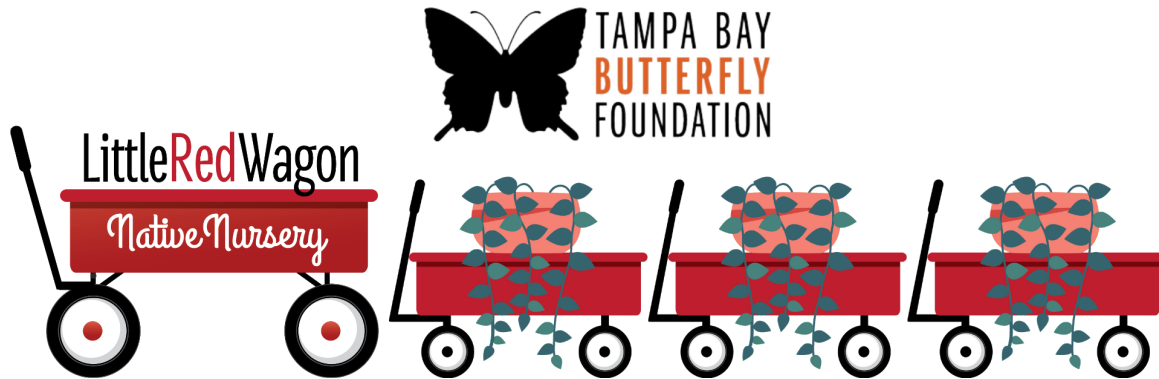


If you cannot see images, please [click here](#)

LITTLE RED WAGONFUL

Nurturing Nature One Wagon at a Time



October 2022

Autumn is a second spring when every leaf is a flower. ~Albert Camus

Pumpkins, pretty leaves, football, and Halloween are some of my favorite things to look forward to this month! Stop by Little Red Wagon Native Nursery to pick up a bale of pine straw for your front porch or to top up your flower beds.

Our awesome, dedicated staff and volunteers worked quickly to clean up the debris after Hurricane Ian so we were able to re-open the nursery on Friday. While it was a sense of relief for our greater Tampa Bay region, our hearts go out to those in South Florida who are suffering a devastating loss. We wish them a swift recovery from the chaos of the storm.

Butterfly of the Month

QUEEN



Queens are medium-sized butterflies (wingspan of 2 ½ to 4 inches) that fly all year in our part of Florida. With white spots that dot its chestnut brown wings and black borders, Queens remind me of a beautiful root beer float. (See Photos 1 and 2.) Often confused with Soldiers, the bottoms of Queens' wings lack the band of pale white squarish spots found on the undersides of Soldiers' hindwings.



Females lay single white eggs on the leaves and flowers of host plants. These include Florida's native milkweeds (*Asclepias* spp.), Gulf Coast Swallow Wort (*Pattalia palustre*), Florida Milkvine (*Matelea floridana*), and White Twinevine (*Sarcostemma clausum*). (Notably, caterpillars can safely ingest the toxic

cardiac glycosides found within these plants; these chemicals make Queens unpalatable, even into adulthood.)



Caterpillars have brightly colored alternating bands (white bands with thin black lines and thick black bands flecked with gold) that warn predators away. They also have three pairs of filaments. The similar Monarch caterpillar has two pairs of filaments. (See Photo #3.) Here in Florida, there are at least three generations each year. Caterpillars can normally be found throughout the year.

Queens can be found in both uplands and wetlands in habitats that range from sandhills to prairies, savannahs, and marshes. Suitable habitat must contain plants that produce poisonous pyrrolizidine alkaloids such as Groundsel Tree (*Baccharis halimifolia*), Scorpion-tail, and Seaside Heliotrope (*Heliotropium* spp.); male Queens use pyrrolizidine alkaloids to synthesize a pheromone that induce females to mate.

During courtship, the pheromone and its poisonous properties are transferred with the sperm packet and subsequently incorporated into the female's eggs. At least one [study](#) indicates that this provides eggs with chemical defense against predation.

In our area, you can regularly see Queens at Fred and Idah Shultz Nature Preserve, Lettuce Lake Park, and Fort De Soto Park. Reach out to us on [Facebook](#) and let us know where you're seeing them.

Host Plant Of The Month



Pink Swamp Milkweed - *Asclepias incarnata*

Pink Swamp Milkweed (*Asclepias incarnata*), one of Florida's 21 native species of milkweeds, is an erect, short-lived clumping perennial that will typically grow to about 4' tall and 1.5' wide. Its large, showy pink blossoms comprise many small, rose-pink flowers that emit a beautiful fragrance similar to the scent of vanilla. The flowers are magnets for hummingbirds, bees, butterflies, and other pollinators. The plant is also the larval host plant for Monarchs, Queens, and Soldiers.

This short lived perennial does well in partial shade to full sun locations both in a pot or in the ground. It goes dormant around November. When the stems turn brown, the plant is not dead! Please do not disturb the roots or remove the plant. Simply cut the stems back to about 6 inches and leave it where it is planted and continue regular watering. These brown stems are attached to the roots and in the spring, the plant pushes up from the roots. An important note of caution is to wear gloves when handling all milkweeds to avoid the white milky toxic sap that can irritate skin and if it gets in your eyes has been known to cause blurred vision. The white sap can cause chemical burns to the eyes and if you get it in your eyes, it is recommended to see an ophthalmologist right away.

Pink Swamp Milkweed is found as far north as Quebec, Canada and as far west as Manitoba in Canada and New Mexico in the US. In its native environments, the plant is most often found in floodplain swamps, hydric hammocks, wet meadows and marshes. Despite its name, Pink Swamp Milkweed can tolerate moderately dry soil conditions and is one of the few milkweeds I've successfully grown in planters.

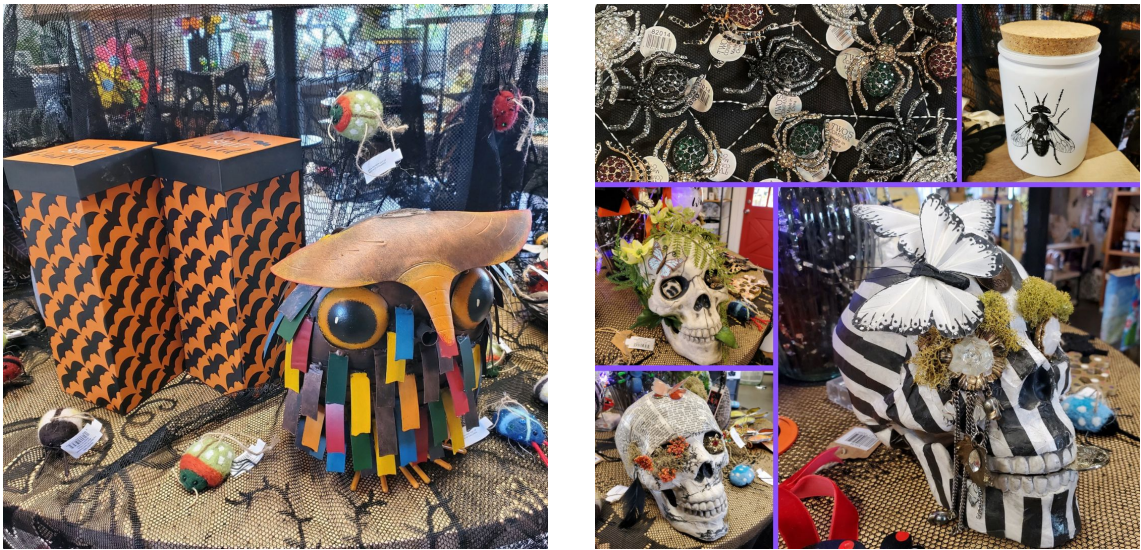
The genus *Asclepias* is named for Asklepios, the Greek god of healing, because some *Asclepias* species have medicinal properties. Indeed, Iroquois used a decoction of Pink Swamp Milkweed as a diuretic and

kidney aid while the Meskwaki used an infusion of the plant's roots to destroy tapeworms. Specific epithet means flesh-colored.

Fun fact: During World War II, the milkweed seed floss was collected and used to fill life jackets. The floss is still used today as a hypo-allergenic filling in pillows and comforters.

[Shop now](#)

Garden Swag



SwagON

Looking for some spooky bug and butterfly vibes? Come check out our Halloween selection with some fab-boo-lous custom handmade pieces.

Right after Halloween is Dia de los Muertos. Monarch butterflies play a role in Dia de los Muertos (The Day of the Dead) because they are believed to hold the spirits of the departed. The arrival of the monarchs migrating to Mexico that typically start arriving on November 1st coincides with this celebration. November 1st is a day to remember children who have passed away and on November 2nd to adults who have passed are honored. This is a celebration of life. Flowers, butterflies and skulls are typically used as symbols. We've got decorative skulls and flowering plants to attract butterflies to your landscape.

[SHOP NOW](#)

Nectar Plant of the Month



Beach verbena - *Glandularia maritima*

Beach Verbena (*Glandularia maritima*) is a long-lived perennial endemic to Florida's coastal counties from Flagler County through the Keys and north to Collier County (plus Hendry and Lee Counties.) Beach Verbena typically grows to 1 foot tall and will grow 1.5- to 3- feet wide as a subprostrate plant that roots at its nodes. Its native habitat includes back dunes, disturbed dunes, coastal strands, and coastal hammocks. It has a high tolerance to salt wind and salt spray, is drought resistant and does best in full sun and nutrient-poor soils.

Beach Verbena has showy, star-like pink-to-purple flowers that are a fantastic nectar source for a range of butterflies, skippers, moths, and bees. While these beauties bloom throughout the year, the blooms are most prolific in the spring and summer.

The plant does well as a “[spiller](#)” in container gardens and plays nicely with Giant Ironweed (*Vernonia gigantea*), Scarlet Morning Glory (*Ipomoea imperati*), and Sea Oats (*Uniola paniculata*) in the landscape. It also is incredibly useful in dune restorations.

Beach Verbena is extremely rare but please note: the Florida Native Plant Society states, “Be careful to plant only your local verbenas. Closely related verbenas hybridize, and you do not want to damage the genetics of the species found naturally near you.”

[SHOP NOW](#)

Design With Vines



Virginia Creeper v. Poison Ivy

Virginia Creeper (*Parthenocissus quinquefolia*) is a deciduous, woody vine that can be trailing or climbing, growing to lengths of 30 to 50 feet. A vigorous and rapid grower, Virginia Creeper is one of the easiest vines to grow. It tolerates a range of condition and will grow in full sun to part shade and average, medium-moisture (but well-drained) soils.

Virginia Creeper's tiny white (and somewhat inconspicuous) flowers provide a great nectar source for bees in the summer and the plant is a larval host for several sphynx moths and the Grapeleaf Skeletonizer moth. However, it's this time of year that Virginia Creeper really shines. In the fall, its dark green leaves of summer turn brilliant shades of mauve, red, and purple. Its blue berries and caterpillars it hosts are an abundant and important fall food source for small animals and birds, especially migrating birds. Birds that are attracted to the berries include woodpeckers, titmice, chickadees, nuthatches, thrushes, robins, and more.

Virginia Creeper is native to habitats that include riverine forests, flatwoods, hammocks, and thickets. Because of its similarity to Poison Ivy (*Toxicodendron radicans*), children learn the rhyme, "Leaves of three, let it be; Leaves of five, let it thrive" because Poison Ivy's leaflets are normally in groups of three, while those of Virginia Creeper are normally in groups of five.

Great words to heed! About 85 percent of the population is allergic to Poison ivy and, according to [researchers at Duke University](#), it's the most common cause of environmental contact allergy."

[SHOP NOW](#)

KIDS' CORNER



Fall is here and here are some ways to keep the kids entertained with our Thankful for Nature camps during school breaks. Dive into the world of creepy crawlies during our October camp by learning about spooky pollinators. Or learn why we should remain grateful for nature, and more importantly, bugs during our Nature camps in November. Every camp offers a look into a bug's life and teaches about the fascinating world just below our feet. Every camper will get the opportunity to meet our animal ambassadors and release butterflies (weather permitting).

[REGISTER: FALL CAMPS](#)



REGISTER: January 2-6

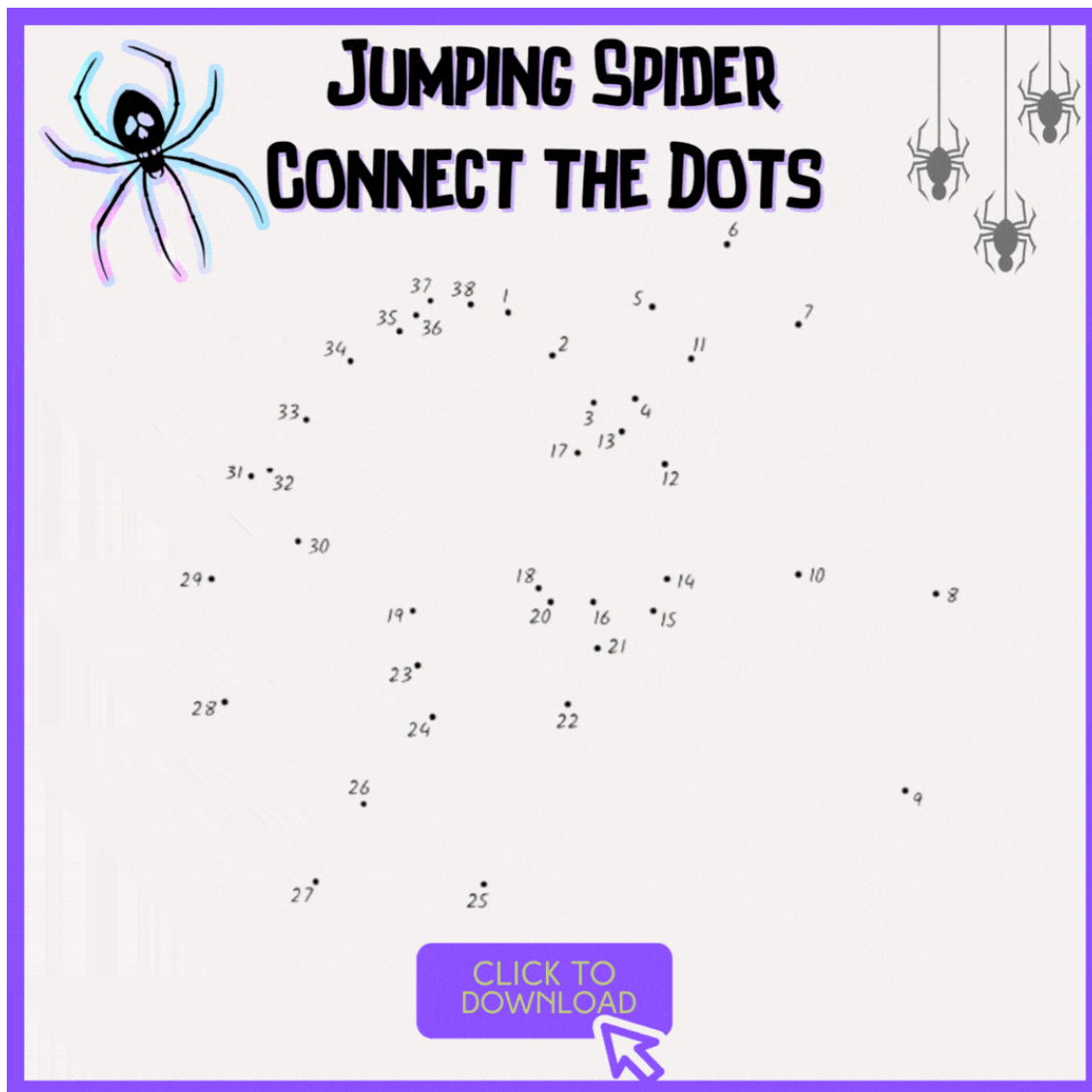


REGISTER: January 9



Check out these kid favorites! With a variety of colors, these hand-made crochet butterflies will flutter their way into your heart!

SHOP NOW



Did You Know?

Bats are superb insect predators and pollinators. Bats can eat an estimated 6,000 bugs per hour and over 500 species of flowers worldwide rely on bats as their pollinator. Keep that in mind as you see bats all around this spooky season!





Fall camps are around the corner and we need you! Sign up to volunteer for one of our fall dates and you'll be surprised when you learn something too. Not only are you able to have fun with the kids, but you get to participate in learning activities, crafts and fun bug games! High school students are eligible to receive service hours toward Bright Futures scholarships. Nature day camps will be held at the Tampa Bay Butterfly Foundation Gallery (4111-A Henderson Blvd.) in South Tampa. Please click the button below to sign up!

VOLUNTEER

"Diggin' in to Restore Butterfly Habitat in Tampa Bay"

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





Volunteer events and activities are subject to change due to weather.



Nature Camp Assistants: **Fall & Winter 7:45 am - 3:15 pm**

We need adults and/or high school students to help with Kids' nature camps in October, November and January. More dates to be announced in upcoming months for 2023.

To volunteer for Fall Camps, click or copy and paste into a browser: <https://volunteersignup.org/ARX4F>

To volunteer for 2023 Camps, click or copy and paste into a browser: <https://volunteersignup.org/9FXAF>

VOLUNTEER - Fall Camps

VOLUNTEER - 2023 Camps



Butterfly Alley Maint.: **Oct. 1st & 2nd @ 10 am – 1:30 pm**

Volunteers are needed to perform cleanup and maintenance of Butterfly Alley Habitat (4110 W. Estrella St.).

To volunteer, click or copy and paste into a browser: <https://volunteersignup.org/Y9KFQ>

VOLUNTEER



Encore! Technology Park: **Oct. 11 @ 9:00 – 11:00 am**

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/8QE77>

VOLUNTEER

Fred Ball Park: **Oct. 19 @ 9:00 – 11:00 am**



Volunteers are needed to help maintain the Tampa Bay Butterfly Foundation-sponsored butterfly garden at 2621 Bayshore Blvd., Tampa, FL 33629 (next to the Rose Circle Garden Club).

To volunteer, click or copy and paste into a browser:

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

VOLUNTEER



CFC Butterfly Garden Maint.: Oct. 20 @ 9:00 – 11:00 am

The Florida Aquarium, Tampa Bay Butterfly Foundation and FWC's Suncoast Youth Conservation Center need 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/33M9C>

VOLUNTEER



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>

VOLUNTEER

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.

Pardon Our Metamorphosis



Visit our temporary butterfly education exhibit inside Little Red Wagon Native Nursery during our normal business hours while the Butterfly Conservatory is in permitting to be built. Enjoy live butterflies, their caterpillars 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 our website for updates regarding our Grand Opening.

www.ButterflyTampa.com

Monthly Calendar of Events

October 1: *International Coffee Day*--LRWNN sells variants of coffee plants!
October 3: *World Habitat Day*
October 4: *World Animal Day*--visit our animal ambassadors.
October 10: *World Mental Health Day*
October 16: *World Food Day*
October 20-23: *Florida Birding & Nature Festival*

Join the flock! Come celebrate the birds, wildlife, and natural lands of West Central Florida.

Register Today

FLORIDA BIRDING & NATURE FESTIVAL

A FOUR-DAY FESTIVAL OFFERING EXPERT SEMINARS, FIELD AND BOAT TRIPS, KEYNOTE SPEAKERS, EXHIBITS AND VENDORS!

SUNCOAST YOUTH CONSERVATION CENTER
6650 Dickman Rd, Apollo Beach, FL 33572

Learn more at fbnfestival.org

October 20-23, 2022

Little Red Wagon Native Nursery

Little Red Wagon Native Nursery is a sponsor. Enjoy four days of field and boat trips, expert seminars, keynote speakers, and a great free nature expo!

- October 21: *National Reptile Awareness Day*--say "hello" to our little friends.
 October 22: *Make a Difference Day*--Volunteer to assist with TBBF conservation efforts!
 October 22: *Dade City Monarch Butterfly Festival*



MONARCH BUTTERFLY FESTIVAL

Saturday
October 22, 2022
10 am to 3 pm
Polly Touchton Park

Sponsored by

The Dade City Youth Council & The Dade City Garden Club



FREE FAMILY FUN!

Native Plant Sale, Vendors
Educational Displays & Presentations
Kids' Zone, Live Butterflies
Raffles & Fun for all ages!



Stop by NABA Tampa Bay/Tampa Bay Butterfly Foundation/Little Red Wagon's booth supporting monarch butterflies. Polly Touchton Park is located between 5th St. & 7th St. and Bougainvillea Ave. & Southview Ave Dade City FL.

October 24: *International Day of Climate Action*
 October 26: *National Pumpkin Day*--pick up a Comfort Grip Soil Scoop from our gift shop for carving!
 October 31: *Halloween*



Wonders of Wildlife Festival 2022

Artists, Crafts and Food

November 5
10 am - 4:30 pm
Edward Medard Conservation Park
6140 Turkey Creek Rd., Plant City, FL 33567

Live Birds and Animals



Live Bird of Prey Show

\$15.00 for adults, kids get in free when accompanied by an adult. \$2.00 park fee per vehicle.
RaptorcenterofTampabay.org
813-205-1851



Join Little Red Wagon Native Nursery as we participate in the Wonders of Wildlife Festival 2022 on November 5 at Edward Medard Conservation Park in Plant City. Enjoy the day with several artists, crafts, food vendors, live birds and animals. Both adults and kids can spend the day learning about nature, wildlife, including free-flying birds over the audience at 11 am and 2 pm during the live Bird of Prey shows.

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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