

BROWARD COUNTY BUTTERFLY CHAPTER

**December 2014
& January 2015**

**PLANT OF
THE MONTH**



Dahoon Holly
Ilex cassine
Photo: IFAS

Believe in Butterflies by Sandy Koi

Excerpt from ATALA NEWS. Two years have flown by at an amazing speed! I earned my Masters' in entomology from the University of Florida in Gainesville, worked part time for USDA Biocontrol and later for the UF Vero Beach Medical Entomology Department. I am finally back in south Florida, living "deep in Dade" and working as the Biological Scientist in the Ornamental Entomology Department at the UF Tropical Research and Education Center (TREC) campus in Homestead. (I think the department should be named 'Ornamental Plant Entomology', but no one asked me.) I've continued to be involved with our Atala colonies, and am working more closely with NABA volunteers in Palm Beach, Broward and Miami-Dade counties. One very fortunate experience was a whole colony rescue coordinated with Palm Beach NABA volunteers in September 2014.

Jeff Gagnon, the environmental planner for the City of Riviera Beach, contacted NABA about the fact that a city park by the beach was going to be razed and renovated, but a self-established Atala colony had ensconced itself in the perfect habitat there. We were surprised and very happy that he knew to contact us! Chris Lockhart did the preliminary scouting for us; Alana Edwards and myself, and four of our student volunteers, went to the site and literally

Field Trip Updates

Our field trips this year were an adventure, our butterfly counts were a learning experience. All thanks to the spot on work of Sue and Barb, consider coming along sometime as we count butterflies or go on a trip.

Mona brought us up to speed on her trip to the Florida Wildflowers Symposium, sharing info on wildflowers for south florida and- books. Check out "The Guide to Florida Wildflowers" by Walter Kingsley Taylor.

Coming soon. St. Marks Refuge Butterfly Festival trip summary by Barb at our February meeting.

The Jesse Durko's nursery tour on Nov 8, was hugely successful. Jesse had more visitors than he or we expected. Thanks to everyone who came.

We are considering several possible places to visit in 2015. We'll keep you posted.

Welcome! Happy holidays, and have a great new year.

How to make butterflies feel at Home. To both attract our butterfly friends and get the most out of pollination, choose plants that are made to attract them! Bees are the best pollinators; but butterflies are very good at it too coming in a close second. Butterflies emerge when it's sunny, seeking nectar from different shaped flowers during their flight. They are most attracted to flowers that bloom in clusters or are platform-shaped sweet-scented flowers. The flower colors they most often visit are bright yellow, orange, pink, red and purple and are diurnal, i.e. open during the day.

Butterfly behavior while nectar seeking is what also makes them great pollinators. They walk all over the flower, maneuvering until they find the nectar with their proboscis or tongue. As they skitter about they move pollen from the male part (stamen) to the female part (pistil) of the flower. They also gather pollen on their legs which they often deposit on a flower at another location. Their messy collection system delivers pollen to all sorts of plant life and helps initiate the plant fertilization process which couldn't be done very easily by human hands! So appreciate our tiny winged angels.

They preserve the health of the local flora while adding a dash of beauty to the surroundings. To keep these visits coming, remember to use native plants, avoid insecticides and put the right plant in the right place. They are your warm and sunny friends. Some butterflies emerge from your backyard. Others come to visit having flown long distances. But where ever they arrive from all are nature's beauty and can make a sunny afternoon wonderful. *Pat Rossi*

Speakers. We hope to see you next year, we have some knowledgeable speakers lined up for 2015 thanks to Peggy.

Our Dec 9 Social. We gathered and shared our potluck dishes, heard music, shared ideas and won prizes.

UPCOMING EVENTS. Tues Jan 13, 2015. Plantation Heritage Park. Speaker: Steve Woodmansee-Lawn Weeds & the Butterflies that Use Them. Our plant table theme is "Native vines & Volunteer plants from your yard"

Tues Feb 10, 2015. Speaker: Pat Howell-Monarchs Milkweed & the Monarch Watch

Plant table theme "Wildflower Seeds"

Contact us at Browardbutterflies.org/ ; email: BCBCmail@gmail.com

Chapter meetings at Plantation Heritage Park 1100 S Fig Tree Ln FL33317

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Checkered White

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Monarchs on Black-eyed susan, Rudbeckia hirt

Introducing our committee. Pat Rossi president, Barbara DeWitt vice president, Lillian Maniscalco secretary, Kathy Arcangeli treasurer. Also Ana Maria Agrusa Webmaster, Nancy Johns Email Membership and Water Matters Day Chair, Sue Mather, Field Trip Chair, Peggy Strumski Speaker Coordinator, Atala and Plant Auction Coordinator, Cindy Jenkins Hospitality Chair, Addie Travers Meeting Membership.

Veterans Butterfly Garden

Michael Brown, together with some inspired volunteers installed plants in the VA Clinic garden on Nov. 1st. Those young host plants already have caterpillars and visiting butterflies on them! Good job.

Cycads At our Jan and Feb Meetings

We'll have a few Coontie (Caudex) roots on our plant table in Jan & Feb. *Zamia pumila* or Coontie, the family Zamiaceae. Did you know that Cycads are pollinated mostly by beetles such as the *Pharaxonotha zamiae* and the weevil *Rhopalotria slossoni*?

It's now known that the Coontie provides food in exchange for pollination services & are attracted to the cycad cones/leaves by fragrance, food, shelter or a place to breed. <http://www.plantapalm.com/vce/biology/pollination.htm>. It has male and female parts and prefers filtered light. Coonties are the host plant for the Echo moth & the Atala butterfly (*Eumaeus atala florida*). The seeds are used by Blue Jays, Mockingbirds and small animals. The plant is poisonous.

For more Info, useful sources: Coontie Propagation Guidelines, browardbutterflies.org/pdf/lee.ifas.ufl.edu/Hort/GardenPubsAZ/Coontie.pdf; www.plantapalm.com/vce/cycadsof/coontie.htm.

Just Facts. The butterfly life cycle and development stages are egg, larva, pupa and adult. Butterflies are divided into five major families, Hesperidae (Skippers), Lycaenidae (Gossamer Wings), Nymphalidae (Brush-Foots), Papilionidae (Swallowtails) and Pieridae. (Sulphurs and Whites). Butterflies of Florida, Jaret Daniels.

Feb Meeting - Seeds & Plants

We'll have wildflower seeds suited to south Florida as well as different plants to bid on. Some wildflowers are annuals, some will self-seed. These should grow in Zone 10: Black-eyed Susan, *Gaillardia blanket-flower*, Blazing Star, *Coreopsis*, Beach or Dune Sunflower, Seaside & Wand Goldenrod, Horsemint or Spotted Bee balm and *Salvias*. From the Florida Wildflowers site, here is some helpful info on wildflowers for our area.

"Ten Easy Wildflowers". <http://flwildflowers.org/planting.php>. Click to view this as a flip book. On this webpage under "your guide to growing wildflowers" there is garden help to grow wildflowers from seed. Good growing!



All about Monarchs

Our Feb talk will be about Monarch Milkweeds. Here's a list of **Native Larval Host Plants for Monarchs, South Florida**.
Curtiss' milkweed (*Asclepias curtisii*)
Swamp milkweed (*Asclepias incarnata*)
Fewflower milkweed (*Asclepias lanceolata*)
Longleaf milkweed (*Asclepias longifolia*)
Savannah milkweed (*Asclepias pedicellata*)
Butterflyweed (*Asclepias tuberosa*)
Whorled milkweed (*Asclepias verticillata*)
Green antelopehorn (*Asclepias viridis*)
White vine (*Sarcostemma clausum*). Source: "Native Habits for Monarchs" <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu.WEC266>, March 2012.

Reminders

Next meeting Tues Jan 13, 6:30pm
Social, 7:00pm Meeting
Plant table theme 'Vines & volunteers from the Yard'

Amazon Users

Please order thru our website
browardbutterfly.org. BCBC earns 4% of your purchases.

Silent Auction.

Please id donated plants. We accept natives and non-invasive plants.

Signing In Notebook

Members & guests, please print your name. As a guest, please give us your email address to receive our newsletters.

Believe... dug up and moved over sixty large (huge) coontie plants as well as over 50 Atala adult butterflies. We then schlepped the plants and bugs to their new home at the Robert J Huckshorn Arboretum, where Alana and her students had planted a wonderful butterfly garden, in Florida Atlantic University's Honors' College in Jupiter. Within minutes of being released in the garden, the females were already scoping out ovipositing sites on the newly moved coonties, which were not yet in the ground!

Believe... This was a highly successful rescue made possible by many people, and I especially thank Jeff and the City of Riviera Beach. Within a month, yet ANOTHER self-established Atala colony was due to be destroyed by a developer! Lana Edwards of the Atala NABA chapter in Palm Beach has been monitoring this site for us for years....and NABA volunteers had to act fast again....read the story details on my blog! Dec. 2014

NatureScape News.Upcoming Events. NatureScape Emerald Award application deadline is December 31, 2014. Apply or nominate someone else.