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# Butterfly House opens to public next month

The Butterfly House at Irvine Nature Center, shown here in 2015, has a grand opening Sunday, May 22, but opens for the season June 3. (Photo courtesy Laura Soder / Photo courtesy Laura Soder)

By **Sharina Taveras Lopez**

For the Community Times

MAY 17, 2016, 1:22 PM

**O**n Sunday, May 22, those who bought their tickets in advance will be able to enjoy from 1 to 4 p.m. a preview of this year's Native Butterfly House at Irvine Nature Center, for the sold-out grand opening.

For those who missed out on tickets, the Butterfly House will be open every Friday, Saturday, Sunday and Monday from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. beginning June 3 until the end of September, depending on the weather. Admission to the Butterfly House is free.

Laura Soder, the Animal Care and Exhibits coordinator and naturalist, said this is the first year that Irvine Nature Center has done a pre-opening event for the exhibition.

This is the second year that the center has had the Butterfly Exhibition.

"The grand opening is a way for people to feel more involved and [the attendees] can come back throughout the year," Soder said. "This gets people interested and invested in the exhibition."

"We are very excited this year and we have been adding some upgrades," she added.

Beth Lacey Gill, director of marketing, communications and rentals for Irvine, said improvements made to the Butterfly House are new skylights, which will give more lighting to the house and more plants to provide housing and a better environment to the butterflies.

Attendees will be able to plant at Sunday's event, Gill said. Some of the native plants they will be planting are Purple Coneflower (Echinacea), Black-Eyed Susans and Eastern Columbine.

The naturalists will be teaching the attendees about the butterflies' way of living and their life cycles, as well as the differences between native and non-native butterflies, Gill said. At the same time, she said that they will be sharing fun facts, such as that Monarch butterflies can travel 3,000 miles and 30 feet high throughout their lives.

The grand opening is the only time the naturalists will be making tours and teaching the attendees about the butterflies and plants.

Some of the butterflies the attendees will potentially be able to see are tiger swallowtails, black swallowtails, pearl crescents, monarchs and

viceroys. People can also take a hike with the naturalist to survey wild butterflies.

The Butterfly House will be open to the public on June 3 every Friday, Saturday, Sunday, and Monday from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. until the end of September depending on the weather. Admission to the Butterfly House is free.

The next upcoming event is the Monarch Watch on Sunday, Sept. 4 from 1 to 3 p.m. People will be able to learn about the monarch butterflies and their survival skills. The event includes a tour of the Butterfly House. Admission to this event is \$5 per family for members of Irvine Nature Center only.

Irvine Nature Center is at 11201 Garrison Forest Road in Owings Mills. For more information, contact the office number at 443-738-9226 or visit its website, [www.explorenature.org](http://www.explorenature.org).

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