

7th Annual Monarch Madness set for October 4 and 5

Join the Panhandle Butterfly House in celebrating the amazing journey of the monarch butterfly. The 7th Annual Monarch Madness Butterfly Festival will be held on Friday and Saturday October 4 and 5 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. and offers fun for the entire family. The Panhandle Butterfly House is located at 8581 Navarre Parkway (Hwy 98) in Navarre Park just west of the Navarre Bridge.

The Panhandle Butterfly House is a certified Monarch Waystation with Monarch Watch (www.monarchwatch.org), an education, conservation and research organization at the University of Kansas. On Friday and Saturday, the entire family can enjoy strolling through the vivarium— a screened structure housing hundreds of butterflies and the plants they love. Children can learn about the life and science of the butterfly while earning their Jr. Lepidopterist card entitling them to release a butterfly in the Butterfly House. Children (ages 3 and up) will be able to tag a monarch as part of the annual Monarch Watch.

“The tagging program is a part of a nationwide research program that helps answer questions about the geographic origins of monarchs that reach Mexico, the timing and pace of the migration, mortality during migration, and changes in geographic distribution” said Mary Derrick, UF/IFAS Extension Santa Rosa County Agent.

Other exciting things to do will include:

- Santa Rosa County Master Gardener's Information Table, where you can learn about how to become a Master Gardener.
- Kids can also make and take fun butterfly-related crafts.
- Santa Rosa County 4-H members will showcase several project areas for the public to enjoy.
- Garden Gate Nursery will sell native and nectar plants needed to attract butterflies and answer butterfly gardening questions.
- Navarre Garden Club will sell yard art and help children plant seeds.
- Cub Scouts will sell popcorn.
- Holley-Navarre Elks Lodge #2787 will be raising money for local charities with the sale of hamburgers and hot dogs, along with snacks and soft drinks.
- On Friday only, you can also see exhibits from Turtle Conservation and Navarre Beach Marine Science Station.

Admission is free but donations are encouraged and appreciated. Only through the generosity of our visitors are we able to provide the community with this wonderful outdoor science lab. It is a wonderful opportunity to learn while having loads of fun! Monarch Madness is brought to you by the Panhandle Butterfly House with help from the Tourist Development Council, as part of the 2013 10th Anniversary Beaches to Woodlands Tour.

For more information visit our website at www.panhandlebutterflyhouse.org or contact Mary Derrick at (850) 623-3868 between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. weekdays or via email at maryd@santarosa.fl.gov.

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