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Little Red Wagonful

Nurturing Nature One Wagon at a Time



May 2021

*Oh! fragrant is the breath of May
In tranquil garden closes,
And soft yet regal is her sway
Among the springtide roses.*
—William Hamilton Hayne

May is often associated with Mother's Day and Memorial Day but it's also the month we celebrate and show appreciation to nurses. Did you know May is named for the Roman goddess Maia, who oversaw the growth of plants? Celebrate spring by planting a Florida native garden to help our wildlife and our much-needed pollinators.

Butterfly of the Month



Great Southern White

There's something darling about Great Southern Whites. The aqua-colored clubs at the tips of their antennae remind me of the beautiful waters of the Gulf of Mexico and strolls along its beaches. These colored antennae clubs are also the easiest way to quickly distinguish these butterflies from other medium-sized white butterflies (like the Checkered White or Cabbage White) that also fly in our area.

Despite its name, when its wings are closed, the butterfly is rarely colored a brilliant white. Instead, these butterflies vary in color from a smoky grayish brown to an off-white to a yellow. If you can catch a glimpse of the top of the butterfly's open wings, you'll usually see a zigzag-like pattern around the wings' edges.

Females lay slender, pale eggs (pictured top right) on Virginia pepperweed (*Lepidium virginicum*), saltwort (*Batis maritima*) and plants in the caper family including nasturtium (*Tropaeolum majus*) and limber caper (*Capparis flexuosa*). The caterpillar is yellowish with small black spots and green stripes that run the length of its body (pictured middle right).

Adult Great Southern Whites like to nectar on Spanish needles (*Bidens alba*), (pictured bottom right) and verbenas. Great Southern Whites are year-round residents of areas that usually avoid freezing temperatures and are known for massive emigrations where, according to the [Alabama Butterfly Atlas](#), “thousands leave to colonize new territory” when temperatures warm.



Plant of the Month



Virginia Pepperweed - *Lepidium virginicum*

Virginia Pepperweed (*Lepidium virginicum*) is a host plant for the Great Southern White butterfly. Another Florida native plant that is very important for wildlife - and we can eat it also. This is another native plant to have/leave in your garden to attract a beautiful butterfly to your garden. The young leaves can be used as a potherb, sautéed or used raw, such as in salads. The young seedpods can be used as a substitute for black pepper. The leaves contain protein, vitamin A and vitamin C. It prefers sunny locales with dry soil (sounds like Florida to me).

\$8.00 / 1 GAL.

SHOP NOW

Garden Swag

Red, White & Pink Tropical Sage

Get your Swagon! We've potted up some beautiful tropical sage (*Salvia coccinea*) in lovely shades of red, white and pink. Suitable for either

planters or gardens, tropical sage can bloom year round in our area. It also attracts a number of butterflies and hummingbirds for added enjoyment.

It doesn't have to be Mother's day or Nurses' Day to celebrate those important to our lives--our Red, White & Pink Tropical sage makes an attractive gift.

\$30.00 / 3 GAL.

SHOP NOW



Design with Vines

Coral honeysuckle (*Lonicera sempervirens*)

Coral honeysuckle (*Lonicera sempervirens*), is a 12-15 foot vine that has beautiful, trumpet-shaped coral flowers during spring, summer, and early fall. A true favorite of hummingbirds, this flowering vine is a triple winner: nectar for butterflies and hummingbirds; caterpillar food for several butterflies and moths (including the Hummingbird Clearwing, which is a moth occasionally seen in our area); and fall fruit for birds.

This plant likes full sun but can grow in part shade. It requires good drainage and air circulation to avoid powdery mildew. Be sure to plant it near a trellis or fence for support – honeysuckle likes to climb, which means it's a great way to add some vertical interest to your garden. Be sure to plant our native vine: Japanese honeysuckle (*Lonicera japonica*), which is commonly available at non-native nurseries, is a Category I invasive plant in Florida.

\$12.00 (1 GAL) / **\$22.00** (3 GAL)

SHOP NOW



Calling All Volunteers!



Little Red Wagon Native Nursery:

We are currently in need of garden enthusiasts to assist in our nursery to support the efforts of Tampa Bay Butterfly Foundation's conservation, research and education efforts

To join our awesome volunteer team, sign up here: <https://volunteersignup.org/W3WEX>

Tampa Bay Butterfly Foundation

Tampa Bay Butterfly Foundation regularly has a number of single-day and ongoing volunteering opportunities.



UPCOMING VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES:

Weekly Summer Camps: June 1 - August 6

Adult and High School-aged volunteers are needed to assist with our nature summer camp program for children ages 6-10. This is a great opportunity for high school students to earn community service hours for Bright Future scholarships!

To volunteer, sign up here: <https://volunteersignup.org/4FJKR>

CFC Maintenance Volunteer Opportunities:

Anita Camacho and other volunteers perform monthly pollinator garden maintenance at the Center for Conservation (CFC). The CFC is a 20-acre campus located in Apollo Beach and exists as a partnership between the Tampa Electric Company (TECO), the Florida Aquarium, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC), and the University of Florida. It's always a fun time if you can make it!

To volunteer, sign up here: <https://volunteersignup.org/TLATX>

ABOUT THE TAMPA BAY BUTTERFLY FOUNDATION:

With a focus on Florida butterfly species and native plants, environmental education and local awareness in the Tampa Bay area, Tampa Bay Butterfly Foundation was established to support the conservation of butterflies and pollinators and the restoration of their natural wildlife habitats. By working globally with university research partners, providing educational and research opportunities and community outreach programs, and through multi-faceted fundraising efforts, the Foundation aims to elevate public awareness of the importance of butterflies.

The Tampa Bay Butterfly Foundation Inc., a 501(c)(3), is an affiliate of the Butterfly Conservatory of Tampa Bay.

Honoring Nurses

Last weekend we celebrated our Moms and this week we celebrate International Nurses Day, Wednesday, May 12th. For me, these days are both important as my amazing mom was also a dedicated nurse for 50 years in the Tampa Bay area. Nurses are a critical part of the medical profession. As we look at our current day and the prior 16-17 months with the COVID-19 pandemic these professionals were on the front lines more than ever and most facing burnout and extreme stress. According to the International Council of Nurses, as of January 31, 2021 there were over 2,700 deaths of nurses in 59 countries due to COVID-19 and as of December 31, 2020 over 1.6 million healthcare workers in 34 countries infected by COVID-19. Please join me in honoring a nurse you know, or thanking a nurse you see in a medical facility for their dedication. One of the big challenges is the



nurse shortage and retention – which puts more of the effort on fewer people. It goes a long way simply to hear a kind word of appreciation.

Pardon Our Metamorphosis



Construction of the Butterfly Conservatory is progressing. If you'd like a preview, you may visit our temporary butterfly education exhibit which is open Fridays to Sundays, free of charge. Please keep visiting [Butterfly Conservatory of Tampa Bay](#) website for updates regarding our Grand Opening.

Monthly Calendar of Events

May 1: *May Day, International Harry Potter Day*
 May 3: *Garden Meditation Day*
 May 4: *Star Wars Day, National Teachers' Day*
 May 5: *Cinco de Mayo*
 May 6: *National Nurses' Day*
 May 8: *World Migratory Bird Day*
 May 9: *Mother's Day*
 May 12: *International Nurses' Day*
 May 15: *National Armed Forces Day, International Day of Families*
 May 16: *Endangered Species Day*
 May 20: *World Bee Day*
 May 23: *World Turtle Day*
 May 26: *May's full Moon, the Flower Moon* will be a supermoon and will coincide with a total lunar eclipse.
 May 27: *World Otter Day*
 May 28: *National Sunscreen Day*
 May 29: *Learn about Composting Day*
 May 31: *Memorial Day, World Parrot Day*

Every Day is Earth Day

Last month, the world officially recognized April 22 as Earth Day. Here at Little Red Wagon, we organized a [#GetTrashed for Earth Day](#) event to clean up trails and communities. This included volunteers who worked on maintaining the butterfly garden we recently planted in the Encore Park community. We believe every day is earth day so we encourage everyone to continue being passionate about our environment on a daily basis.



Editor's note: In our April newsletter, the "Butterfly of the Month" on the Zebra longwing largely used material from a similar piece by Andrei Sourakov, the Collection Coordinator at the McGuire Center for Lepidoptera and

Biodiversity at the Florida Museum of Natural History. The original work can be found at <https://www.floridamuseum.ufl.edu/100years/zebra-longwing/>. Citing that source was inadvertently omitted and we apologize for that oversight.

Little Red Wagon Native Nursery is Hillsborough County's only native nursery. Supporting Florida's native plant & wildlife ecosystem and our natural world, we are located at 4113 Henderson Blvd. in South Tampa.

You can also visit us at LittleRedWagonNativeNursery.com

Email: Info@ButterflyTampa.com

Hours: Tuesdays - Fridays 11-5:30, Saturdays 10-5:30 and Sundays 12-4. Closed Mondays.

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