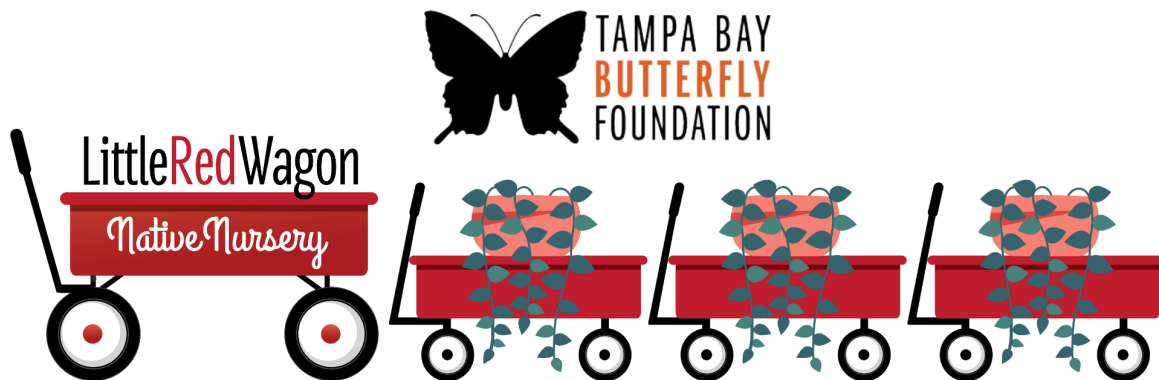


If you cannot see images, please [click here](#)

LITTLE RED WAGONFUL

Nurturing Nature One Wagon at a Time



September 2023

“The beauty of the natural world lies in the details.” – Natalie Angier

Fall is on its way as September reminds us that summer is coming to an end and the onset of cooler weather will begin...or at least that is the hope for Floridians! Football is in the air, pumpkin "everything" begins and we begin to see the dwindling of daylight each day warning us that the year is winding down. This month, we begin our monthly Bug Club for Kindergarten to Grade 5 kids and our upcoming Fall Nature Camps are open for registration and already filling up!

Butterfly of the Month



Statira sulphur

Statira Sulphur are large (wingspan 2 3/8 - 3 1/8 inches) lovelies that are generally a pale yellow (female) or lemon-yellow (male). Females often have five pinkish spots in a zigzag pattern on the bottom hindwing (see photo #1); males lack these spots. (See Photo #2.)

Female Statira Sulphurs lay single, whitish eggs on the new growth of the leaves of Coinvine, the native host plant in Florida for these Statira Sulphur caterpillars. Caterpillars are green with pale yellow lines on its sides and tiny blue spikes.

Statira Sulphurs produce at least three generations per year in Florida and can be found near coastal uplands and mangrove swamps. We regularly see them nectaring on Firebush at Fort DeSoto Park and at Picnic Island Park. As seen in these photos, they also really enjoy the nectar from Seaside Ageratum (*Ageratum maritimum*). Let us know if you see any while you're out and about. Email your photos to info@ButterflyTampa.com. We'd love to know what you find!

Host Plant Of The Month



Coinvine - (*Dalbergia ecastaphyllum*)

Coinvine (*Dalbergia ecastaphyllum*) is a salt tolerant, evergreen semi-prostrate vine that easily grows to 30 feet. With clusters of small, white, pea-shaped flowers producing flat, penny-sized seed pods that turn coppery-brown and give the plant its common name, Coinvine is commonly found in beach dunes, estuaries, maritime hammocks, mangrove swamps, and salt marshes on both coasts in Florida from Pinellas County south to the Keys and north to Brevard County. The plant attracts bees, butterflies and other butterflies. It is also the host for Statira Sulphur and Gray Hairstreak caterpillars.

Its taproots and salt tolerance make Coinvine incredibly well suited to dune restoration efforts and beachfront properties. The plant performs best in full sun and moderately moist, well-drained soil. However, Coinvine forms dense thickets and scrambles over other plants. It is consequently best to plant Coinvine where it has plenty of room to run. Alternatively, Coinvine can be grown in containers, but it requires well-draining potting mix, regular watering, and consistent fertilization.

Please note: Coinvine is toxic if ingested and should not be planted in areas where children or pets might eat it.

Garden Swag



Get Your SwagON!

September is National Honey Month! Most of the honey found in grocery stores is pasteurized. While the high heat during pasteurization kills improves the color and texture, removes crystallization, and extends the shelf life, many of the beneficial nutrients are also destroyed in the process. Raw honey contains an many plant chemicals that act as antioxidants. Stop by our Gift Shop and pick up raw Orange Blossom or Wildflower honey, which we source from a trusted local producer. Enjoy the sweet benefits of raw honey!

[SHOP NOW](#)[SHOP NOW](#)

Nectar Plant of the Month



Firebush - (*Hamelia patens*)

Firebush (*Hamelia patens*) is a long-lived perennial shrub that adds a vibrant burst of color to the garden. Typically growing 15' to 20' tall by 8' wide, and distinguished from its Caribbean and Central American cousins which have yellow or orange flowers, our native Firebush has showy red tubular flowers that are a magnet for bees, butterflies, moths, and hummingbirds. This plant is semi-evergreen; it is native to USDA Zones 9-11 and, if the winter is mild, will bloom every month of the year, providing a great nectar source for our native pollinators. Flowers give way to purple-black glossy fruits that attract a number of songbirds including wood thrush and mockingbirds. Firebush is also the caterpillar host plant for Pluto Sphinx Moths.

This shrub is native to coastal forests, upland forests and hammocks. It prefers full sun and well-drained, but somewhat moist soil. The plant grows quickly: University of Florida IFAS notes a 1-inch spring-planted specimen can easily reach 5 feet by the following winter. It makes a great accent and can also be used in a mass planting at the back of a planting bed or as a screen to provide privacy. Pair Firebush with Tropical Sage (*Salvia coccinea*) or Great Blue Lobelia (*Lobelia siphilitica*) for a vibrant, exuberant garden, or make it a standout focal point by juxtaposing it with Whorled Milkweed (*Asclepias verticillata*) or Salt and Pepper (*Melanthera nivea*).

(Fun fact: Missouri Botanical Garden notes the plant's genus (*Hamelia*) derives from the name of the celebrated French botanist and physician, Henri Louis du Hamel du Monceau, while its specific epithet (*patens*) means spreading.)

[SHOP NOW](#)

Design With Edibles



Seagrape (*Coccoloba uvifera*)

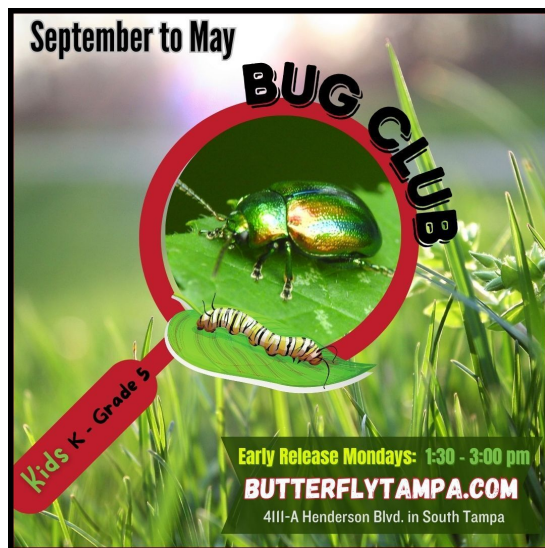
Seagrape (*Coccoloba uvifera*) is an evergreen, multi-stemmed large shrub or small tree that can easily reach heights of 50 feet in zones 10a-11. With round, leathery leaves that turn bright red in the late fall, inconspicuous ivory-colored flowers that grow as 8-10" spikes and attract a range of butterflies and bees, this plant is truly noted (and named!) for its clusters of ¾-inch grapes (female trees only) that ripen to a deep purple by late summer. These grapes can be used to make jellies, preserves, and wine if birds and small mammals don't devour them first. Note that Seagrape is dioecious: to obtain fruit set, the female requires that a male be planted nearby for proper pollination.

Seagrape is native to coastal hammocks, coastal scrub, coastal grasslands and beach strands. In Florida, it can be found along the Gulf Coast from Pinellas County south to the Keys and on the Atlantic Coast from southern Volusia County south. It requires full sun and sandy, well-drained soils and its high tolerance to salt and drought make this an ideal option for coastal landscapes where it can also help control dune erosion. Grow Seagrape as an interesting specimen or prune a row of them to create a dense hedge and privacy fence.

Please note: Seagrape leaves are slow to decompose, so be sure to only plant in areas where this won't be an issue.

[SHOP NOW](#)

KIDS' CORNER



MONTHLY BUG CLUB

This monthly Bug Club will be held on Early Release Mondays for Hillsborough County Public Schools during the school year.

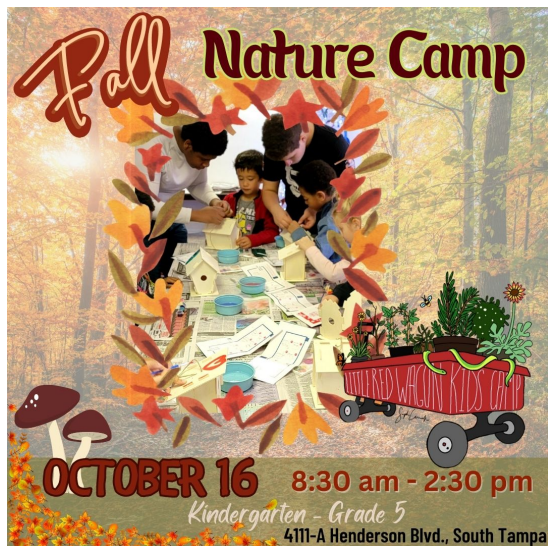
From 1:30 to 3:00 p.m., Kindergarten to Grade 5 children will participate in various activities exploring nature and will meet animal ambassadors too!

There will be no club activities on non-student days that fall on a Monday.

REGISTER NOW

Three Nature Camps will be offered on Hillsborough County Public School breaks this fall for Kindergarten to Grade 5 children from 8:30 am to 2:30 pm. Every camper will have the opportunity to release a butterfly by the end of the camp.

BUTTERFLYTAMPA.COM



This one-day camp will keep kids busy as bees while they learn about the ecosystem in their very own backyards.

REGISTER: OCT. 16



During this a one-day camp, kids will explore bugs that are red, white and blue too! Dive into the patriotic spirit while learning about amazing bugs.

REGISTER: NOV. 10

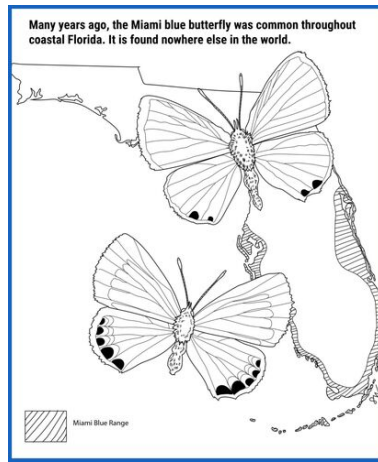


This is the third year we are offering this popular camp which always fills up quickly!

There will be daily explorations of our backyard as we hunt for the creatures we learn about each day. Our animal ambassadors will make guest appearances, too.

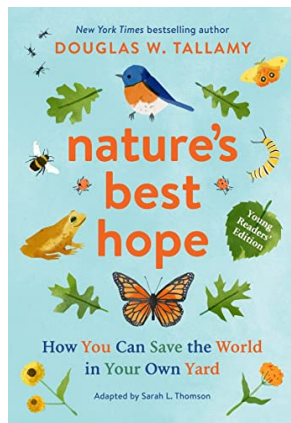
Campers will learn to be grateful for all that nature offers and why it's important to nurture nature! Don't miss out on this special camp during Thanksgiving school break.

REGISTER: NOV. 20-22



MIAMI BLUE BUTTERFLY COLORING PAGE

Check out this coloring sheet about the endangered Miami Blue! What do you notice about their range years ago versus now?

[Download PDF](#)


In Nature's Best Hope (Young Readers' Edition), Doug Tallamy empowers kids to use their own yards to help combat the negative effects of climate change.

[SHOP NOW](#)

WACKY FACT!

The native Miami Blue butterfly is among the rarest insects in North America. It can only be found on two small islands of the keys.



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

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





Butterfly Alley Maintenance

Volunteers are needed to perform cleanup and maintenance of Butterfly Alley habitat (4110 W. Estrella St., behind Little Red Wagon Native Nursery). We will not be performing maintenance this month but hope you will join us in the future.

VOLUNTEER: September 15



CFC Habitat Maintenance

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.

VOLUNTEER: September 21



Encore Park! Maintenance

Volunteers will be helping to maintain a Tampa Bay Butterfly Foundation-sponsored butterfly garden at Encore Park located at 1210 E. Harrison St. (Corner of Harrison Street and Hank Ballard St.).

VOLUNTEER: September 30



Nature Camp Volunteers

Sign up for a rewarding experience mentoring Kindergarten to Grade 5 children during our Fall Nature Camp programs. Click the button below to select the date(s) you are available to volunteer. This is a great opportunity for High School students to earn hours for the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship program and college environmental science students.

VOLUNTEER: Fall Camps

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.

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.

Education Exhibit



Visit our butterfly education exhibit inside Little Red Wagon Native Nursery during our normal business hours. Enjoy seeing live butterflies, their caterpillars and chrysalis as well as a few native reptiles every day of the week!

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.

BUTTERFLYTAMPA.COM

Monthly Calendar of Events

SEPTEMBER 1 Happy Labor Day - Little Red Wagon will be CLOSED.



SEPTEMBER 4 National Wildlife Day
SEPTEMBER 5 Amazon Rainforest Day
SEPTEMBER 6 National Read a Book Day
SEPTEMBER 7 International Day of Clean Air
SEPTEMBER 16 World Cleanup Day
SEPTEMBER 21 National Paw Paw Day
SEPTEMBER 21 Zero Emissions Day
SEPTEMBER 22 Elephant Appreciation Day
SEPTEMBER 23 Ecological Debt Day, Fall Equinox
SEPTEMBER 24 World Rivers Day, World Gorilla Day
SEPTEMBER 26 World Environmental Health Day
SEPTEMBER 29 National Coffee Day, World Heart Day
SEPTEMBER 30 Family Health Fitness Day

Little Red Wagon Native Nursery is Tampa'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](https://www.LittleRedWagonNativeNursery.com)

Email: Info@ButterflyTampa.com

Hours: Mondays: 11-3, Tuesdays - Fridays 11-5:30, Saturdays 10-5:30, Sundays 12-4

[Visit Little Red Wagon Native Nursery](#)

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