



Sophia M. Sachs

Butterfly House

a division of the



MISSOURI BOTANICAL GARDEN

Quick Facts

Mission

To foster a greater understanding of plant and animal relationships in the environment in order to promote the conservation and restoration of natural habitats.

Purpose

To educate the community about butterflies and invertebrates, to instill excitement and curiosity about the natural world, and so build an ethic of care and conservation.

History

- Opened to the Public: September 1998
- Joined the Missouri Botanical Garden's family of attractions: July 2001
- Accredited by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) in 2003, the only dedicated insect facility in this organization.

Location

Faust Park in Chesterfield

Features

- 8,000-square-foot glass tropical conservatory garden where thousands of tropical butterflies fly freely
- Emergence cabinet where visitors can watch butterflies emerge from their chrysalises
- Adjacent space includes living exhibits, classroom, theater, visitor amenities, and gift shop
- Outdoor native butterfly garden featuring nectar sources and host plants to attract both native and migratory butterflies
- Popular location for weddings and other special events

Education Programming

- Extensive formal education programming enjoyed by over 6,000 schoolchildren each year
- Group tours, events, informal education, and other programs reach an additional 12,000 children each year
- Butterfly House website contains free educational materials for teachers and students to learn more about insects and enhance visits

Relationship with Costa Rica

- Tropical butterfly breeding and importation is regulated by a division of the USDA
- Tropical butterflies are considered invasive pests in the caterpillar stage and cannot be allowed outside the conservatory
- Major conservation effort with El Bosque Nuevo in Costa Rica
- Tropical butterfly farming operations are a much less invasive form of agriculture
- Partnerships for conservation and habitat restoration
- El Bosque Nuevo (EBN) is dedicated to sustainably generating profits to preserve rain forest habitat in Costa Rica
 - Butterfly House serves as advisor and major client of EBN since 2002
 - Preserve of 180 hectares (445 acres) in 2002
 - Current size of preserve 400 hectares (988 acres)
 - 7 of those hectares (17 acres) purchased directly with proceeds from Butterfly House purchases of pupae
 - Positive results of the Butterfly House and EBN partnership include:
 - stable jobs for Costa Ricans
 - preserved habitats for thousands of animal species
 - rediscovery and reintroduction of a butterfly species previously thought extinct in Costa Rica