



Photo of John Watts courtesy of the speaker.

John Watts was born and raised in north Florida (Jacksonville) where he developed an early interest in insects and began studying them at six years of age. John had hundreds of acres of woods and swamps directly behind his house where he spent most of his free hours exploring. John received his master's degree in entomology from the University of Florida where he specialized in insect husbandry. It was also in college that he began a lifelong interest in the biology and the systematics of leaf beetles (Chrysomelidae). As a collector of insects, John took it upon himself to learn about plants and is an avid gardener both for food and for wildlife, especially pollinators. John's professional career started at the Cockrell Butterfly Center at the Houston Museum of Nature and Science, and John has been in the live butterfly exhibit business ever since. John spent 7 years at the Butterfly Pavilion and Insect Center in Westminster, Colorado before settling in Dallas. With over 20 years of experience and an inordinate fondness for nature in general, John gladly shares his wealth of knowledge at Texas Discovery Gardens.

John's presentation, "What's the Buzz: An Introduction to the Bees of North Texas," will cover the identification and importance of our local bees. The honey bee provides about \$30 billion worth of pollination services every year, but did you know that they are non-native? There are over 3500 species of native bees in North America and these solitary insects are the real workhorses in the wild. During this presentation, you will learn about the various families and genera of bees found in the North Texas area and how important it is to help conserve them.