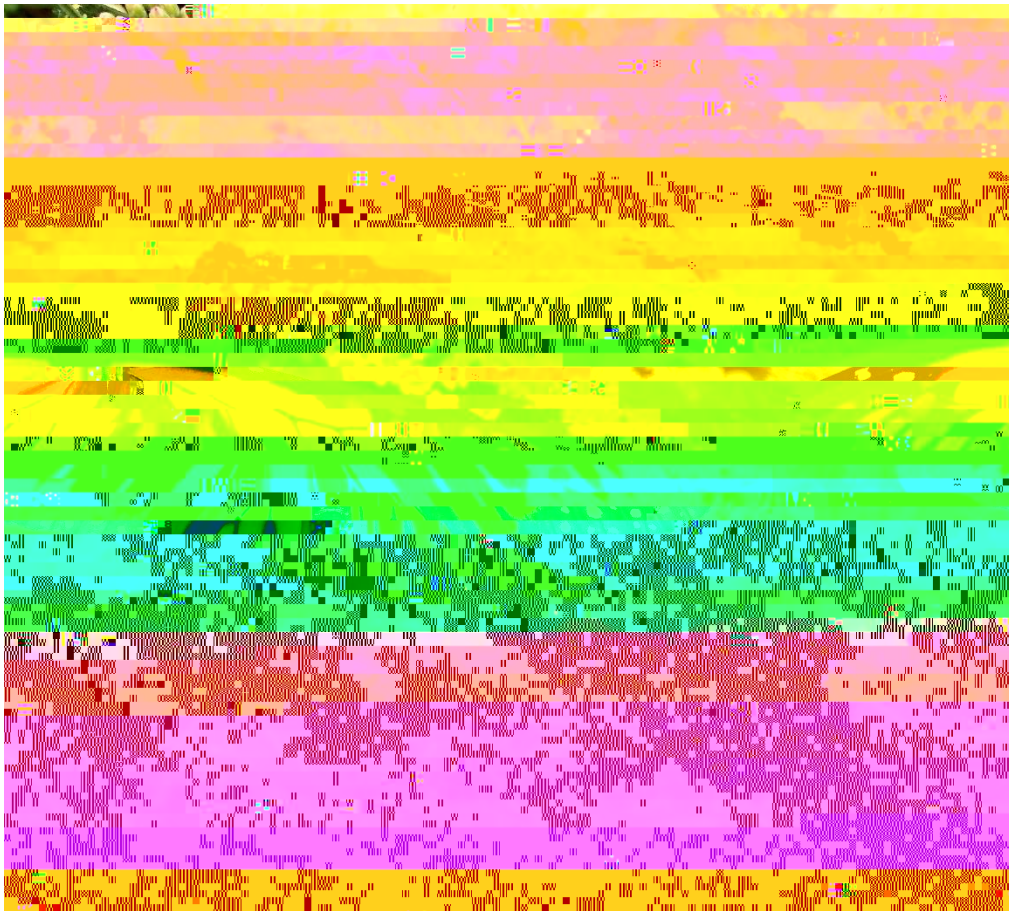


Common Butterflies Found in the Pollinator Garden

Sarah Rayner, Youth Education Coordinator

The butterflies we know most commonly at the LSU AgCenter Botanic Gardens and throughout the surrounding areas. Butterflies are attracted to the nectar flowers that they use as an energy source. Most plant(s) specific to the butterflies are available in the gardens, the butterflies may deposit eggs on the leaves of their host plants. The caterpillars, also known as larvae, feed on the leaves and at some point pupate and emerge as an adult butterfly. Many of the butterflies described by Dr. Chrissy Mogren in 'Louisiana Native Pollinator Trees', will visit the Pollinator Garden to nectar on flowers for energy, but carry out their life cycles laying eggs on host specific pollinator trees in the forest.



Pipevine Swallowtail (*Battus philenor*, Papilionidae)

This butterfly is common in the Southern U.S., and is named after its hostplant, the pipevine plant. The leaves of the pipevine plant (*Aristolochia species*) are toxic to many predators, so as the caterpillar eats the plant it absorbs the toxins and in turn becomes toxic to its own predators. Other butterflies like the black form of the female Eastern Tiger Swallowtail, the Black Swallowtail and Spicebush Swallowtail will mimic the Pipevine Swallowtail for ~~to gain protection~~ protection. The male Pipevine Swallowtail has a striking metallic blue hindwing and forewings that are a dull, blackish color. The females are much

Monarch Butterfly (*Danaus plexippus*, Nymphalidae)

The Monarch butterfly is probably the best known of the butterflies. Monarch butterflies are migrating butterflies that spend their winter in Oyamel Fir trees in the mountains of Mexico and in some parts of Southern California. If the monarch lives in the Eastern U.S., usually east of the Rocky Mountains, it may migrate to Mexico to overwinter. In Florida, the butterflies will migrate back and forth along the east coast, overwintering in Florida. Monarch butterflies that are west of the Rocky Mountains will overwinter in and around Pacific Grove, California in eucalyptus trees. It is the fourth generation of Monarch butterflies that can migrate up to 2,500 miles each season. The only host plant for the Monarch is milkweed (*Asclepias* sp.). The female Monarch butterfly will deposit her eggs on the underside of the milkweed leaves. Habitat conservation, restoration and the planting of native milkweed is recommended to protect Monarch populations. The Monarch caterpillar is toxic to most insects and birds if eaten. The milkweed contains toxic



Common Buckeye (*Junonia coenia*, Nymphalidae)

The Buckeye is common across North America from Canada to Mexico and are especially common in Florida. In late summer through fall, large numbers of adults migrate southward into the Florida peninsula where the adults overwinter. They prefer open sunny habitats from fields, gardens, roadsides and shorelines. The most

Pearl Crescent (*Phyciodes tharos*, Nymphalidae)

The Pearl Crescent butterfly gets its name from the small white crescent moon that is enclosed in a brown patch at center of the margin of the hindwing. They are small butterflies with a wingspan of 1-1 3/8 inches. The wings are orange with black borders and black markings. They are found throughout much of the United States, southern Canada and Mexico. They fly lower to the ground and frequent open areas such as pastures, meadows, road edges, vacant lots, fields, streams, open pinewoods. The caterpillar feeds on asters and is brown with yellow rings and spines that do not sting.

