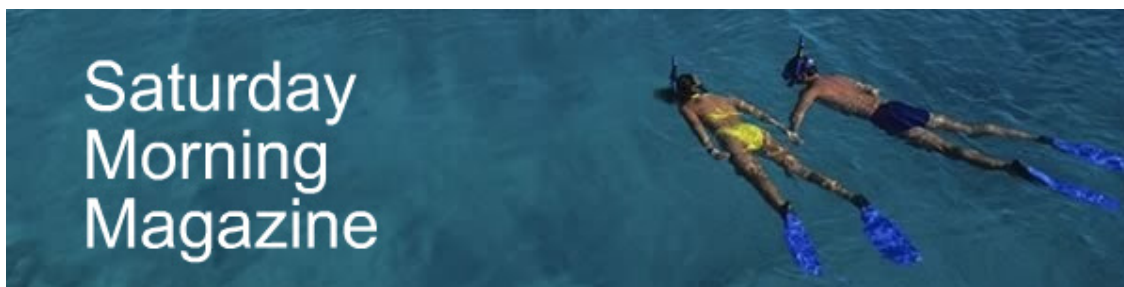


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Butterfly Gardens Open in Florida

You have to love [butterflies](#). They don't practice social distancing. Males and females chase each other around shamelessly. Young swallowtail caterpillars chew leaves while lined up in a row, side by side, touching even. Such is life in a butterfly garden.

Located inside [Tradewinds Park](#) ten miles north of Fort Lauderdale, Butterfly World has a series of domed enclosures packed with butterfly and moth friendly plants along with quite a few songbirds.

They say they have 20,000 butterflies but who's counting? Stepping inside Butterfly World for my first visit I saw was a showstopper – an Atlas butterfly. Wow. Notice the camouflage on the ends of the wings – colored to look like fierce heads and intended to scare away predators.

butterfly gardens - at Butterfly World in Coconut Creek you might see an Atlas moth

I would be remiss if I didn't tell you Butterfly World also has an excellent nursery. You will be tempted and may even succumb to temptation. I certainly did.

Address: 3600 W. Sample Road, Coconut Grove, FL 33073. Phone: 954-977-4434. Open 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Saturday, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Sundays. Masks and social distancing required.

Admission: Adults \$32.50, children ages 3-11 \$22.50 under the age of two admitted free. Discounts for military and AAA members – check online.

 [Sea Aster Gallery shop](#)

[Butterfly Rainforest](#)

A huge enclosed area, Butterfly Rainforest is part of the Florida Museum of Natural History in Gainesville. Re-opens to the public on July 3, with limited entry and one path access. Masks required along with social distancing.

At any one time the rainforest has up to 50 species of butterflies and moths, all close up, all waiting for their photo opportunity – also see turtles, songbirds and fish.


Address: 3215 Hull Road, UF campus, Gainesville, FL 32611. Phone: 352-846-2000. Admission to Butterfly Rainforest: \$14 adults, \$12 Florida residents and college students, \$12 seniors, \$7 ages 3-17. Call or check website for reopening hours.

Outside areas:

[Pan's Garden](#)


This small garden in the middle of a Palm Beach residential area used to be a parking lot before the Preservation Foundation of Palm Beach came along and rescued it in the 1990s. Now the Foundation headquarters are here along with

several saved architectural features including Pan's Fountain and a tile wall saved from Casa Apará, a home built in the 1920s. The tile work is lovely.

 Butterfly gardens - Pan's garden in Palm beach also has architectural features like this tile wall

Also a pond and a thriving ecosystem featuring native plants and the wildlife they support – including lots of butterflies.

[Atala butterflies](#), rare and found mostly in South Florida come here and lay eggs on native coontie plants. These plants themselves are pretty awesome, coming from a plant family that was around during the time dinosaurs roamed around.

 Butterfly gardens - Atala caterpillars on the back of coontie leaves, Pan's Garden, Palm Beach

Native trees, shrubs, grasses and wildflowers are all crowded together, easy to see and most inspiring – yes, you too can do some of this Florida friendly biodiversity in your garden.

Address: 386 Hibiscus Avenue, Palm Beach, FL 33480. Phone: 561-832-0731 ext. 113.

Hours: Monday through Saturday 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Masks recommended. Social distancing required. No admission. Parking is on the street.

[Harry P. Leu Gardens](#)

Noted for their tropical lush displays, Harry P. Leu gardens also includes other garden areas like a vegetable garden, raised bed garden and a fantastic butterfly garden. It was here that I first realized a trellis with native plants like coral honeysuckle climbing on it could work in my garden. And the winding paths in the butterfly garden section are overflowing with butterfly friendly plants, both in the ground and in pots, both host and nectar plants.

 Butterfly garden at Harry P. Leu Gardens in Orlando

Address: 1920 N. Forest Avenue, Orlando FL 32803. Phone: 407-246-2620.

Hours: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. every day. Cashless entry. Buy tickets on line or with a credit card upon arrival. Fees: \$10 adults, \$7 children ages 4-17. Masks required.

Now that you are stirred up by gardens described here in Saturday Morning Magazine, Google your area, find butterfly gardens, go forth and enjoy.

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Breaking News

My book [50 Great Walks in Florida](#) was chosen by University Press of Florida for [July Quarantine best e reads](#)

University press has selected ten books, the e book version, for free reads on e readers in July 2020. Fun!

Upcoming

Butterfly gardeners will find lots of reasons to rejoice with Lucy Tobias' new book *The Zen of Florida Gardening* coming out September, 2020. Reserve your copy [here](#)

The post [Butterfly Gardens Open in Florida](#) appeared first on [Lucy Tobias](#).

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