



# Friends of Deerfield Island Park

## March 2021 Newsletter

Save the Date: Our next Board/Members Zoom Meeting will be on Friday, March 12 10:00 am

Watch your email for a link to the meeting



### From the President

Our beautiful Island Park remains closed but projects are still moving along (I know I keep saying this, but they are). We have met with the Parks department and agreed on a preliminary plan for the new Butterfly Garden. It is even bigger than originally planned and promises to be an amazing space surrounding the outdoor Tortoise Shell Pavilion, with areas designed for specific butterfly families, and incorporating a walkway leading to the new Mangrove Boardwalk. We are planning to have E-signage as well as 3-dimensional butterfly signs. There are even plans to incorporate a Monarch Butterfly Waystation. (See article below). Funding for the main walkway was provided by a grant that we secured from JM Family Enterprises and we have received several additional grants and donations to help purchase plants and signage.

The Parks Department has created 2 banners for our Friends group. One is now installed at the big dock opposite Sullivan Park. A second banner will be installed at the marina when the park reopens.

Our "Little Dig at DIP" is still being planned for and will ultimately become a great educational program for children and adults alike. Funding has been set aside for this project.

The Parks Department is also in the process of redesigning the existing building and surrounding property to become the a new Educational Center with meandering walkways and outdoor spaces for lectures and contemplations. We expect that our mascot, Tony the Tortoise, will be the greeting spot for visitors coming off the shuttle and heading to the Educational Center.

So, hang in there ..... Friends of DIP still have much to contribute to the Island and our partnership with the Department of Parks and Recreation is strong.



## FoDIP Website Maintenance

Do you have some technical computer skills? Some experience with websites, perhaps some very basic HTML knowledge (not absolutely necessary). Helene is looking for someone to assist in maintaining our website..... adding photos, submitted articles and just keeping our website fresh and interesting. Will gladly train !!!!!!!!!!!  
Contact Helene: [helenewec@gmail.com](mailto:helenewec@gmail.com)



## Monarch Butterfly Waystations

Waystations are especially important for increasing the numbers of Monarch butterflies. With the recent cold snap, many caterpillars would have died if they had not been taken into enclosures throughout the state.

Monarchs are on the decline in the USA due to climate change and lack of the certain types of milkweed they need. The Monarch and Queen butterflies are the only butterflies that use only milkweed for both the larval stage and as nectar. This year's migration has been the largest in 15 years due to the efforts of Mexican government to protect forests, and organizations like *Monarch Watch*, which encourages the planting of milkweed and other nectar providing plants.

Latest research revealed some Monarchs do migrate in the winter or just hang out and mix with local populations in warmer locations from Florida to California. This is confirmed with new techniques called "stable isotope

analysis” of wing samples. More Monarchs are choosing to stay here in Florida before heading up north in the Spring. I have been inspired these last few months to provide an enclosure, in which I am able to protect the caterpillars and see them through the pupa or chrysalis stage to releasing them as butterflies. More Monarchs have discovered my yard and the giant milkweed plants where I find my caterpillars.

Waystations offer feeding stops for their reproduction and refueling for the Monarchs’ arduous journey back to North America in the Spring and return to Mexico or Florida in the Fall. It is always beneficial to have extra milkweed available (the leaves can even be frozen), however they cannot be given to younger caterpillars.

I will be participating in the [Monarch Watch tagging program](#), which provides important information on the numbers and pathways the butterflies follow. Click on the above link for more information.

Contributed by Caroline Steffen



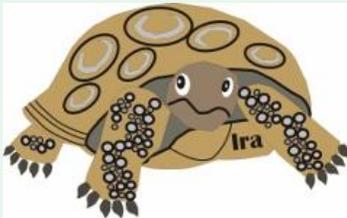
Monarch Waystation



Pupa Stage



Milkweed plants



## Friends of Deerfield Island Park (FODIP)

Formed in March 2015

We are dedicated to preserving and protecting our unique green island as a natural habitat for native plants and for the island's animal inhabitants. We have been approved by the IRS as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization for this purpose.

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