Welcome to our meetings!

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Coming Attractions
Tue Feb 9, 2016
At Tree Tops Park, 7pm
Roger Hammer, Naturalist / Award-winning author
"Attracting hummingbirds and butterflies in tropical Florida"

Field Trip to
Long Key Nature Center
JOIN US
Sunday Jan 24 10am-Noon
Presenter Kelli Whitney. Learn about winter butterflies & the history of Long Key Park!
More info, Call: Pat 954 376 1128; email BCBCmail@gmail.com

Reminders
Next meetings
TUE Jan 12, 2016
TUE Feb 9, 2016
Hope to see you!

Amazon Users
Please order thru website www.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.

Please take your Plants donated at each event or meeting home if not auctioned off.

UPCOMING EVENTS
TUES JAN 12, 2016 Kelli Whitney “TRENDS IN BUTTERFLY COUNTS”

Also Wildflower Seeds & Plants for auction
Contact us at www.browardbutterflies.org; email: BCBCmail@gmail.com
Chapter meetings at Tree Tops Park 3900 SW 100th Avenue, Davie FL 33328 – 954-357-5130
Atalas, Colorful & Unpredictable

It is called the Florida atala or coontie hairstreak. Where once they were listed as threatened and even thought to have disappeared, now they are a species of the greatest conservation need. They appear in Broward, Palm Beach and Miami Dade counties, often turning up in the yards of butterfly lovers who attract them planting their host plant the coontie or Zamia pumila. The coontie plant is native to Florida and once was found in the wild in most of the peninsula and in southwestern Georgia east of the Apalachicola River. The plant sold in Florida nurseries is Zamia pumila which remains the dominant form although other Zamia species in the West Indies exist.

The root is poisonous which contains the toxin cycasin yet the Seminole made a process of washing it out after grinding the roots into a flour. Coonties were an important source of foods for the Seminole during the lengthy Seminole wars. The plant almost disappeared because the Florida settlers in the late 1800s to 1900s used the plant to make the flour into an industry. Of course the atalas could have disappeared with it. By the 1930s atalas were considered rare, and this butterfly was thought to have expired from our local counties when a small amount of butterflies was found on Key Biscayne in 1979. Garden enthusiasts have kept planting this cycad since then and are responsible for the reestablishing numbers of atalas.

The plant is dioecious, being either male or female, where the male cones are more slender. Fertilization occurs when the wind Blanschinae zamiae, moves from the male to female cones which enlarge. In time, the cones open, the flesh of the red seeds are exposed for the pickings of birds and other animals. The eggs are found on the outer parts of the leaves, even on the cones. The larvae of echo moth also use the cones to pupate.

This is a very striking hairstreak from the Lycaenidae family of butterflies that include the blues and metalmarks. It is the second largest group behind the Nymphalidae which comprise for example, the monarchs, queens and gulf fritillaries. The black and shimmering blue green wings against the red thorax and a dash of red in wings, warn predators to be wary. The female wings have hues of blue against black, the male appears a bit more green-black and slightly smaller. They are only 1.5 inch, the gossamer wing butterfly is delicately lights up in sunlight. Planting coonties gives no guarantee to see atalas because atalas can be picky. There are many surprises in store for the anxious gardener waiting to see them, they’re still uncommon because they can be introduced upwards to a dozen or more plants, yet disappear or maybe reappear again two years later, lucky for you and your counties.

The ceramic bench is a thing of beauty. It was carefully crafted with the zebra longwing & mami blue renditions perfectly motiled in place. The day of the bench dedication at Long Key Nature Center for Prof. Elane Nuehring was windless yet delightfully cool. Nearly fifty individuals came together to share thoughts of Elane, former president of Miami Blue’s chapter. Those attending included Ron Nuehring, Linda Evans of the Miami Blue Chapter and friends of the Nuehrings. The Broward County Butterfly chapter hosted the affair and was well represented.

Organizers Cindy Jenkins and Kathy Arcangeli did a wonderful job, Cindy made artful floral table baskets, Kathy worked quietly arranging food and drinks for all. Poignant reminiscences were shared by the speakers. Still others revealed Elane’s gift of persuasion and curiosity for butterflies, this coming from Kelly Whitney, Ron Neuhring, Barbara DeWitt, Janice Malkoff and Miriam Avello We thank all participants and volunteers.

Atala Butterfly Information ~ read the Abstract on the New and Revised Life History of the Florida Hairstreak *Eumaeus atala* (Lepidoptera: Lycaenidae) with Notes on its Current Conservation Status

Author(s) Sandy Koi and Jaret Daniels
Source: Florida Entomologist, 98(4):1134-1147.
Published By: Florida Entomological Society
DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.1653/024.098.0418
URL: http://www.bioone.org/doi/

**Directions to Tree Tops**

We meet at Tree Tops Park. From I-95, exit at Nob Hill Road. Travel 2.5 miles south on Nob Hill. Tree Tops will be on the left hand side.

From I-95, exit at Griffin Road. Travel west approximately 9.2 miles to Nob Hill Road. Turn right. Travel a quarter of a mile north. The entrance to the park will be on the right hand side of the road.

From I-75, exit at Griffin Road and travel east approximately 4.7 miles to Nob Hill Road. Turn left. Travel a quarter of a mile north. The entrance to the park will be on the right hand side of the road.