

by Jessica Wells

What's Buzzing at the Bee Lab?

Dr. Jamie Ellis has a fifteen year history with the University of Florida. He is the Gahan Endowed Professor of Entomology in the Department of Entomology and Nematology. His life long interest in honey bees brought him to UF. At first, he was as an assistant professor and he eventually became a full-time professor and founded the Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (IFAS) Honey Bee Research and Extension Laboratory (HBREL).

From a young age, honey bees fascinated Ellis. He carried his interest in bees with him as he entered college. Ellis was on a pre-medicine track when his supervisor at the University of Georgia (UGA), Keith Delaplane, asked him why he was not pursuing what he was passionate about. Ellis took his supervisor's words to heart and went on to receive his Ph.D. in Entomology, Rhodes University, South Africa.

In 2006, Ellis was hired to run the UF bee program. The beekeeping program saw a significant expansion in 2018, with its brand new, unmatched facility called the HBREL.

Ellis described his job and research as an adventure. His responsibilities at UF/IFAS stem into three main fields; research, teaching responsibilities, and Extension. While directing HBREL, he created the UF/IFAS Bee College, UF South Florida and Caribbean Bee Colleges, and the UF Master Beekeeper Program.

Ellis and his team at HBREL are dedicated to discovering better ways to sustain bees and beekeeping. According to Ellis,

“At HBREL, we are trying to improve the health of honey bees and the sustainability of beekeeping in Florida, across the U.S., and around the world.”

“At HBREL we conduct research that's relevant to our clientele, trying to solve real world problems on behalf of beekeepers. We communicate the results of the research and new management recommendations to beekeepers through our Extension program.”

There are many ways to become involved with HBREL to grow the knowledge and skill set desired on honey bees. From undergraduate classes, to graduate programs at UF, to IFAS Extension programs, one can discover resources to further advance one's understanding of honey bees.

To find out more of Dr. Ellis' research at HBREL, [visit here](#).

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