

Summer 2007

## Mariposa of the Month

# The Monarch Butterfly

## *Danaus plexippus*



The monarch butterfly is sometimes called the “milkweed butterfly” because its larvae eat the plant. In fact, milkweed is the only thing the larvae can eat! If you’d like to attract monarchs to your garden, you can try planting milkweed (if you live in the right area).

Adult female monarchs lay their eggs on the underside of milkweed leaves. These eggs hatch, depending on temperature, in three to twelve days.

The larvae feed on the plant leaves for about two weeks and develop into caterpillars about 2 inches long.

After awhile, the caterpillars attach themselves head down to a convenient twig, they shed their outer skin and begin the transformation into a pupa (or chrysalis), a process which is completed in a matter of hours

Most predators have learned that the monarch butterfly makes a poisonous snack. The toxins from the monarch’s milkweed diet have given the butterfly this defense. In either the caterpillar or butterfly stage the monarch needs no camouflage because it takes in toxins from the milkweed

and is poisonous to predators. Many animals advertise their poisonous nature with bright colors... just like the monarch!

The pupa resembles a waxy, jade vase and becomes increasingly transparent as the process progresses. The caterpillar completes the miraculous transformation into a beautiful adult butterfly in about two weeks..The butterfly finally emerges from the now transparent chrysalis. It inflates its wings with a pool of blood it has stored in its abdomen. When this is done, the monarch expels any excess fluid and rests.

The butterfly waits until its wings stiffen and dry before it flies away to start the cycle of life all over again.

Eastern populations winter in Florida, along the coast of Texas, and in Mexico, and return to the north in spring. Monarch butterflies follow the same migration patterns every year. During migration, huge numbers of butterflies can be seen gathered together.

## New Organization for the Panhandle Butterfly House

With the resignation of Sandra Sherman, past director of the Butterfly House, plans for a reorganization went into action. John Tonkin, director of the Santa Rosa Clean Community System, Inc. formed an advisory board from Master Gardeners, community leaders, volunteers and the three county extension horticulture agents. It was decided to change the structure from a three-county Master Gardener-supported network to a more professional and community oriented group. The Panhandle Butterfly House now falls under the auspices of the Santa Rosa Clean Community System, Inc. as well as the UF/IFAS Cooperative Extension. Board members consist of Master Gardeners from all three counties, community volunteers and members of the three-county garden clubs. Theresa Friday, Santa Rosa County Horticulture Agent, is chairman of the advisory committee.

Jude Groninger, landscape designer, designed the gardens and was instrumental in obtaining plants at no cost or reasonable prices. One Friday in March, over thirty volunteers planted more than 400 plants and transformed the gardens in just one morning. Careful placement of previously donated benches, a beautiful metal sculpture of copper butterflies and a large attractive rock decorate the inside of the butterfly house. New white fencing, new signs and paths through the various flower beds enhance the exterior gardens.

The board is hoping for a new season that will be more successful than ever. With the help of our volunteers, this should be one of the best years for the PBFH. We can always use more volunteer help, both as docents and garden workers. If you are interested, please contact Margaret Fraser 850 939-3379.

# Butterfly House Donors

Many people and businesses have made very welcome donations to the Butterfly House in the past few months. Donations of in-kind materials as well as monetary donations are very much appreciated and we would like to recognize them and show our thanks.

Jude Groninger

Mike Petit

Don Plank/Hiawatha Nursery

Joyce Horgan/Navarre Garden Club

Ed Betts/Publix

Emerald Coast Growers

Skip and Shirley Hibbard

W. Showalter--\$300 for picket fence

UF Student Club

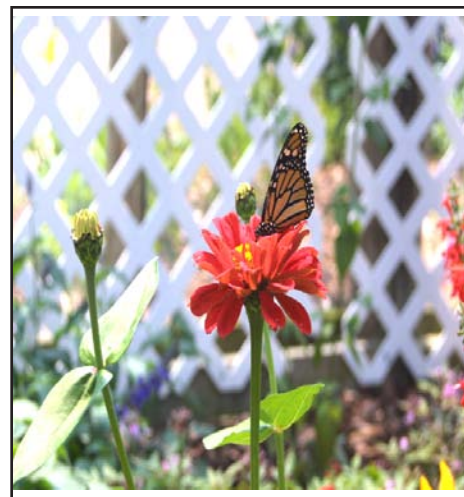
Walmart: Tiger Point

Green Up Santa Rosa

Pam and Wayne Porter/Porter's Plants

Gulf Breeze Garden Club

Emily Peterson/Garden Gate Nursery



## Panhandle Butterfly House Society

The PHBH Advisory Board is establishing a new PBFH Society with the object of raising money for operating funds, maintenance and most important, the weekly purchase of butterflies during the summer. It costs approximately \$6000 each year for live butterflies in the house itself. You will be hearing more about this in the future, but there will be an opportunity to sign on as charter members at our grand opening May 17 from 3-5 pm.

You can be assured that 100% of your gifts will be used exclusively to benefit the BFH and its continual upkeep.

### The gifting levels will be:

- \$10: Skipper
- \$25: Buckeye
- \$50: Swallowtail
- \$100: Gulf Fritillary
- \$250: American Lady
- \$500: Viceroy
- \$1000: Zebra Longwing
- \$1500: Monarch

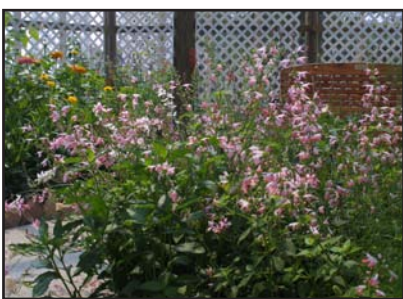
Another chance to help the BFH and make a memorial is to purchase a brick to be installed in the walkway outside. Price of bricks is: \$50.00.



Margaret Fraser in the garden

# Butterfly House Volunteers

Volunteers are the foundation of the Butterfly House. Without them, there would be no butterfly house. Through the years there have been many volunteers, some who have been with us for five to ten years. We would like to thank and recognize these faithful lovers of beauty for their years of service and hope that they will continue to help in years to come.



### 10 Years

- Isabel Clutter --Docent
- Mitzi Emmons--Docent\*
- Frank Paine--Docent and Garden\*
- John Robins-on--Docent and Garden
- Ellen Randle--Docent
- Bette Schultz--Docent

### 5 years

- Fran Cassidy--Docent
- Margaret Fraser--Docent and Garden\*
- Mollie Klemas--Docent
- Kay Mitchell-- Garden\*
- Jean Reasoner --Docent\*

## Panhandle Butterfly House Advisory Board

- Theresa Friday, Extension Faculty & MG Coordinator, Santa Rosa County (SRC)
- Larry William, Extension Faculty & MG Coordinator, Okaloosa County
- Mary Peterzen, SRCMG Association President
- Karen Broughton, Santa Rosa Clean Community Systems, Inc. and SRCMG
- Shirley Brown, Santa Rosa Clean Community Systems, Inc.
- Margaret Fraser, SRCMG
- Jeanne Blage, SRCMG
- Carol Tanksley, Esc. Co MG
- Kay Mitchell, Esc. Co. MG (Newsletter editor)
- Hal Kurtz, Okaloosa Co.
- Dorothy Slye, Tourist Development Council
- Pete Peterzen, Community Volunteer
- Joyce Horgan, Navarre Garden Club President

# Plant of the Month

## Clerodendrum

### Ugandense



#### Description

Blue butterfly bush is an open and sprawling evergreen shrub that gets up to 10 ft (3 m) tall and wide, but is easily kept much smaller. It has opposite leaves that are egg shaped, strongly toothed and about 3-4 in (7.6-10 cm) long. The inflorescences, borne at the ends of long arching branches, are panicles 4-10 in (10-25.4 cm) long composed of individual flowers about 1 in (2.5 cm) long, each with three pale blue lobes and one violet blue lobe. The flowers look like little butterflies in two different shades of blue and are produced more or less continuously throughout the summer and fall.

#### Location

Blue butterfly bush occurs in Kenya and Uganda in East Africa.

#### Light

Grow this clerodendrum in partial shade.

#### Moisture

Water freely in growth but reduce watering in winter.

#### Hardiness

USDA Zones 10 - 11. Blue butterfly bush performs best in a frostfree climate, but it is root hardy in zones 8 and 9, freezing to the ground in winter, but returning from its roots in spring.

#### Propagation

Blue butterfly bush is easy to propagate from stem or root cuttings, or from rooted suckers.

#### Usage

Use blue butterfly bush as a small stand alone specimen or in a mixed border. Prune back this gangly shrub as needed to keep it in check. Clerodendrums flower on the current season's growth, so you can prune them anytime. Cut back the old wood to a pair of buds to improve flowering. In areas that get frost, you can get the most consistent flowering year in and year out by

growing blue butterfly bush in a large pot that can be brought indoors when temperatures approach freezing.

#### Features

There are more than 400 species of Clerodendrum. The members of this diverse genus occur naturally in tropical and subtropical Asia and Africa, and include evergreen and deciduous trees, shrubs, vines and herbaceous plants. Tubeflower, also called Turk's turban, (*C. indicum*) is a roadside weed now established in the southeastern US, and Cashmere bouquet (*C. bungei*) is a nuisance invasive weed in South Florida - it is pretty though. Among the many beautiful ornamental Clerodendrums are flaming glorybower (*C. splendens*) and pagoda flower (*C. paniculata*).

The genus name comes from the Greek: dendron, tree; and kleros, chance, a reference to the varied medicinal properties purported for some members of the genus. *C. trichotomum*, from China, has been shown to lower high blood pressure, and is prescribed in Chinese herbal medicine for a variety of ailments.



Karen Broughton, Theresa Friday and Mary Peterzen with Clerodendrum Ugandense in the garden.



Docent Training Group: 1st row: Theresa Friday, Ellen Roston; 2nd row: Dave Hartger, Barbara Hagenbucher, Jean Reasoner, Mary Peterzen, Margaret Frazer, Isabel Fraysse, Karen Broughton; 3rd row: Rudy Bumbalough, Dian Quinn, Cliffojean Stillwell, Meta Seltzer, Eleeonor Aspliden, Andy Fraysse; 4th row: Frank Paine, Jeanette Todd, Claire Teixeira, Shirley Hibbard, Julie Cozad.

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Panhandle Butterfly House  
PO Box 5208  
Navarre, FL. 32566