

## ELINOR KLAPP-PHIPPS PARK BUTTERFLIES & BLUEBIRDS

### Bluebirds

Over the years, land has been cleared for housing and industrial developments, shopping malls, highways, and cropland; many old trees have been cut down for firewood. Wooden fence posts that provided nesting cavities have now been replaced with metal posts; the supply of natural nesting cavities for bluebirds and other native cavity nesters has been greatly reduced.

Compounding the problem of habitat loss has been the introduction into North America of the House Sparrow and the European Starling. Both starlings and sparrows are cavity nesters, and both are very aggressive. House Sparrows are small enough to enter any hole that a bluebird can, and are so aggressive that they will chase away the more timid bluebird. Starlings can be excluded from bluebird boxes by using the correct size entrance hole, but will out-compete bluebirds for woodpecker holes and other natural nesting cavities.

During the summer, bluebirds feed mainly on insects and in the winter they depend on many kinds of wild berries.

Even though the bluebird population has greatly decreased, the future can still be promising for them. The most important step we can take to help bring back the bluebird is to provide nesting sites by setting out a bluebird box or starting a bluebird trail. This bluebird trail is a series of 30 bluebird boxes, installed by Bryan Horsey as an Eagle Scout project, placed along the route shown on the map. In areas where nesting boxes have been put up in suitable habitat, bluebird populations are increasing. Bluebirding is a great environmental, hands-on project that people of all ages can enjoy. Follow the trail and see how many of these beautiful birds you can see.



### Butterflies

More than 75 butterfly species have been observed in Elinor Klapp-Phipps Park since July 2001 (for complete list, see separate checklist). This is close to half of the 160 butterfly species that regularly occur in Florida and represents a greater diversity than occurs at many larger parks, preserves, and refuges. A variety of habitats in and around the park support this concentrated biodiversity. Many of these butterflies can be seen along the 1.5 mile loop trail depicted in the map on the inside of this brochure. The trail goes through two of the major habitats: grassy fields, and woodlands. During warm months, 30 to 40 species - and hundreds of individuals - can often be seen in a day.

#### Identifying Butterflies

Butterflies commonly seen along the trail can be identified using the photos on the inside of this brochure. A symbol by each one indicates its usual habitat (F = fields and W = woodlands). While some butterfly species fly most of the year, others fly for only a few months during a specific season. For more extensive information, refer to field guides listed on the back of brochure. Binoculars help greatly in identifying butterflies, as many are small or have small distinctive features. Having close-focusing binoculars is more important than having high magnification. Binoculars that focus to less than 10 feet are best (some focus as close as 3 feet).

#### Two Uncommon Butterflies

Several rare species have been found in the park, but two occur here regularly. The Hoary Edge, although more common farther north, is rare in Florida. It is usually found in the meadow south of Gate A or sunny spots along the roads. The Golden Banded-Skipper is "one of the rarest and most elusive butterflies in the East" (Glassberg, 1999). Yet it is often seen in the forest between markers 26 and 28, sometimes in large numbers (>10 per day). Caterpillars have been found on their respective host plants, confirming that both species breed in the park (for help with caterpillar identification, see references on back).

### Finding Butterflies In The Park

Butterflies are most active from mid-morning to mid-afternoon on warm sunny days. Few fly in early morning or on cool cloudy days. They often bask in the sun on leaves, tree trunks, or bare ground to warm up. Once warm, butterflies spend much of their time feeding. Nectar is the main food of most butterflies, so a good way to find them is to look for concentrations of wildflowers. The most commonly-used nectar plants found along the trail are listed below. Some butterflies also feed on tree sap, or obtain salts and minerals from damp ground and fresh animal scat.

#### Some Favorite Nectar Sources

Verbena (*Verbena brasiliensis*)  
Elephant's Foot (*Elephantopus sp.*)  
Tread Softly (*Cnidoscolus stimulosus*)  
Blue Mistflower (*Conoclinium coelestinum*)  
Butterfly Pea (*Centrosema virginianum*)  
Goldenrod (*Solidago sp.*)  
Bear's Foot (*Polymnia uvedalia*)  
Spanish Needles (*Bidens alba*)

For help with wildflower identification, refer to the field guides listed on the back panel.

#### Beyond The Butterfly Trail

Butterflies occur throughout the park, from Miller Landing Road to the southern boundary, and from the soccer fields to Lake Jackson. Some species have been seen only in these outlying areas. So, explore other sections and create your own personal "butterfly trails."

### Butterflies & Bluebirds Info

#### Field Guides

*Butterflies Through Binoculars: Florida.*  
Glassberg, Minno, and Calhoun, 2000.  
*Butterflies Through Binoculars: The East*  
Glassberg, 1999.  
*Butterflies of North America.*  
Brock and Kaufman, 2003.  
*East Gulf Coastal Plain Wildflowers*  
Nelson, 2005.  
*Florida Butterfly Caterpillars and Their Host Plants*  
Minno, Butler, and Hall, 2005.  
*Florida Wild Flowers and Roadside Plants*  
Bell and Taylor, 1982.  
*Florida Wildflowers in Their Natural Communities*  
Taylor, 1998.

#### Other Resources

*Butterflies of the East Coast, An Observer's Guide*  
Cech & Tudor, 2005

North American Butterfly Association (NABA) website:

[www.naba.org](http://www.naba.org)

For information on local NABA chapter activities, contact:  
[NABA@NatureInFocus.com](mailto:NABA@NatureInFocus.com)

North American Bluebird Society (NABS) web site:

[www.nabluebirdsociety.org](http://www.nabluebirdsociety.org)

**COLLECTING BUTTERFLIES IN THE PARK IS PROHIBITED BY CITY ORDINANCE.**

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# Common Butterflies of Elinor Klapp-Phipps Park

All butterfly photos in this brochure are copyrighted by Dean K. Jue.

Size Measurement = Average Wing Span (Cech & Tudor 2005)  
Habitat Key: F = Field W = Woodland FW = Field or Woodland



**Pipevine Swallowtail** – 3.6" F  
February – September



**Black Swallowtail** – 3.2" F  
February – September



**Eastern Tiger Swallowtail** – 4.8" FW  
March – September



**Spicebush Swallowtail** – 4.1" W  
February – September



**Cloudless Sulphur** – 2.5" FW  
January – December



**Little Yellow** – 1.3" FW  
January – February  
May – December



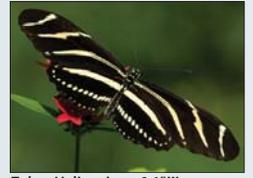
**Sleepy Orange** – 1.65" FW  
January – December



**Red-banded Hairstreak** – 1.0" W  
February – October



**Gulf Fritillary** – 2.8" F  
February – November



**Zebra Heliconian** – 3.1" W  
June – December



**Variegated Fritillary** – 2.1" F  
April – November



**American Lady** – 2.0" F  
January – November



**Common Buckeye** – 2.0" F  
January – December



**Red-spotted Admiral** – 3.2" W  
March – October



**Carolina Satyr** – 1.3" W  
February – November



**Silver-spotted Skipper** – 1.9" FW  
February – September



**Long-tailed Skipper** – 1.8" FW  
May – November



**Golden Banded-Skipper** – 1.75" W  
April – September



**Hoary Edge** – 1.65" FW  
March – September



**Southern Cloudywing** – 1.45" F  
April – September



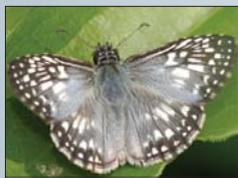
**Northern Cloudywing** – 1.5" F  
March – August



**Horace's Duskywing** – 1.45" F  
February – October



**Zarucco Duskywing** – 1.5" F  
March – October



**Tropical Checkered-Skipper** – 1.2" FW  
February – November



**Clouded Skipper** – 1.25" W  
March – November



**Fiery Skipper** – 1.2" F  
April – November

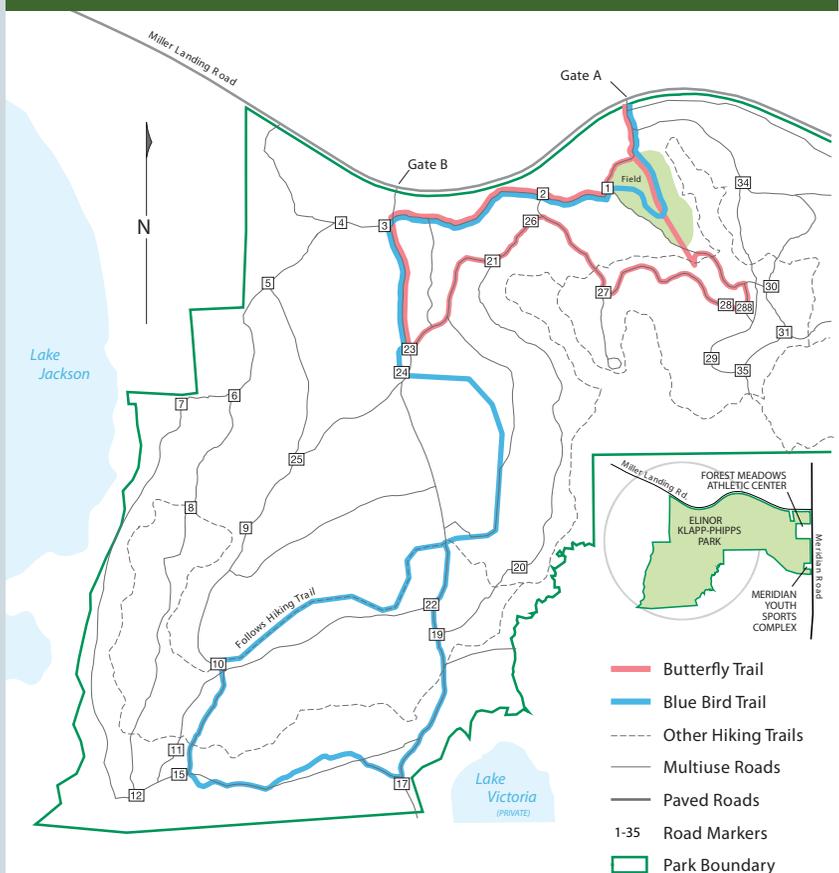


**Whirlabout** – 1.1" F  
April – November



**Ocola Skipper** – 1.3" FW  
July – November

## Butterfly & Bluebird Trails



For complete butterfly list, see separate park checklist.  
For more detailed Parks and Trail information, please visit <http://www.talgov.com/parks>  
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