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Little Red Wagonful

Nurturing Nature One Wagon at a Time

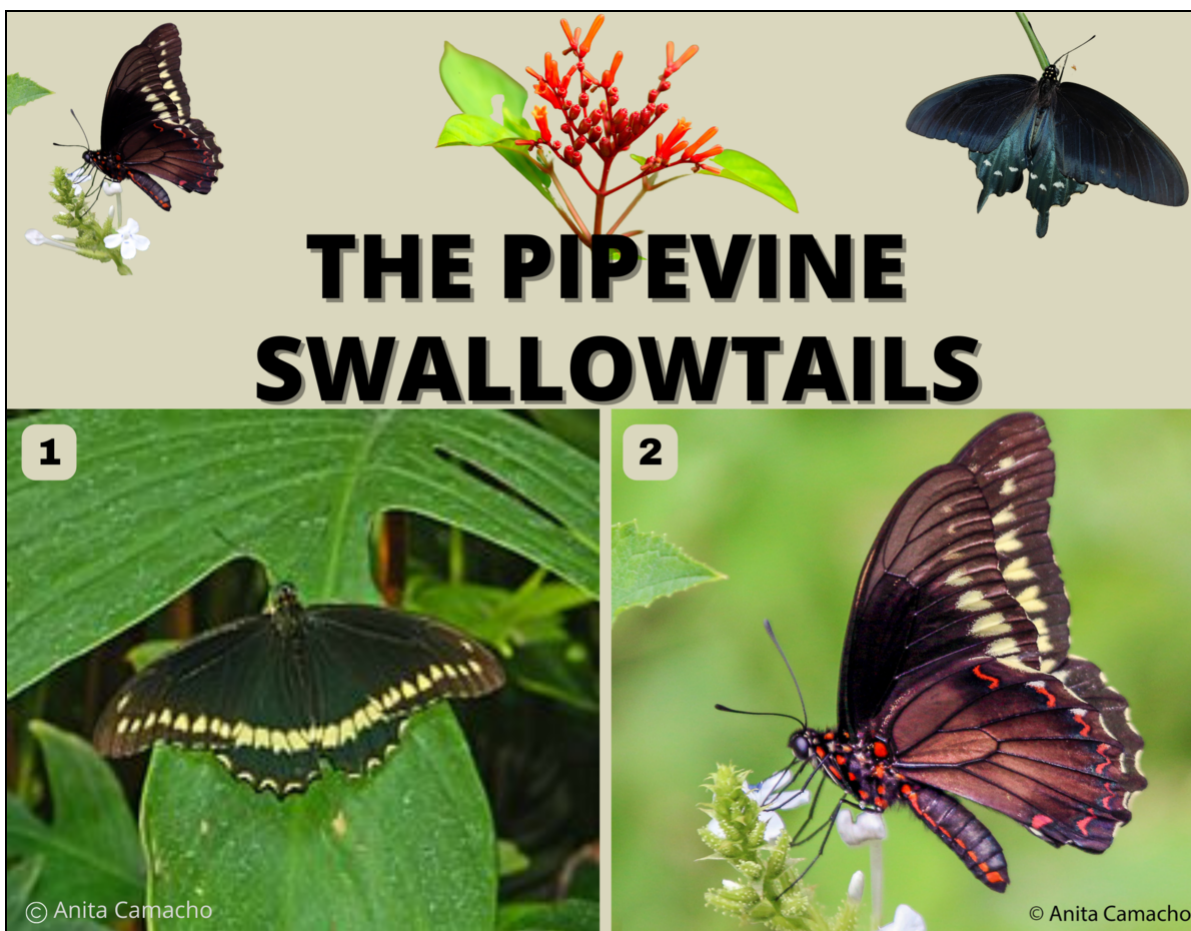


May 2022

"Mother nature has the power to please, to comfort, to calm, and to nature one's soul."
~Anthony Douglas Williams

May is the month we celebrate mothers and our time in the garden increases as the days get longer and warmer. Enjoy nurturing native plants by selecting plants from our nursery that will thrive in our Florida environment.

Butterflies of the Month



Google "swallowtail butterfly" and you're likely to see an article or two that states swallowtails get their name from

the tail-like extensions on the back edge of their wings. So, just to confuse you, one of our butterflies of the month is the Polydamas swallowtail (*Battus polydamas*). Despite its name, the Polydamas swallowtail lacks tails giving it one of its common names of tailless swallowtail. It is the only swallowtail in North America that does not have tails in the swallowtail butterfly family Papilionidae. Although many swallowtails lose their tails to predators, they have them upon emergence from chrysalis. This large, brownish-black butterfly has a wingspan of 3 ½ - 4 ¾" with a band of large yellow spots across the hind wings. This band of yellow spots also gives this butterfly yet another common name of Gold Rim swallowtail. (see photo 1) The undersides of the forewings also have yellow spots and the hindwings have a row of red lunules. The abdomen also has rows of red spots, which is a significant difference from the other swallowtails in the Tampa Bay area. Polydamas are fast flyers and when nectaring they continue to rapidly flap their wings without landing on a flower. This butterfly flies 10 months of the year in the South Tampa area from my experience as we are in zone 10A. They will over winter in chrysalis December and January, if we have a cold enough winter. They are very easy to attract to gardens if you plant Pipevine plants (*Aristolochia* species). While this swallowtail can use the non-native pipevines as a host plant to lay its eggs for its caterpillars to eat, the Pipevine swallowtail cannot use non-native pipevines as it is too toxic for its caterpillars.



The Polydamas caterpillars (see photo 3) are big eaters and the native *Aristolochia* plants can take a while to establish and be large enough to feed if too many clusters of yellow eggs are laid. The Polydamas lays its eggs in clusters (see photo 4) and the caterpillars will stay together in the 1st through 3rd instars as a defense mechanism to appear larger to pray (see photo 5). The chrysalis can be either brown or green (see photo 6). Polydamas enjoy many nectar sources and especially tubular flowering plants such as Tropical sage, Firebush and Coral honeysuckle.



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© Lori Ballard



© Wikipedia

The Pipevine swallowtail (*Battus philenor*) is a very dark swallowtail to almost be black velvet on the wings. The female is nearly all black with a single row of white spots near the edges of the wings. The male is black with a blue/aqua iridescence on the hindwings (see photo 7). This swallowtail is smaller than the Polydamas at 2 ¾" to 4" wingspan. A common behavior with butterflies, especially the male butterflies is puddling. (see photo 8). Puddling is where butterflies congregate on moist sand and mud, drink water and extract minerals and salts for breeding. They will often use animal feces for this as well – I like to call that an "enriched site" when we are in the field and see this behavior. Pipevines also lay eggs in clusters but their eggs are an orangish-red in color. Caterpillars have two color forms, a dark brown/deep purplish (see photo 9) or a reddish brown form (see photo 10). The non-native pipevine plants are toxic to the Pipevine swallowtail caterpillars. If a female lays its eggs on a non-native pipevine, when the caterpillars start to eat the plant, they will die. So the native pipevines *Aristolochia tomentosa* and *Aristolochia serpentaria* are a must to attract this species. The Woolly Dutchman's pipevine (*Aristolochia tomentosa*) is our host plant of the month and more readily available commercially than *A. serpentaria*. This butterfly also overwinters in chrysalis and its chrysalis can also be in both brown and green form. The Pipevine butterflies are usually later to arrive than the Polydamas, typically showing up around March through November in our area with 3 or more broods during that time. Similar to other swallowtails the Pipevine swallowtail continues to flutter while it nectars and rarely lingers at any one flower for long. Both the Polydamas and Pipevine swallowtails sequester toxins from their pipevine host plants, making them distasteful as protection against predators both as caterpillars and adults. Butterflies that appear similar to the Pipevine swallowtail to predators (known as mimicry) include Spicebush swallowtail, Black swallowtail (see June 2021 newsletter) and Red-spotted Purple. This mimicry provides added protection for these other butterflies against predators as they are not as toxic. We will explore the Spicebush swallowtail and Red-spotted Purple in future newsletters.

Host Plant Of The Month



© Anita Camacho

Woolly Dutchman's Pipevine (*Aristolochia tomentosa*)

Woolly Dutchman's Pipevine (*Aristolochia tomentosa*), a long-lived Florida native perennial, grows to about 20-30 feet. It is slow to establish and a slow grower in our area until it is about 3 years in the ground. This vine has very unusual flowers which resemble a smoking pipe. With 4-8" heart-shaped leaves, Victorian gardeners in the southern United States frequently used these plants to shade porches and other outdoor areas. It will do well in pots with a trellis in a partial shady area also. The plant is important for two of our native swallowtails, our butterflies of the month, the Polydamas and Pipevine Swallowtails. The Pipevine caterpillars can only feed on *Aristolochia* native plants. But please avoid planting Brazilian Dutchman's Pipe, aka Giant Pelican Flower, aka Giant Dutchman's Pipe *Aristolochia gigantea*. Pipevine Swallowtails will mistakenly lay eggs on this Brazilian native. Unfortunately, the plant is fatally toxic to early instar Pipevine swallowtail caterpillars. While the Polydamas swallowtail can handle the toxicity of the *Aristolochia gigantea*, the Pipevine swallowtail cannot. Another one to avoid is *Aristolochia elegans* (Elegant Dutchman's Pipe or Calico flower) a category II invasive to Florida – even though both Pipevine swallowtail and Polydamas can use it as a host plant. Unfortunately plants in the nursery trade do not come with labels that say "this species kill butterfly larvae" or "this species is invasive to Florida."

Woolly Dutchman's Pipevine was historically found along streams and moist woods in its native range in the southeastern and south-central United States. Listed as a Zone 5-8b perennial, this plant does best in our Tampa

gardens with filtered sun or light shade. It's important to keep the soil moist with watering twice a week to mimic its natural habitat.

Please note: all parts of this plant are toxic when ingested, so please avoid planting where children or pets might accidentally ingest it.

\$18.00 / 1 Gallon

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Gift cards are available in any denomination, and are good for plants, or something special from the gift shop.

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Design with Vines



© Anita Camacho

Trumpet Creeper (*Campsis radicans*)

Trumpet Creeper (*Campsis radicans*) is a long-lived woody and robust perennial. It is a fast grower, climbing to approximately 30-60 feet tall and spread 5-10 feet. It has a couple other common names - cow itch vine and hummingbird vine. It produces clusters of showy, orange/scarlet trumpet-shaped flowers that bloom year-round with its prettiest blooms in spring and summer. Its fruit resembles a long brown bean capsule containing several seeds. It grows best in full sun and will produce more blooms in a sunny location as compared to partial shade. Trumpet Creeper prefers medium moisture in sandy or clay soils. Best not to plant this vine where it can attach with aerial rootlets that have adhesive disks allowing it to adhere to wood, brick, and stucco as it can damage these surfaces. It's best to grow on a trellis, trees, fences, arbors or another sturdy structure to support its weight as the plant matures and can be controlled. Its rapid growth makes training the vine easy with regular pruning as it grows. It can also be used as an attractive ground cover, grown in a container where it will hang down over the side of the pots or hanging baskets. This is a very attractive plant to hummingbirds and other pollinators. It serves as a host plant for the Plebeian sphinx moth (*Paratraea plebaja*).

\$22.00 / 3 Gallon

SHOP NOW

Nectar Plant of the Month



Lyreleaf Sage (*Salvia lyrata*)

Lyreleaf Sage (*Salvia lyrata*) is an attractive long-lived perennial in the mint family with lavender-blue flowers that bloom from late winter to late spring (see photo 11). It is a highly adaptable plant that can tolerate drought and flooding during the rainy season. The foliage has nice green leaves with purple/reddish/burgundy coloring in the midribs of the leaves. (see photo 12). It is found along woodland edges, open areas, disturbed sites, and landscapes. It may grow to 1 to 2' feet in moist to dry well-drained soils. It tolerates full sun to partial shade and Florida's heat and humidity. It can prolifically seed and works in gardens and meadow settings. It can also be used with a mix of ground covers and will tolerate mowing. Its tubular flowers are pollinated by bees but very attractive to our butterflies of the month, hummingbirds, skippers, and other pollinators.

Salvia lyrata is a medicinal and edible herb. Young Lyreleaf sage leaves have a slightly minty flavor, which adds an interesting, subtle flavor to salads or hot dishes. The entire plant, including the blooms, can be dried and brewed into tea. Often flavored with a bit of honey, the tea (sometimes used as a gargle) may soothe coughs, colds, and sore throats.

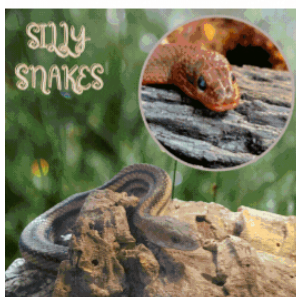
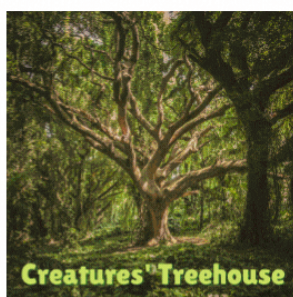
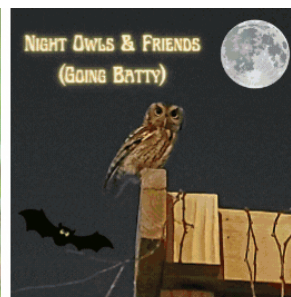
It is moderately resistant to deer.

Pair it with Wild Bergamot (*Monarda fistulosa*), Purple Coneflower (*Echinacea purpurea*), and Blue Curls (*Trichostema dichotomum*) for a garden sure to attract our native pollinators.

\$8.00 / 1 Gallon

SHOP NOW

KIDS' CORNER



Summer Nature Camps

Register while spots are available! Summer is here and it's time to get excited about nature. Spend this summer discovering the tiny world of bugs! Buzz with the bees, get silly with snakes and leap with the lizards before school starts again. Campers will discover nature and wildlife while learning to care for our environment. Every child will get an opportunity to release a butterfly by the end of the camp (weather permitting).

Don't delay – space is limited!

REGISTER NOW

“Diggin’ in to Restore Butterfly Habitat in Tampa Bay”

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



UPCOMING VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES:
(All events are subject to change due to weather.)

TBBF Hell Strip Habitat Maintenance: May 18 @ 5:30 - 7:30 pm

Volunteers are needed to perform Hell Strip Habitat maintenance (4110 W. Estrella St.).

To volunteer, click or copy and paste into a browser: <https://volunteersignup.org/JR3FQ>

CFC Butterfly Garden Maintenance: May 26 @ 9:00 - 11:00 am

The Florida Aquarium, Tampa Bay Butterfly Foundation and FWC's Suncoast Youth Conservation Center are looking for volunteers to assist with habitat maintenance at Center for Conservation site of the Florida Conservation and Technology Center in Apollo Beach (529 Estuary Shore Lane) as well as their Adopt a Road site along Dickman Road.

To volunteer, click or copy and paste into a browser: <https://volunteersignup.org/E98AD>

Encore! Technology Park: May 31 @ 5:30 - 7:30 pm

Volunteers are needed to help maintain the Tampa Bay Butterfly Foundation-sponsored butterfly garden at Encore! Park located at 1210 E. Harrison St. (Corner of Harrison Street and Hank Ballard St.)

To volunteer, click or copy and paste into a browser: <https://volunteersignup.org/JMX3H>

Summer Kids' Camp Assistants: May 31 - August 9, 8:00 am - 1 pm

High School and adult volunteers are needed to assist with our Kids' Nature Camps this summer. A commitment for a full week of camp is preferred; we will have a meeting the week prior to provide information.

To volunteer, click or copy and paste into a browser: <https://volunteersignup.org/BDDPP>



Little Red Wagon Native Nursery:

We currently need garden enthusiasts to help us support the efforts of Tampa Bay Butterfly Foundation's conservation, restoration, research, and education efforts. To join our awesome volunteer team, click or copy and paste into a browser:

<https://volunteersignup.org/9BQTJ>

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.

VOLUNTEER WITH US!

May 14 - Butterfly Walk at Picnic Island

Join Tampa Bay Butterfly Foundation and NABA Tampa Bay on a butterfly walk at Picnic Island. This is a new location that may be part of the North American Butterfly Association count circles for Tampa Bay. Come join us to help monitoring populations of butterflies in this beautiful park. This will be free for NABA members. Non-NABA members fee: \$5. Please bring payment morning of event. This event is subject to change due to weather.

\$5.00 / Non-NABA Members

REGISTER



TAMPA BAY BUTTERFLY FOUNDATION **NABA** North American Butterfly Association

Butterfly Walk

Non-NABA Members: \$5 **MAY 28** *at* Violet Cury Preserve
10:00 AM - 12:00 PM

BUTTERFLYTAMPA.COM
Violet Cury Preserve - 1802 Sinclair Hills Rd, Lutz

May 28 - Butterfly Walk at Violet Cury Preserve

Join Tampa Bay Butterfly Foundation and NABA Tampa Bay on a butterfly walk at Violet Cury Preserve in Lutz. Come join us to help monitoring populations of butterflies in this beautiful park. This will be free for NABA members. Non-NABA members fee: \$5. Please bring payment morning of event. This event is subject to change due to weather.

\$5.00 / Non-NABA Members

REGISTER

Pardon Our Metamorphosis

Visit our temporary butterfly education exhibit during Little Red Wagon Native Nursery's normal business hours while the Butterfly Conservatory is being constructed. Enjoy live butterflies, their caterpillars



LRW May Newsletter

and chrysalis as well as a few native reptiles Tuesdays through Sundays. While the education exhibit is currently free, we do accept donations for Tampa Bay Butterfly Foundation for education, research, habitat restoration and conservation for butterflies and native plants in our area. Please keep visiting

[Butterfly Conservatory of Tampa Bay](http://www.ButterflyTampa.com) website for updates regarding our Grand Opening. For updates, visit:

www.ButterflyTampa.com

Monthly Calendar of Events

May 1: *National Start Seeing Monarchs Day*
May 3: *National Garden Meditation Day*
May 4: *National Teachers' Day*
May 5: *Cinco De Mayo*
May 8: *Mother's Day*
May 20: *Endangered Species Day, World Bee Day*
May 23: *World Turtle Day*
May 30: *Memorial Day*

Visit Little Red Wagon Native Nursery

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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