they tend to nest and things like stems, hollow stems. So if you can leave some old brush in your garden, generally a native bee that is there called cavity nesters, about 30% of the native bees are cavity nesters, if you will leave some hollow stems.

Allyson Shabel

So wait till your your flowers die this year. The stems will hollow out next being hollowed out next year. And that's when they would lay their eggs in there and raise their young. So you really need like 18 months to two years of dead stems in your garden to to give them somewhere to lay their eggs. And so that might not be a pretty thing.

Allyson Shabel

I know my neighbors don't want to see old dead plants in my yard that are just I mean, just doesn't look nice all the time. Right? So a way around that is to cut some of those stems, last year's stems, and just lay them make a little brush pile in the back of your yard where nobody sees it and just leave it there for a couple of years.

Allyson Shabel

That gives them those old stems that they need to lay in. And it keeps it out of sight for you and your neighbors. You could also build a habitat for them. For those cavity nesters, you can get a wood block that is not pressure treated. I've used like a six by six, cut into about one foot sections and you drill holes in it If you go to the website Xerxes.com.

Allyson Shabel

They've got a really great step by step guide of how to create those those habitats. Mm hmm. And just follow that and put it out. You will get something in there every year.

Brian Brown

And that's Xerxes with an x.

Allyson Shabel

You're right. Yeah. Yeah. They're seeing that on the other habitat that specifically native bees like there's you know I think I said 30% nesting cavities but 70% nest in the ground. And as gardeners we're always told keep mulch on the ground, keep mulch on the ground. Everything needs to be mulched or covered so the soil doesn't wash away.

Allyson Shabel

But native bees in particular, that 70% that are ground nesters need bare soil. So just finding some patches that you can leave bare soil in your garden, probably not somewhere that's really low that holds water. Some are on the higher side that drains nicely and bees will dig into that and they will make they will lay eggs in there.

Brian Brown

Yeah, I think a lot of people get scared of when they see bees burrowing in the ground. They think it may be something like a yellow jacket or some other harmful bee. Right. And, you know, we'll get calls about it. And what do I spray on these bees? They're you know, they're they're scared they're going to get the tag, but they're probably pretty docile, right?

Allyson Shabel

Yeah, I really like to watch them. You know, you mentioned wasps. There's a lot of native wasps that will build their nests in holes as well. And they're not harmful. You know, you think about a yellow jacket, but there's plenty of other native wasps and bees that nest in the ground that they don't do any damage at all as far as.

Allyson Shabel

So that's food. I mean, that's shelter, right? Mm hmm. But you also need to provide water for your bees and your native pollinators. Any

sort of pollinator needs a water source. So if you are putting a water source in your garden, it would be best in a sunny location. That they somehow, the way that the rays reflect off the water makes it more visible.

Allyson Shabel

If it's in the sun as opposed to in the shade. So try to put your water location in a sunny spot, or at least somewhere with afternoon sun.

Brian Brown

Just any source of water like either a birdbath... Will a cup of water do?

Allyson Shabel

Yeah. You know, like even the trays that you put under pots, we all know those trees and I know that we say don't leave them under pots because they hold too much water where you can actually just take those and set them in your garden and fill those with water. If you'll change that water out about every three days, you won't have mosquitoes.

Allyson Shabel

They also just like puddles of water. They like to get minerals out of puddles from the mud beside the puddles. So any sort of water is good as long. The only thing that I would say is make sure that there's no pesticide aids in those waters or coming close to those waters. That that's the only concern.

Brian Brown

I think a lot of people, you know, they'll try to get rid of mosquitoes, like you said. So changing the water is pretty important. And, you know, anytime somebody has a mosquito problem, we'll tell them, you know, by the little donut dunks that you can put in water, but that has Bt in it. So that can kill a pollinator, right?

Brian Brown

Or does it?

Allyson Shabel

I think it's okay.

Brian Brown

Okay.

Allyson Shabel

It's okay for bees.

Brian Brown

Okay.

Allyson Shabel

For sure. That would be something that would be good to check. Yeah. And maybe we should check that out. But really, if you just change out that water every three days, and generally if you've got it in the faucet, it's going to be dried out in three days anyway, especially in the summertime. So that may not even be a concern long term.

Brian Brown

So one of the habitats I saw on one of our tours that we did as a as a team was the little houses that you can build that probably may be a little bit more attractive if you didn't want to have, you know, just some brush laying around. And they use bamboo, right? Just kind of stack bamboo on top of each other.

Brian Brown

Yeah, in a little house.

Allyson Shabel

That's one way to do it. And I think the idea behind bamboo is that bamboo is all different sizes. So you would get all different pollinators attracted to that if you know exactly what sort of pollinator you want to try to attract like a specifically a native bee, you can gauge the size whole toward that specific bee and create, you know, the right size for that bee.

Allyson Shabel

But if you just kind of want to put one out there that's general and just kind of see what you get, kind of like vision for bees, then the the bamboo would be great. But they do need to be all of those tubes need to be about six inches long. And native bees prefer to have the back of the tube solid.

Allyson Shabel

So those are the two things that I would say is six inches long with the back solid. And then another thing that people do that's very helpful because, you know, we think about diseases. Diseases are in everything plants, insects, people, everything has diseases. And to

reduce the disease potential, if you take paper and line those tubes, just, just, just wrap it around and make a little tube and stick it in that bamboo and change that out every year, then you go a long way to preventing these diseases from one year to the next.

Brian Brown

That's a really good tip. Yeah, I'm not that familiar with that kind of stuff. I just, you know, we had seen that pollinator house that was built and I thought that was kind of neat for people that want to attract pollinators. So, you know, that's kind of more the unconventional, which I guess there's a lot of things that will attract bees, like our pollinators like that.

Brian Brown

But plants obviously, those are the most you know, that's what they're going toward. What kind of plants out there should people be planning to attract more pollinators? I know there's a there's a huge list of them, and I have my list of favorites. So some of your favorites.

Allyson Shabel

Okay. But then you tell me your favorites, too, because I like plants.

Brian Brown

Well, you know, I have a I have a huge list of them, but like, I like Virtex, our lilac chase tree, you know, that's a that's a really good one. It attracts a lot of bees.

Allyson Shabel

Bumblebees especially.

Brian Brown

Yeah, I really like that tree. It's tough and it's I think it's really underused. A lot of people don't even know what it is. It's a if you don't know what it is, it's a smaller tree. It stays, you know, within 20 feet, I would say. And it has a purple spike at the top. Really loves the heat.

Brian Brown

When it gets hot. It's just it's a great tree for that. So that's one of my one of my favorites that people don't really think about putting in their landscape, you know, of Echinacea. I love that. Yeah. So that's a couple of mine.

Allyson Shabel

So yeah, and you know, both of those, um, have things that are desirable for the bees specifically or for the pollinators, specifically. The fact that both of those flowers are cluster flowers. So the insect can sit on that flower as a compound flower and find lots of little flowers inside of that to sip from. So it is kind of like a buffet, you know.

Allyson Shabel

Yeah, that bee or that butterfly can go to that Vitex and sit there and without moving around all over the place and wasting energy, it can sip from lots of small flowers at one time. So they really like that. Those, those flowers that are compound flowers, it's one flower that's made up of a lot of smaller flowers. So your vertex is one another really common flower that's compound would be like a lantana.

Allyson Shabel

That's one that pretty much everybody knows is one big flower made up of a lot of smaller flowers and then composite flowers. So flowers that are they have petals on the outside and a big disk on the inside. And that's another one that's just a bunch of flowers all jammed together. They're really tiny. So it just looks like one flower to us, to the bee.

Allyson Shabel

It looks like a bunch of smaller flowers. And it's just a good way to get the maximum amount of food with the minimum amount of energy. So any sort of flower that a bull flower or a compound flower is really good. Another thing to look for is flowers that aren't hybridized. So there's old fashioned heirlooms. A lot of times when we breed flowers and I know you're you're a plant person too, and so am I.

Allyson Shabel

And so I look through magazines and I see all these plants that have, you know, like an extra cool variation or they've, you know, got something really neat about them that the heirloom doesn't have. And I kind of like to collect those myself, but those in the process of breeding for whatever trait that they are looking for, that extra large flower or that really cool foliage, sometimes they breed out the nectar and the pollen production of that plant.

Allyson Shabel

So really sticking to heirloom plants is important. And then the other kind of plant or flower that you should stay away from is something that's got double petals. So think about a rose. Like a knock out rose is an easy one, right? We all know that. And that one, if a pollinator

landed on it, they would have a really hard time finding their way down to where the pollen and nectar is because there's so many petals.

Allyson Shabel

So if you stick with single flowers, those those pollinators are going to be better off, easier to get to that nectar.

Brian Brown

So. So what are your favorites, right? Or can you narrow that list down? Yeah, I.

Allyson Shabel

Can't. Well, so Echinacea, you mentioned that purple cone flower. I've got that blooming in my yard. And I really like it because number one, it blooms for a long time. Yeah, it is a native plant. Any sort of native plant is going to be a better fit for our native pollinators. So that's another thing to look for is native plants that purple can flower is always got some sort of a native pollinator on it.

Allyson Shabel

In my landscape they bloom for a good long time and then over the winter, the the birds always show up to eat the seeds, which is I know they're not pollinators in this sense, but it's another reason that I really like that that purple grown flower is also very easy to grow kind of seeds out. Well, another one that I've got in my landscape that have been super happy with is and it was the perennial plant of the year a couple of years back.

Allyson Shabel

It's called Calamintha. Mm hmm. That's the genus Calamintha. And I know it's got the word "mint" in it, which probably is scary to some people because what do you think when you think, man?

Brian Brown

Yeah, it is. It takes over ever. Yeah.

Allyson Shabel

Right. Well this doesn't this so far is just a small clumping plant. But from dawn to dusk there is a buzz around that plant. You know, something is on that plant and it will bloom, pun intended. It is a love, and it will bloom until fall. Yeah, I've been really happy with that.

Brian Brown

So is it in the mint family or what's the common name or do you know or.

Allyson Shabel

I need to look that up. Yeah, I've looked at it beforehand, but it's it's just been a spectacular pollinator plant and it's fairly drought tolerant in the full sun. I there doesn't require any deadheading. It's just a really easy plant to plant and let go. Probably my third favorite pollinator plant is Mountain Mint and once again it's got the word "mint".

Allyson Shabel

It's a little scary, but it's a native it's a native plant that doesn't really spread like mint. It, it, it does spread, but not nearly is not going.

Brian Brown

To take.

Allyson Shabel

Over. Right. That spearmint or something. But it gets about three feet tall and it's got a silver flower on it. And that also is always covered in some sort of pollinator and it blooms for the majority of the summer.

Brian Brown

Yeah. All right. So any, any other plants that you really love that are something that maybe is underutilized that people need to really consider.

Allyson Shabel

Sure. Well, I think you could another good you know when you're thinking about food sources, another good thing to consider is the season in which those food sources are are flowering. Right. Nature has spring covered like we don't we don't need to like add extra plants for spring because there's gobs of plants blooming in the spring. But as we get closer to fall so that late summer and into fall, both of those seasons, if you just think about your own landscape, things sort of it dries up, things sort of start blooming, blooming slows because it's so dry.

Allyson Shabel

What nectar is there is usually less because it's so dry out. So really thinking about planting first late summer and fall is a really good idea. That's what the pollinators would probably most appreciate. That extra food source. So things like Asters are really great. They bloom late season all the way up into frost and in my garden. Sometimes after Frost I've still got Asters blooming Salvia is another good one that blooms really late into the season and I've seen I've got honeybees at my house and they are all over that salvia in the late late summer.

Allyson Shabel

So really think about trying to provide food sources for later in the season. Don't worry about spring. That's covered.

Brian Brown

So speaking of honeybees, you know, there's a lot of insects that we have out there that are that can cause harm to our plants, one in particular I'm thinking of is Japanese beetles. You know, people have a huge I mean, we have just been inundated with Japanese beetles. We have every year. It's just kind of a fact of life that we have them now.

Brian Brown

So how can we treat those type insects without harming our pollinators, or is there anything that's safe, chemical wise that we can spray?

Allyson Shabel

Sure, that's a good question. One good thing to link here would be Alabama Extension has a publication called Protecting Pollinators in Urban Areas, and it's got a list on the back of it of the things that are safe to use for pollinators safer and the things that are not safe at all. So that would be a really good thing to link or to look up to.

Allyson Shabel

So you've got that list on hand, but there are some things that you can do if you've got Japanese beetles, like I have Japanese beetles in my yard. Yes. Yeah. And you know, the easiest thing to do and it's super safe and I do it in my yard is I've got beetles. And so I just take a little cup and I put some water in it and then I just put a squirt of soap in it, you know, Dawn® dish, soap, whatever.

Allyson Shabel

And then I take it out there and I just knock those bugs right down in there. There's no chemical getting on. Anything that could hurt a

pollinator is only getting those bugs that I want to kill. You knock them in there, and they drowned in that soapy water. So that's one thing that's super easy. It also helps you spend time in your landscape.

Allyson Shabel

You know, you're out there knocking off those Japanese beetles or whatever bug and it's it's giving you time in your yard to see what is lovely to look at or what is a problem. So that's one thing you can do.

Brian Brown

But don't spray your plants with with the dish soap.

Allyson Shabel

No, no, no, no. Not just for your plants with a dish soap. Just a nice little cup.

Brian Brown

That rumors out there. It's all over social media, so please don't do that. Right.

Allyson Shabel

Right. So other things that you can do, if you've got insects that you really have got to treat are first the time that you spray is important. So we always say that pollinators work banker's hours 8 to 5. They go to bed at night when the sun goes down and then you don't see them till the next morning.

Allyson Shabel

So if you need to spray something, we would recommend that you spray in the evening around sundown. And that's that's fairly safe for your pollinators. Another thing that you can do is if you know, you've got something that needs spraying and you know, it's got flowers on it, you can cut those flowers off or mow the flowers off, you know, if it's in your lawn, you need to spray something on your lawn, mow the flowers off, and then the pollinators are going for flowers.

Allyson Shabel

If there's no flowers there, there's probably not going to be any pollinators there. Right. So that that will keep the pollinators away while you treat. That's another thing to do.

Brian Brown

Yeah. I listen to something the other day and he mentioned, you know, Clover, you know, if you're if you're going to have to spray for something, especially Japanese beetles, you know, treating them at the right time is essential. You got to treat them at the right stage of development. If you have any kind of grubs in your lawn, just, you know, just to top the the flowers off the right, that's like, oh, that makes sense.

Allyson Shabel

Right? Right. It's a simple thing that yeah, I think people didn't think don't really think about it. Yeah. And it works. Yeah. Take away the food source and the pollinator will not be there and it'll grow back.

Brian Brown

Yeah.

Allyson Shabel

And that's another, you know, that's another. You talked about food sources. That's another great source for pollinators is those lawn weeds, as we call them. You know, so many people have just a straight Bermuda lawn or a straight is always a lawn. And if you can incorporate some clover in there or spring beauty or violets, azaleas, any of those things are really great for pollinators.

Brian Brown

So we kind of talked a little bit about pollinators in general, and especially landscape plants. But what about in our gardens? Same thing for gardens. Do we need to plant these flowers around our garden or what can we do to attract more when we're having a garden?

Allyson Shabel

Yeah, just as many flowering plants as you can that will attract pollinators and it will get the pollinators to stay in your landscape full time. You know, think about butterflies are considered a pollinator, although they're probably not the strongest of pollinators. The other thing that you can do for those is to plant those habitat plants or the food sources for caterpillars.

Allyson Shabel

So things like milkweed, anything in that carrot, family, fennel, dill, carrots, parsley, any of those are really great for swallowtail caterpillars as well. So adding the the caterpillar food sources into your landscape, incorporating those will be helpful, making sure you've got some pollinator habitat nearby those flowering plants. My landscape I've got Don't judge me.

Brian Brown

No judgement.

Allyson Shabel

They were there when I moved in, but I've got nandinas.

Brian Brown

Oh yeah.

Allyson Shabel

And they're the non flowering kind. It's just a little shrub of foliage that's just don't judge me.

Brian Brown

But I hear.

Allyson Shabel

You. They are actually they're right next to my flowering plants and it provides a place for butterflies and other pollinators to light and be protected. Um, I was in my landscape last year and I walked by one of my nandinas and I knocked it with my foot and like five butterflies flew out. So, you know, they were really do use that kind of thing.

Brian Brown

So they do serve a purpose.

Allyson Shabel

Small Yeah, small. And there would still be better points for that. Yeah. They deserve a purpose. Yeah.

Brian Brown

Well we have a couple of nandina haters in here, so I get it. But yeah, they, they, you know, pay attention. You know, when you're walking out in your landscape, you know, pay attention to what's out there and and see if you can see anything crawling on. You know not all bugs are bad right? There's good bugs and bad bug.

Allyson Shabel

You know, you think about the variety of pollinators, especially with specifically native bees. There's 4000 species of native bees in the United States. 4000?

Brian Brown

That's insane.

Allyson Shabel

That's huge. Yeah. And they all look different. You know, some are bigger than your thumb. Some are, you know, a quarter of an inch. Yeah. I mean, they're all different colors. There's some that are metallic green. Those are probably my favorite. There's metallic blue bees. I mean, there's just a wide variety of colors and shapes and sizes. Nature's really cool.

Brian Brown

So what about some pollinators that can be harmful or nuisance pollinators?

Allyson Shabel

Okay, The pollinators we love to hate, right?

Brian Brown

Yeah. Yeah.

Allyson Shabel

So there's one that always comes up, and that is the carpenter bee.

Brian Brown

Oh, yeah.

Allyson Shabel

I mean.

Brian Brown

I get a lot of calls about that one, Right?

Allyson Shabel

I understand. I totally understand. Because this is your your structure. You have paid good money for this structure and something

is boring holes in it. Carpenter bees are really great pollinators, you know? Yeah, but when they are digging galleries into your wood, that's problematic. And so that's probably the one that we get the most calls on about how to prevent.

Allyson Shabel

And I totally understand that. I think the best way the least toxic way is to use one of those carpenter bee traps. You know what I'm talking about? It's got a square of wood at the bottom and a jar on top and those are actually pretty good at attracting those carpenter bees. And it really only gets those carpenter bees.

Brian Brown

Yeah, there's nothing inside of it, right?

Allyson Shabel

You know, it's just a block of wood in a glass jar.

Brian Brown

They just love to be attracted to wood, so.

Allyson Shabel

Right. And if you'll put them because carpenter bees come back to the same location from year to year and the the eggs they lay their babies come back to that same spot as well a lot of times. And so if you'll put it where you're seeing the damage, then you'll get more bees that way, you'll get more carpenter bees in that trap.

Brian Brown

That's a that's a good tip because, you know, we get tons of calls about what I do about carpenter bees, and they are very much a nuisance and Right. I would say of the pollinators, that's probably the number one thing, is, you know what I do, You know, you can also paint if it's if it's something you can do, just you can paint a fence or something.

Brian Brown

And that will that will keep them out, too.

Allyson Shabel

So they're difficult to control, though.

Brian Brown

Yeah, they are. So they are.

Allyson Shabel

But yeah, and you probably know this, but the the bumblebee and the carpenter bee, they do a strange sort of pollination called buzz pollination. And so they don't I mean, they, they are hairy and they do get some pollen on them and transfer for women flower to the other. But they sit there and you can hear the carpenter bees.

Allyson Shabel

Just buzz, buzz, buzz, buzz. And that's their way of pollinating a lot of plants. Things like tomatoes specifically use that buzz pollination to to pollinate the tomato.

Brian Brown

It's interesting. So they they get up next to the male part and they kind of shake the pollen off.

Allyson Shabel

Yeah, they just they just vibrate. Yeah. Their whole bodies just vibrate and it shakes because, you know, some pollen is extra sticky and so that shakes it loose.

Brian Brown

Yeah, that's interesting. Yeah. Well, is there anything else on pollinators?

Allyson Shabel

I have one really cool thing that I can share with you. Sure. And this is something that I learned just a couple of years ago, but I think is really cool is that we can't see it. But, you know, uh, pollinate is see a different range than we do. They can see ultraviolet. And one really cool thing to do, if you got some extra time is just to Google nectar guides of flowers.

Allyson Shabel

So a lot of flowers. You know, we just see our, our normal range. But some flowers have specific little guides that guide the pollinator to where the nectar is. They're called nectar guides and they're in that UV spectrum. And so if you just Google it, you can see some really interesting nectar guides on flowers. You know, one specific one is dandelion, right?

Allyson Shabel

What does a dandelion look like?

Brian Brown

Which part? The flower. Well, the flower. Yeah, I'm thinking of the spent... Oh, well, you know, that's what people think of when you think dandelion, you know. But they're you know, the little yellow flowers.

Allyson Shabel

Are yellow flower. Yeah, but when a bee looks at it, they see like a bluish color on the inside the center of that flower or has these U.V. nectar guides in there that are a different color. And so they follow that different color and it guides them right to the nectar. Wow, That interesting.

Brian Brown

That's really interesting.

Allyson Shabel

A lot of flowers have them and we can't see them. It's just a neat thing.

Brian Brown

So it's not necessarily what the petals are, Right?

Allyson Shabel

Sometimes you can see it. We can see it on the pedals. Sometimes you'll see a streak going towards the center, but sometimes it's in that UV spectrum that we can't see. Wow. Really neat.

Brian Brown

That is really neat.

Allyson Shabel

Nature's cool.

Brian Brown

Yeah. Well, Alison, thank you for being with me today, talking about pollinators. So if you need more information, there's plenty of information on our Web site, ACES.EDU. We also have programs

throughout the year on different programs. We also have a bee symposium every year. You want to talk about that real quick?

Allyson Shabel

Sure. If you are into honeybees, but I am also into honeybees. We have a Alabama Extension beekeeping symposium. It's the first weekend in February every year. Even if you're just interested in bees and don't have bees, it's a really cool thing to come and sit in on. It's two days worth of classes. Excuse me. It's one day worth of classes.

Allyson Shabel

Yeah, all on beekeeping. And there's a big vendor floor with lots of vendors. You can buy all sorts of bee related things as well. And then we also have a beekeeping newsletter which features every month from the Auburn Bee Lab, a pollinator of the month. And you can learn about a new strange bee that you probably didn't even know existed.

Allyson Shabel

Wow, that's cool. You could register for that on our website as well.

Brian Brown

Awesome. Well, thank you for being with us and hopefully you will take some of these practices and incorporate them into your your lawn, your landscape or your garden. And hopefully you can track more pollinators. Thanks again. Thank you.

Brian Brown

From the ground up is a production of the Alabama Cooperative Extension System.