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Moth Project to Attract 'Second-Shift Pollinators' on Campus

SEPTEMBER 4, 2014



Weeklong events to highlight art, biology and sustainability

[Georgia Southern University](#) will host "The Moth Project" at various locations on campus each evening from 7 p.m. until midnight beginning Thursday, Sept. 11 through Sept. 17. The project, presented by PlantBot Genetics, focuses on educating the public about the decline of pollinator populations and the need to preserve the environment while seeking alternative solutions for pollination.

"Earth's primary pollinator, the honeybee, is in rapid decline and scientists don't know exactly why," said Georgia Southern Professor Jeff Schumki. "Through "The Moth Project," PlantBot Genetics asks 'what if we had to rely on second-shift pollinators, such as moths, to pollinate our food and flowers?'"

PlantBot Genetics, a collaboration of professors from Georgia Southern and Auburn University, received a grant from [Georgia Southern University's Center for Sustainability's](#), Sustainability Free Project Grant: Student Sustainability Fees at work!, to study moths and educate the public.

"This visually stunning project acts as the stage for a public art experience, cross-pollinating various disciplines, and further expanding an understanding of and appreciation for moths and other nighttime pollinators that are vital to the area," said Schmuki.

During the demonstration, the ArtLab, an 18-foot solar-powered trailer that houses a mobile art space, will project videos of black-lights to attract moths, other nighttime pollinators and guests. The Moth Project's lights and projections are completely off-grid and solar-powered, freeing it from the tether of an electrical outlet.

The presentation of, fluttering lights are created to attract insects to help educate attendees on the importance of ecologically responsible power sources that provide a cleaner and healthier environment for humans, insects and plants.

Reflective light tents will be displayed at the [Garden of the Coastal Plain](#) on Thursday, Sept. 11, Sweetheart Circle on Friday, Sept. 12, parking lot 33 near the Biological Sciences building on Monday, Sept. 15, the outdoor classroom of the Biological Sciences building on Tuesday, Sept. 16 and the Russell Union Rotunda Wednesday, Sept. 17.

"We expect the demonstration at the Garden of the Coastal Plain to attract the largest and most diverse array of insects," said Schumki.

The University's [College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences](#) will feature the project in a Great Minds lecture on Monday, Sept. 15 at 7 p.m. The lecture will take place in the Biological Sciences building room 1115 and is free and open to the public.

PlantBot Genetics will compile the Moth Project findings into a free pollinator field guide to catalog the moths and other insects that it identifies. The field guide will also contain information on the importance of pollinators and resources for those curious about backyard naturalism.

The Moth Project will return to the city of Statesboro on Saturday, October 4, during GreenFest, from 9 a.m. – 1 p.m. on the Bulloch County Courthouse lawn.

For more information on The Moth Project visit class.georgiasouthern.edu.