



# Butterflies Go Free

## DATES

February 18 to April 24, 2016

## SCHEDULE

Tuesday to Sunday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.  
Open on Monday, February 29  
(March Break) and March 28 (Easter)

## PLACE

Montréal Botanical Garden  
4101, rue Sherbrooke Est  
(Pie-IX metro station)

## WEBSITE

montrealspaceforlife.ca

## FACTS

Number of butterflies and moths  
in the greenhouses

**1,500 to 2,000**

Number of butterflies and moths  
released every day

**about 100 \***

Number of butterflies and moths  
released during the event

**between 15,000 and 20,000**

Total number of species present  
during the event

**about 75**

Number of species observed  
during a visit

**about 50**

Places of origin

**Costa Rica, El Salvador, Kenya,  
Malaysia, Philippines, Tanzania,  
and United States.**

Temperature in the greenhouses

**24°C to 29°C\*\***

Number of nature interpreters  
in the greenhouses

**3 to 5**

Attendance since 1998

**2,119,688**

*\* Note that the Insectarium staff releases the butterflies and moths in front of visitors (schedule varies). Visitors can expect to see about 50 different species on any given day.*

*\*\* With relative humidity of between 35% and 60%, the humidex reaches highs of 25°C to 36°C.*

*\*\*\* Plants where females lay their eggs.*

## STARS OF THE SHOW

### *Heliconiinae* Various species

The small spines on these caterpillars make them harder for their predators to swallow and probably also protect them from cannibalism by other young caterpillars.

### *Papilio rumanzovia* Scarlet Mormon

These caterpillars have eyespots on their thorax, giving them a threatening appearance. This effective camouflage makes them look like little snakes.

### *Attacus atlas* Cobra moth

These impressively large caterpillars spray a foul substance to scare off predators.

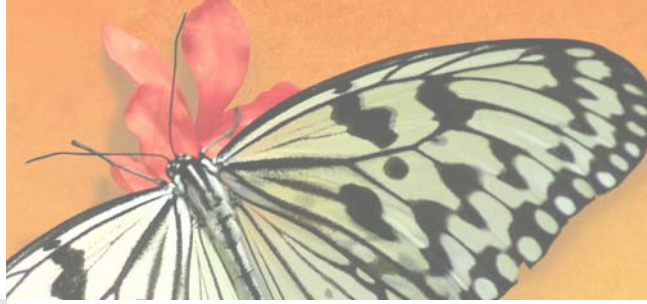
## FAVOURITE PLANTS

### Nectar plants

Butterfly bush • Hyacinth •  
Yellow sage • Star duster •  
Indian hawthorn • Lollypop plant

### Host plants\*\*\*

Asclepias • Calliandra • Key lime •  
Guava • Passion flower



## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### WHEN IS THE BEST TIME TO SEE THE BUTTERFLIES? WHEN ARE THEY MOST ACTIVE?

- **Butterflies are generally more active in the morning, on sunny days,** and when there is a **change in atmospheric pressure.**
- **Butterflies active at dusk** become active **around sunset.**

### HOW LONG DO BUTTERFLIES AND MOTHS LIVE?

Butterflies live **one month, on average,** with some major differences in life spans. Some moths don't eat, meaning that they lead very short lives – just a few days, enough time to find a partner and mate. Others beat longevity records, such as the monarchs that fly all the way from Quebec to Mexico for the winter.

### WHAT ARE THE BIGGEST INSECTS IN THIS YEAR'S EVENT?

The *Attacus atlas*, *Attacus lorquini* and *Attacus caesar* moths are between 20 and 30 cm. All three come from the Philippines.

### HOW MANY SPECIES OF BUTTERFLIES AND MOTHS ARE THERE IN THE WORLD?

There are around **175,000 species** of moths and butterflies in the world. Nearly **12,500** are found in North America and **2,965** in Québec.

### HOW LONG HAVE BUTTERFLIES AND MOTHS BEEN ON EARTH?

According to scientists, the oldest known moth fossil is **190 million years old.**

### DO ALL CATERPILLARS BECOME BUTTERFLIES OR MOTHS?

**Yes.** Butterflies systematically go through a number of stages: egg, caterpillar, chrysalis and butterfly. Moth chrysalises are also enclosed in protective cocoons. The time the insect spends as a caterpillar allows it to store energy, while it undergoes profound anatomical and physiological changes as a chrysalis, and adulthood is devoted to reproduction.

### WHERE DO THE BUTTERFLIES AND MOTHS COME FROM?

The insects in Butterflies Go Free come from butterfly farms in 10 different countries. Butterfly farms are a way to protect butterflies and their habitats by creating fair-trade, sustainable businesses that get local communities involved. By encouraging butterfly farms through the years, the **Montréal Insectarium has preserved more than 60 hectares of rainforest in Costa Rica, the equivalent of 120 soccer fields.**