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## Blooms & Butterflies

*First sign of spring opens March 12 at Franklin Park Conservatory and Botanical Gardens*

March, 2015—Franklin Park Conservatory and Botanical Gardens' iconic spring exhibition, *Blooms & Butterflies*, opens on Saturday, March 12 with an opening day celebration. Now in its 23<sup>rd</sup> year, *Blooms & Butterflies* offers an immersive, up-close experience with native and exotic butterfly species.

Each week, hundreds of butterflies native to North, Central and South America arrive in chrysalis form at the Conservatory. Chrysalises are displayed in the environmentally controlled Emergence Center where visitors can watch adult butterflies emerge.

Newly emerged butterflies are released into the Pacific Island Water Garden, an 8,000 sq. ft., multi-level garden enclosed under glass. Hundreds of brightly colored butterflies of all sizes enjoy the warm and tropical climate, flying freely among visitors and feeding on nectar from colorful, tropical blooms. Visitor can watch butterflies take their first flight into the Garden during staff-led butterfly releases at 1 and 3pm each day.

In the summer months, *Blooms & Butterflies* extends into the Pollinators Garden, located on the Conservatory's ScottsMiracle-Gro Community Garden Campus. A Native Butterfly Box allows visitors see Monarch caterpillars transform into butterflies. Monarchs are tagged and released to begin their migration.

The butterfly metamorphosis can be experienced at home, too, with native Painted Lady caterpillars available in Botanica Gift Shop and Greenhouse. Once they have emerged, Painted Lady butterflies can be released outdoors to continue their life cycle.

*Blooms & Butterflies* remains on view through September 18, 2016

### **About Franklin Park Conservatory and Botanical Gardens**

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Franklin Park Conservatory and Botanical Gardens offers botanical collections, art and nature-based exhibitions, plant shows, and educational programs for all ages. Situated in an 88-acre urban park, the Conservatory features the historic 1895 John F. Wolfe Palm House and 83,000 square feet of glasshouses, classrooms, and meeting and event spaces. The Conservatory owns a signature collection of glass artwork by Dale Chihuly. *Light Raiment II*, a permanent installation by internationally recognized light artist James Turrell, illuminates the John F. Wolfe Palm House every evening from dusk until dawn.

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