

March 2008: Butterflies

This spring, the [Tucson Botanical Gardens](#) held a butterfly exhibit. We originally intended to visit during Rodeo Days, but there was just too much going on! The exhibit closed March 31; we got there March 30.



The exhibit is a lot like the [Butterfly Pavilion](#) in Denver, which we visited a few years back with my sister Becky and her family. There were a lot of bugs at the Denver site (like the [hissing cockroach](#)), but of course, the emphasis at the Tucson Botanical Gardens was plants. It is a beautiful place, perhaps worth the \$7 to walk around and eat your lunch. It might be a good idea to bring your own lunch - the Garden Cafe has good food, but it's a bit on the pricey side, and the service is slow. On the other hand, it employs people recovering from mental problems, so patronizing it would be an act of service. Even if they serve Peanut-Butter and Banana sandwiches, which I just could not get Faith to order.



The butterflies are given a tropical environment, to protect them from the Tucson extremes. Although it was a beautiful day outside!



Here we are, examining the specimens. The ones that weren't chasing each other down at our feet! Charity menaces a big owl-eye, who is obviously enjoying some

fruit on that plate.



There were moths here, as well as butterflies. This big fellow was hiding under a leaf. He was almost a foot across!



Two girls examining a beautiful little creature.

There were lots of people there that day, and the building wasn't very large, so we moved on after looking around. At the other door, two docents with feather dusters

made sure nobody accidentally carried out stowaways. One of these older ladies was wearing dealie-bobbers!

Outside was a view into the nursery, where the cocoons and chrysalises were hatching. We were told that, when the show ended, these would be taken to the Denver permanent exhibit. Also outside were some really big butterflies, some of them kinda ugly.



Unfortunately, we also scheduled a movie, and by the time we got out of the (long line for the) butterfly exhibit, and finally got and ate our lunch at the Garden Cafe, there wasn't really time to see the rest of the Gardens, outside of noticing this majestic Crested Saguaro. Definitely worth a return visit.



April 2008: Spring in Huntsville

Huntsville is one of my favorite places (have I said that before?). It is especially beautiful in the spring! The South is famous for its flowers anyways, and there are more flowering trees active at this time of year than you can believe!



A residential street near the Huntsville High School, near downtown. The trees are just *everywheres!*

More shots around the Huntsville High School. I may be wrong about the building. It is a historical structure (of course), but it really isn't big enough to be a "high school", and there is playground equipment here. But there are lots of beautiful trees.



Maple Hill Cemetary is beautiful. What do they call these? "Memorial Parks"?
"Park" it is.





More flowering trees at the west end, where the historical markers are. A huge magnolia spreads its boughs but has no flowers; I will have to revisit when the magnolias blossom.

Looks like Alice has recently joined John. Assuming she was a native, what a lot of changes she must have seen in Huntsville in her lifetime!



In the blocks south and east of downtown are the fine old residences - which are actually *residences*, and not merely lawyer offices. Simply awash with flowers. These purple ones are called "Bradford Pears", but they don't appear to bear anything but masses of purple blossoms.



A view from the Weeden house to First Presbyterian and the mansion at the end of the street.





A stately house.

No surprise, Big Spring Park has lots of trees.



Right at the spring, the Bradford Pear flower petals are drifting as thick as snow.



From Downtown, you can look down into the park at the head of the stairs. What a tremendous view! The funny thing is, it had been cloudy every day of my trip, and this *one single* afternoon, it cleared off to let the sun through!



Big red tree downtown, on Courthouse Square

Views down the street toward the Episcopal church, and across the street from the church.

