



Your Humane Backyard: Butterfly Gardening

Piano Key Butterfly at Butterfly World

Photo: Deborah Robbins Millman/The HSUS

When you think of butterflies, what comes to mind? Beauty? Joy? Those are common responses; however, butterflies have two other very important roles. As the third most important pollinator species after bees and flies, butterflies' decline is particularly troublesome since many agriculturally-important crops depend on them. Also, as an indicator species sensitive to environmental changes, butterflies may foretell environmental health issues.

Your garden can become a butterfly haven and window on the world with flowering plants and no pesticides. Butterflies will tell you how well you and your local environment are coping with our world. As an added bonus, hummingbirds also frequent butterfly gardens!

Here are some of the butterfly-friendly flowers and shrubs selected by the North American Butterfly Association as important native plants that grow well in south Florida:

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- Alligator Flag
 - Blue Porterweed
 - Butterfly Milkweed
 - Corkystem
 - Firewheel
 - Holywood
 - Partridge Pea
 - Spicy Hackberry
 - Sugarberry
 - Passionflower

Ruby-throated
hummingbird patient

Photo: Staff/The HSUS



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Five Decades of Stewardship

South Florida Wildlife Center | Spring/Summer 2018



Stewardship Begins with You!

A Word from SFWC Executive Director, Debra Parsons-Drake



Photos: SFWC Staff/The HSUS

Cover Photo: Christine Capozziello /The HSUS

Dear Friends of Wildlife,

It's spring and, in South Florida like most of the U.S., it's wildlife maternity season! Our Resource Center is busily fielding calls from people seeking humane means of dealing with litters of wild animals nesting in their yards, trees, woodpiles, boats and crawlspaces. Already, our hospital and nursery are providing care for hundreds of orphans. By the height of season, we'll have as many as 400 wildlife youngsters onsite at once, each needing specialized, individual care.



At South Florida Wildlife Center, our focus is far broader than infants! Annually, we treat between 270 and 360 species of wildlife, including all types of mammals, migratory and pelagic birds, turtles and tortoises - and nearly everything in between. In the past few weeks, we've had some fascinating cases, including a six-foot iguana who, horrifyingly, was shot multiple times with a crossbow. We surgically removed the arrow tips: He made a full recovery and was transferred to a sanctuary. As I write this, a majestic American bald eagle, who came to us unable to fly, is receiving cold laser treatments and making a steady recovery in one of our raptor aviaries. Please continue reading to learn more about the patients you have helped us care for and how you can enjoy your own backyard this spring and summer!

Debra Parsons-Drake

South Florida Wildlife Center: Working for people and wildlife since 1969



SFWC's Mari Diaz
renests a Cooper's hawk

Photo: Christine Capozziello/The HSUS

Partners in Stewardship

While SFWC provides care and rehabilitation to the most vulnerable, all of us can play a role in helping Florida's wildlife thrive.

For instance, by landscaping with native species and minimizing fertilizers and pesticides, we can restore natural habitats. Setting aside undeveloped areas on our private property gives our wild neighbors a place to live. Keep reading to learn more about tree trimming, catios, and creating butterfly gardens – and visit our website at www.southfloridawildlifecenter.org for more ideas!



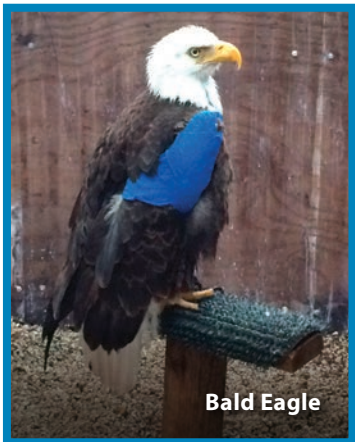
Eastern Screech Owl
in a nest box

Photo: SFWC Staff/The HSUS



The eagle receives cold laser
treatment to reduce pain
and speed healing

Photo: Sarah Stebinger/The HSUS



Bald Eagle

Photo: Deborah Robbins Millman/The HSUS

Bald Eagle Treated at SFWC

Our national bird, the American bald eagle, is the only eagle unique to North America. Although bald eagles have been removed from the national endangered species list, they are still rarely seen in south Florida. Florida has more bald eagles than most of the continental U.S. – and there are only about 1,500 nesting pairs here.

Eagles symbolize strength, but even these powerful, majestic birds can be fragile. This bald eagle was found in Palm Beach County, unable to fly. The eagle is undergoing cold laser treatment to repair its injured wing, and is building its conditioning and strength in our large aviary. Once fully recuperated, the eagle will again fly free.

Support for the eagle's care has been provided by the following Funds at the Community Foundation of Broward: Helen and Frank Stoykov Charitable Endowment Fund, David W. Leonard Fund, and Edwin A. and Jane N. Huston Fund.

Effective Tree Trimming: Be a Good Landlord to Wildlife

In Florida's mild climate, breeding season extends well beyond spring. Some species – including cardinals, mourning doves, squirrels and opossums – have multiple broods or litters to ensure offspring survival. This makes late fall through winter the best, most humane time to trim trees and vegetation.

Proper pruning protects your landscaping. Done improperly, trimming can harm trees and make them more prone to storm damage. It's a good idea to consult knowledgeable, certified and licensed professionals who can safeguard your trees and the wildlife dependent on them.

Tree cavities provide homes for flickers, opossums, and other wildlife.



Opossum in a log

Photo: Shelly Starr/The HSUS



Flicker family

Photo: SFWC Staff/The HSUS



Photo: Pam Thomas/The HSUS

Save Birds and Delight the Cat! Build Your Own Catio

Unfortunately, many of the birds and small mammals treated at SFWC were injured by a family cat. This is distressing for cat owners, and dangerous for cats and wildlife. Cats can have the best of both worlds – the safety of indoors and the stimulation of outdoors – while wildlife is protected with a catio, a cleverly designed window box just for feline family members.

Why?

- Cats experience nature without the dangers lurking outdoors.
- Cats will be healthier, happier and live longer.
- Save on veterinary bills from outside injuries or illness.
- Cats can watch but not touch wildlife, keeping birds and animals safer.

Resources: <https://www.animalsheltering.org/catios>

<https://catiospaces.com/catios-cat-enclosures/diy-plans/window-box-sml/>

Saving the Iguana

South Florida Wildlife Center recently provided lifesaving care for a six-foot iguana who had been cruelly and inhumanely shot multiple times with a crossbow; several of the five darts had to be surgically removed. Fortunately, after treatment & recovery, the animal was transferred to a sanctuary. While we recognize that it can be challenging co-existing with all the species who share our neighborhoods, there are humane ways to do so! YOUR support enables us to provide 365-days-a-year assistance for residents seeking compassionate, non-violent ways to handle wildlife issues. Our Resource Center team provides counsel on issues including keeping animals out of your garden, protecting your bird feeders and discouraging nighttime trash bandits. Call us at (954) 524-4302.

YOU CAN HELP US BECOME BETTER STEWARDS OF THE ENVIRONMENT! If you choose to receive our newsletter electronically, you'll help us save natural resources like trees, help control pollution and waste produced through the printing process, and help us save on postage, allowing us to channel those much-needed funds into caring for the 12,000 animals we treat each year. Please email development@southfloridawildlifecenter.org and tell us that you would rather receive our next mailing electronically.



Photo: Deborah Robbins Millman/The HSUS