

Planting for Biodiversity:

Before we get started on the substance of this webinar which is titled: **Planting for Biodiversity**, I want to do a quick recap of what we discussed in the last webinar I put together which was “**Natives 201**”. I tried to drive home the importance of planting Native plants. The basic key points I made were:

- The majority of native plants serve as **host plants** to our local insect populations. 90% of these insects have evolved with specific plant material and rely on them to complete their lifecycles.
- These insects contribute to the **diets of our local birds** and other wildlife groups.
- The berries, nuts and seeds that Native Plants produce are also important **food sources for local wildlife**, especially in the fall and winter months.
- These Native Plant Communities provide **shelter and habitat** for our local wildlife and insect populations
- They **build our soils** with their leaf litter
- They provide sources of **pollen and nectar** for our pollinators

I spoke quite a bit on the negative impact that Non-native plants, and specifically Invasive Non-Native plants, have had on our environment and local ecosystems, as well as introduced pests and diseases.

And I also presented the idea of seeing planting more natives in your garden as a way of contributing to your yard’s healthy diet.

Natives 201 was the **WHY** we should plant more NATIVES. Today we will discuss **WHAT** to plant, **WHO** are all the creatures we need to be supporting and **real steps** we can take to help our gardens be more accommodating for biodiversity.

So what Exactly does Biodiversity mean?

- Biodiversity is short for “Biological Diversity” – the basic definition is the variety of life on Earth. It’s genes, species, populations and ecosystems.

- Within each and every ecosystem, is a complex community of species. It is composed of insects, mammals, vegetation, fungi, and microbes. The best and healthiest ecosystems are one's that are rich in biological diversity, where each species has a role and a function and **together**, they make the whole successful. **So**, the more diversity of species within an ecosystem, the better it functions. As you learn about these interactions and relationships, you will be a first-hand witness to just how marvelous and genius nature truly is and you will want to help preserve this beautiful Biodiversity.

So let's go deeper into these components of Biodiversity in our own backyards:

First UP: PLANTS.

Plants are the foundation. Building biodiversity on our properties must start with plant material. What we plant into our landscapes can either help the ecosystem, do nothing for it, or negatively affect it. That's the raw way to look at it. **But** knowing that truth and knowing **WHAT** to plant and **WHERE** to start can be overwhelming, even paralyzing.

I won't possibly be able to tell you every single plant option that exists, but I want to share a few with you that are dynamic players in biodiversity. Plants that serve as host plants, shelter for wildlife, pollen sources, and true team players in the native world.

- **Let's start with my top 10 selection of CANOPY TREES:**

Most Canopy trees offer cavity and platform nesting opportunities for birds and squirrels. They also drastically increase the area of your yard that supports biodiversity by taking your property into the air. Though trees take a long time to mature, the investment you make in the future of biodiversity on your property should begin with trees. Buying and planting a tree is a big decision and that decision is worth a little extra consideration. Consider what already exists on your property, consider what your neighbors have on theirs, and introduce a different tree. The more diversity, the better! As I introduce each plant, I will also follow with the number of Lepidoptera species (which means moth and caterpillar species) the tree is a host to.

- 1. *Acer rubrum* - Red Maple - Host to 229 Lepidoptera Species**
 - The Red Maple is certainly a common request in the industry, and I once looked down on it because of its over use. I don't feel that way anymore. With a number like 229, it is a great team player in the world of biodiversity and an excellent canopy tree choice. Birds and squirrels also consume their helicopter-like seed pods, also known as Samaras. Another important thing to note, is their blooms are an important food source for some of our year-round birds. The End of Winter can be a brutal time for these friends, but the blooms offer some much-needed nutrition when options are limited during this time.
- 2. *Betula nigra* - River Birch**
 - I couldn't get an exact total for our regional count, but nationwide the *Betula* genus supports **413** Lepidoptera species, which is one of the highest numbers and a good reason to find a home for one of these on your property if you have a spot for one. They naturally grow in areas with consistent moisture so an area that collects water will work great.
- 3. *Carya* - Hickory - 226 Lepidoptera Species**
 - There are many hickory species that are native to our region. There is the Pignut, Mockernut, Shellbark, Pecan, Butternut and my personal favorite, Shagbark. These trees take many, and I mean MANY years to produce nuts. The Shagbark Hickory can take one of the longest periods of development, totaling up to sometimes 40 years to produce nuts, but when they can live for 200-300 years, that seems reasonable. They do not live by our timelines, but planting hickory will provide future wildlife mammals with a food source they will love.
- 4. *Celtis occidentalis* - Common Hackberry - 49 Lepidoptera Species**
 - The number of species it supports is lower, **BUT** you have to also consider its other contributions. If you have a hackberry, you are aware of the downside of having these on your property. Woolly Aphids that take up residence in these trees, create sooty mold that can coat surfaces and plant material underneath. I am not advocating you plant these prolifically, but if you have some on your property try to bear with them.

Their berries are an incredible food source for our birds and wildlife.

5. Di-os-py-ros virginiana - American Persimmon - 50 Lepidoptera Species

- This is a fantastic team player tree. Fruit is consumed by many birds and animals. Nurseries do not label these trees male or female but they are separate plants. You will need a male persimmon around if you want to have fruit producing female trees. Luckily, these trees are relatively common and there may be some in a neighbor's yard nearby.

6. Fagus grandifolia - American Beech - 119 Lepidoptera Species

- These trees support tons of life in the woodland forest. The beechnuts are a good source for small mammals, turkey, nuthatches, crows, and bluejays. And with age, the bark of this tree is quite attractive.

7. Juglans nigra - Black Walnut...now hear me out...131 Lepidoptera Species

- Like the Hackberry, this is certainly a tree that has heavily fallen out of favor in the ornamental horticulture world. BUT, if you have one, try to see it for its virtues too. Squirrels go bananas for this nut and it is an important food source for them. Plus, with 131 species that it supports, it is worth keeping around.

8. Prunus serotina - Black Cherry - 320 Lepidoptera Species

- Fruit is a favorite for birds, as well as turkey and small animals. The flowers are an excellent food source for pollinators in the spring.
- The Prunus genus are notorious for attracting Eastern Tent Caterpillars. Some might consider this a negative, but tent caterpillars are an incredibly important food source for many bird species.

9. Quercus as a Genus - also known as Oak - 432 Lepidoptera Species

- There are many oaks to choose from. White oak, Northern Red Oak, Shumard Oak, Swamp White Oak, Scarlet Oak, Bur Oak, and Nuttall oak are some of the many oaks that will grow in Tennessee. Oak as a genus are excellent food sources for wildlife, they provide shelter and habitat for many birds and

along with the many caterpillars they host, they also support a large variety of other insect life too.

10. *Tilia americana* - Basswood/American Linden - 128 Lepidoptera Species

- Basswood is a favorite among our native bees and to the European honey bee. Other pollinating insects flock to this flower as well and seeds are a food source for birds and squirrels.

Top 10 Understory or Small Trees

And if anyone has any questions or comments, feel free as we go along.

And also, if you are taking notes, remember this will be recorded and posted on our website and youtube page if you need to watch again with a pause button.

1. *Amelanchier* - Serviceberry - 80 Lepidoptera Species

- Within this group there are three native species that we can grow here. Downy, Shadblow and Allegheny. All of these species provide berries for our birds in early summer and are a great pollen source for native bees.

2. *Asimina triloba* - Paw Paw - 13 Lepidoptera Species

- This tree is not high on the caterpillar supporting chart, but sometimes the number isn't the whole picture of its worth. The paw paw is the only host plant for the Zebra Swallowtail, so their coexistence is essential. Paw Paws create a large fruit that is a favorite of many local wildlife species, and we can eat it too.

3. *Cercis canadensis* - Eastern Redbud - 24 Lepidoptera Species

- This tree can also seem like a common, boring option but it's function in our ecosystem is incredibly important. It is one of the first blooms available to our early season native bees. It also offers nesting opportunities for birds.

4. *Cornus florida* - Flowering Dogwood - 92 Lepidoptera Species

- Birds, squirrels, chipmunks and other animals consume the fruit of the dogwood and, like the redbud, they make a good nesting tree for birds.

5. *Corylus americana* - American Hazelnut - 131 Lepidoptera Species

- This is a less common option. We actually have a few booked to come in this spring and I am quite excited about it. Nuts are consumed by squirrels, birds, other small animals and Humans too!
- 6. The *Craetagus* species - Hawthorn - 122 Lepidoptera Species**
- Washington Hawthorn and Winter King hawthorn are the two types we bring into Bates. They make great nesting trees and the fruit is desirable for many different types of bird species.
- 7. *Rhamnus caroliniana* - Carolina Buckthorn - 10 Lepidoptera Species**
- This is another less known tree I am determined to bring into popularity. Not to be confused with Common Buckthorn, which is not native. Carolina Buckthorn produces berries for the birds, attracts bees, butterflies and other pollinators and is a great small tree for a small yard., only maturing to 15 feet.
- 8. *Magnolia virginiana* - Sweetbay Magnolia**
- I don't have an exact total of Lepidoptera species it supports, but it is a host for the Spicebush Swallowtail and the Eastern Tiger Swallowtail.
 - Seeds of the Sweetbay are consumed by birds and many small animals. It's semi-evergreen leaves offer protection in the winter and it makes a great addition to the urban landscape.
- 9. *Morus rubrum* - Red Mulberry - 9 Lepidoptera Species**
- The Red Mulberry certainly finds itself in the "messy" category, but it is a great tree for hungry birds. Trees are male or female so keep that in mind when choosing this tree. It's another tree that is not labeled male or female in the market, so you may need to get several to increase your chances.
- 10. *Prunus americana* and *virginiana* - 320 Lepidoptera Species**
- Just like their Black Cherry Canopy Tree Cousin, these smaller versions are wonderful additions to the woodland understory. Their fruit is quickly consumed by many visitors and they make great habitat for birds.

Top 10 Shrubs

Moving on to Shrubs. There are many more Shrubs to choose from but these are my 10 ten selections for supporting Biodiversity.

1. *Aesculus parviflora* - Bottlebrush Buckeye - 35 Lepidoptera Species

- The Bottlebrush Buckeye is a larger shrub, eventually filling a 12'x12' space. Hummingbirds and Eastern Swallowtail Butterflies visit the blooms and the dense, shrubby habit creates great shelter for birds and other wildlife.

2. *Aronia arbutifolia* and *melanocarpa* - Chokeberry - Host to at least 2 Lepidoptera Species

- Chokeberry is a great food source for birds during the winter months. They also do a great job retaining soil and are a good choice for an area struggling with erosion.

3. *Euonymus americanus* - Heart's-a-bustin/Strawberry Bush - 13 Lepidoptera Species

- This is an uncommon native shrub. Its fruit is consumed by birds and small animals and its green stems make for great winter interest in the garden.

4. *Hamamelis virginiana* - Common Witch Hazel - 63 Lepidoptera Species

- This is a large understory shrub that can reach heights of 20 feet, it is a great addition to a woodland garden. It blooms between October and December, depending on the weather. Birds and small animals consume its fruit in the winter months.

5. *Lindera benzoin* - Spicebush - 11 Lepidoptera Species

- These shrubs will eventually reach 12 feet in height. A notorious host for the Spicebush Swallowtail, it also produces fruit that is valued by both birds and small animals. Like the Persimmon and Red Mulberry, this shrub has separate male and female plants, so make sure to plant a few to increase your chances of having both genders.

6. *Rhododendron* - Native Deciduous Azalea - 50 Lepidoptera Species

- There are many deciduous azaleas that are native to the Tennessee Region. Some can be found growing in East Tennessee, in the Smoky Mountains and Blue Ridge region, such as the Flame Azalea. With that said, if planted in the right location in your garden, (dappled shade with some morning sun), they should do

okay. Native Azaleas are a food source for birds and support a specialized bee. Hummingbirds and Butterflies will also visit their blooms in late spring.

7. Rosa – Native Roses – 94 Lepidoptera Species

- Most of the roses that are available in the market are not native roses. We do, however, have a few native options worthy of consideration. The Pasture Rose (*Rosa carolina*), Swamp Rose (*Rosa palustris*), and the Climbing Illinois Prairie Rose (*Rosa setigera*). The rose hips of these shrubs are a favorite for some of our local bird species and flowers attract many pollinators to their blooms. We will be bringing a few of these roses into our nursery this spring and I am looking forward to their arrival.

8. Sambucus americana – American Elderberry – 27 Lepidoptera species

- One of my personal favorites, not only do these shrubs support butterfly and moth larvae, but birds love the fruit and their hollow stems are a common choice for overwintering insects. The blooms are also a favorite for many pollinators.

9. Vaccinium – Blueberry – 196 Lepidoptera Species

- There are three species native to Tennessee. *Vaccinium corymbosum* – Southern Highbush Blueberry, *Vaccinium ashei* (which has now been changed to *Vaccinium virgatum*) – which is the Rabbit-eye Blueberry and *Vaccinium angustifolium* or Lowbush Blueberry (this last blueberry is usually found naturally growing in higher elevations). Lowbush is less used but the other two types are readily available. Native bees LOVE the blooms and you will find picking these delicious fruits before the birds get to them to be quite a challenge. They prefer acidic soil so make sure that the place you put them is acidic or add soil acidifier on a schedule to keep these shrubs happy.

10. Viburnum – 88 Lepidoptera Species

- There are MANY viburnum in the market, but not all of them are native. The species *acerifolium*, *dentatum*, *nudum*, and *prunifolium* are all native viburnums. They can be, at times, difficult to find but worth the hunt. Not only do they support Lepidoptera species, but their blooms attract pollinators, and they bear fruit that is loved by the birds. Make sure you plant more

than one because cross pollination is necessary for berry production.

Okay, moving on to Perennials:

The total of Caterpillar species that perennials support is substantially lower than many of the shrubs and trees, but their value is just as important. They serve as sources of nectar and pollen for our insect species, produce seed for birds, and shelter for some overwintering insects. I am going to go through this list a little quicker and simply give you the number of Lepidoptera species they host.

- Achillea (Yarrow) - 12
- Asclepias (Milkweed) - 11
- Aquilegia (Columbine) - 8 - make sure the species is canadensis. There are other species that are native to the Northwest and Europe, but canadensis is what grows here in Tennessee.
- Aster - 6
- Baptisia (False Indigo) - 17
- Eupatorium (Joe-pye weed) - 30
- Helianthus (Sunflowers) - 66
- Hibiscus - Rose Mallow - 25
- Iris cristata - Dwarf Crested Iris - 9
- Liatris - Gay Feather - 5
- Lobelia - Cardinal Flower - 5
- Monarda species - Beebalm - 9
- Oenothera - Evening Primrose - 18
- Rudbeckia - Blackeyed Susan - 15
- Solidago - Goldenrod - 90
- Vernonia - Ironweed - 20
- Violet - Wild Violet - 26
- Yucca filamentosa - Adam's Needle - 9

There are also some native Grasses that serve as host plants.

- Many Native Carex support varying species of skipper moths
- Panicum virgatum (or Switchgrass) is the champion host of the grasses, supporting 26

Ferns can also be hosts as well.

- The Lady Fern hosts 2, Cinnamon Fern and Christmas fern host 5, and the New York Fern hosts 6.

The last native plant I will mention is the Rubus family. Our native, wild growing blackberry. This is a host for 117 Lepidoptera species and it goes without saying, most everyone and everything that eats its fruit is a fan of this plant.

So those are a few suggestions for WHAT to plant. We have a tendency to treat plant material like the furniture and decorations within our homes. And our emphasis on aesthetics often takes precedence over function and purpose. I am not saying by any stretch of the imagination that Natives are not beautiful, because they are. I simply want us to take into consideration what plants do for our ecosystems and the creatures they support and let aesthetics be secondary in our decisions.

One more important thing to mention as it pertains to planting more natives, is to make sure you are thinking about all of the seasons. Incorporate spring, summer and fall bloomers, to make sure our native bees and pollinators have a food source all season long.

Next Up in this conversation about the components of biodiversity is: BUGS!

E.O. Wilson, a pioneer in the conservation field, referred to insects as “The little things that run the world”. Butterflies and fuzzy moths are the easy to love bugs of the insect world, but there are many players in our outdoor spaces. I would like to briefly go over the main groups of insect life we support by **choosing** to plant native plants.

These are some of the insects that play active roles in our backyard ecosystems: (now let me take a deep breath) Grasshoppers, Katydid, Trees and Bush Crickets, Walkingsticks, Plant Bugs, Lace Bugs, Seed Bugs, Boxelder Bugs, Leaf-footed bugs, Shield Bugs, Cicadas, Treehoppers, Leafhoppers, Froghoppers and Spittlebugs, Aphids, Leaf Beetles, Long-horned Beetles, Metallic Wood-Boring Beetles, Stag Beetles, Bess Beetles, June Beetles, Chafers, Hercules Beetles, Click Beetles, Blister Beetles,

Soldier Beetles, Weevils and Bark Beetles, Sawflies, and Anthropod Predators. And then there are of course all of our beautiful Butterflies and Moths as well as the 4,000 native bees that reside in North America.

What all of these insects have in common is a place in our ecosystem. Some live in the tree canopy, others live within the ground and feed on plant roots. Some complete their entire lifecycles in dead and dying wood, others rely on pollen or the chlorophyll of herbaceous plant material. Insects have specific host plants ranging from grasses to perennials, vines, trees, and shrubs and their lifecycles revolve around them. They pollinate our crops. Insects are a vital food source for many of our birds and wildlife. Insects keep our ecosystems in balance and we need them for our own survival, too.

Though I have observed some of these insects in my landscape and in the time I have spent in the horticulture industry, this coming year, I am planning to go on something of a treasure hunt in my own garden. Whether you have children or just enjoy feeding the child within you, I encourage you to pay closer attention to these tiny little creatures some really smart guy said run the world. It's one thing to say the names of all of these insects and to look up their pictures on the internet, but it's completely different to observe them in person. To watch a bird snatch one up and carry it to their nest, to see which plants they gravitate towards, and to witness their beauty with your own eyes!

Now let's talk a little bit about Animals as valuable players within our backyard ecosystems. In the urban environment, some are more common than others, but there are more than you think.

- When we increase the diversity of native plant material on our properties, the benefits extend to our birds and animals as well. They increase their food supply and offer habitat and shelter. Animals, cute or less cuddly, are also a very important player in keeping our ecosystem in balance.
- Take, for example, the **possum**. These, for most people, fall into the less cuddly of creatures but when you realize their role in the ecosystem, you will perhaps see them in a new light. Did you know that in one season, a possum can consume up to 5,000 ticks?? They are obsessive groomers and eat what they find on themselves. If we

did not have these animals in our ecosystems, imagine how out of balance the tick populations could be.

- **Bats** play an important role in that they consume insects at night, including mosquitos. Bats are not the only predators that eat mosquitos. Some species of birds, frogs, lizards (or what we have a lot of, skinks), fish and dragonflies also eat mosquitoes. We have talked a lot about birds, but supporting amphibians in our backyard ecosystems is important too.
- Now let's talk about **snakes**. At some point we have to throw aside our primal fear of these slithering creatures. They play a vital role in our ecosystems as well, consuming bugs and small rodents. You don't have to like them, just leave them to do their job and allow them to be a part of your backyard ecosystem too.

So we have talked about Native Plant material being the foundation for creating more biodiversity in our backyards. We have discussed the many types of insects that exist in our landscapes and rely on these native plants, and also the animals that rely on the native plants hosting the insects that they will in turn eat and enjoy.

Lastly, I want to talk about **additional steps** we can take to further support biodiversity in our yards:

- **Water:** it can be as simple as having a few birdbaths or you can do some research on how to build a wildlife pond on your property. But just like we need water to survive, so do animals. Yes, there are natural sources like lakes and streams, but providing this little source in your yard keeps them from burning energy to get to these larger sources.
 - Another idea for creating a water source for birds is to create a birdbath with a stump. With a drill and an attachment, you can excavate the top 2 inches to create a basin for water to collect. And as we talked about earlier, many insects need old and decaying wood, so this little wood stump bird bath can end up serving two purposes.
 - Also consider that not all critters can access birdbaths. Think about placing a couple old planter dishes around your garden to leave for these visitors. Just make sure you dump birdbaths

or dishes out every few days to discourage mosquitos from developing.

- **SUPPLEMENTAL FOOD SOURCES**

- Adding Birdfeeders and Butterfly feeders can be a way to add an additional food supply for your backyard ecosystem. Make sure, especially with birdfeeders, that you are taking them down and cleaning them routinely to avoid unintentionally allowing bird diseases to spread.

- **STUCTURES FOR SHELTER**

- In addition to dense growth and hedges you create on your property, canopy trees, and evergreen material that all offer birds and wildlife cover and nesting opportunities, there are other things you can add to your garden to help too.
- **Brush Piles:**
 - Instead of having the city take away your brush, consider letting it be another piece of the puzzle in your yard's ecosystem. Locate it away from your home, perhaps in a corner. Birds and other critters will use this as shelter as well as a potential nesting site or source for nest material.
- Another idea is a **rock pile**. Yes, this would be potential habitat for snakes. But like we said, they play an important role too. Just place it far away from your home. A sunny area is best, where the rocks can absorb the sunrays during the day and retain some of that heat overnight.
 - I have a substantial amount of rock on my property. Anywhere it is stacked, I find chipmunks and skinks absolutely love the habitat and burrow their homes behind the rocks, away from predators.
- You can also include birdhouses for nesting, roosting houses for the winter months, bat houses, and amphibian houses.

Additional good earth Stewardship practices:

- Resist the urge to cutback and prune. I mentioned earlier that insects overwinter in the American Elderberry stems, but they also overwinter in perennials like Goldenrod. And any seed leftover on perennial seed heads is food for the birds.
- Birdfeeders are fine but make sure you are not feeding mammals. Unlike birds, mammals can become dependent on human

intervention. We need them to follow their natural food sources and not rely on us.

Needless to say, there are many things to consider when you are wanting to make your garden and landscape more biodiverse. You don't have to know everything all at once. It's a journey, full of steps, careful observations, and hard work. But every step you take will teach you something new. Every observation will open your eyes and request that you have more compassion and understanding for this world that we so easily ignore. And all of that sweat equity you put in will only increase the pride you have when you see your landscape come alive.

Creating a landscape that attracts more wildlife can be incredibly rewarding and I often see it as one of the most enjoyable games I have ever played. Seeing a new bird in the yard that I haven't seen before brings me joy and I consider it a win! Finding a baby snapping turtle, a new butterfly, several different insect species dancing on my milkweed, a spicebush caterpillar curled up in a leaf, a Carolina Wren family taking up residence in my hanging basket that I stopped watering and let them have. Each new sighting is a piece to the puzzle and to the bigger picture.

For too long we have been managing our properties to cater to our needs and even fears, more than to support the ecosystem that surrounds us. True earth stewardship is about conserving our land and its inhabitants, not destroying them or discouraging their presence.

Does all of this sound like I am trying to influence your emotions? Absolutely, but only with the best of intentions. The way I see it, it has to be emotional. Being good earth stewards needs to appeal to the core of us. Convincing you to join this effort actually matters greatly to me. I spent a lot of years doing this work not understanding the full magnitude of the decisions I and we make when it comes to our properties and how it directly effects the world around us. I want to be a part of the solution instead of a part of the problem. That is why I am sitting before you today.

Today's webinar was my best effort to ask you to join me in making our private properties strengthen the biodiversity that is all around us.

That is the end of this webinar but I want to leave you with a few resources to take away. And since most everything at the nursery is dormant, I will offer you great reference material instead.

- Resources to help you on your way to developing a more biodiverse landscape
 - Choose your level of nerd:
 - National Wildlife Federation
 - The Book
 - A step by step guide to help you make your property a Wildlife Habitat Garden and get it certified. Whether you have children or are just a child at heart, the process of meeting the certification process to make your garden a habitat is fun, educational and fulfilling. My yard already meets the requirements but I plan to certify my yard and order one of their yard signs to place in my yard.
 - The Website
 - Details about our national wildlife critters and their needs.
 - Nwf.org/nativeplantfinder – you put in your zipcode and it shows you the native plants in your region that serve as host plants for butterflies and moths. That is the resource I used to put numbers with the plant material we discussed earlier.
 - Audubon Society
 - They also have an incredibly thorough and helpful website that will guide you through all of North America's bird species. Each species page is detailed with feeding behavior, Eggs, Young, Diet, and Nesting preferences. It also shows their migration patterns and links to their songs and calls. I personally will be spending ample time on this sight in the upcoming months as I learn and digest all that there is to know about the wonderful birds in our area.
 - Another great resource for learning more about birds is www.birds.cornell.edu. They have a Bird Academy which offers online courses you can take to further your knowledge and understanding of birds.
 - Podcasts I have enjoyed include:

- **Native Plants, Healthy Planet by Pinelands Nursery** in New Jersey. They interview Authors and Conservationists, offering a wide range of thought and effort people are putting forth to aid in the mission of informing people about what is being done and what we can collectively do to preserve our land and wildlife.
 - **The Case for Conservation:** this podcast addresses conservation more on a worldwide stage.
 - **Native Plant Podcast:** These hosts interview a wide range of people in the native horticulture world and worth a listen as well.
- Lastly, if you have an hour and a half of time and have a few tears to spare, I highly HIGHLY recommend the documentary, **The Biggest Little Farm**. It paints a beautiful picture of just how important biodiversity is and the rich rewards of being a good land steward.