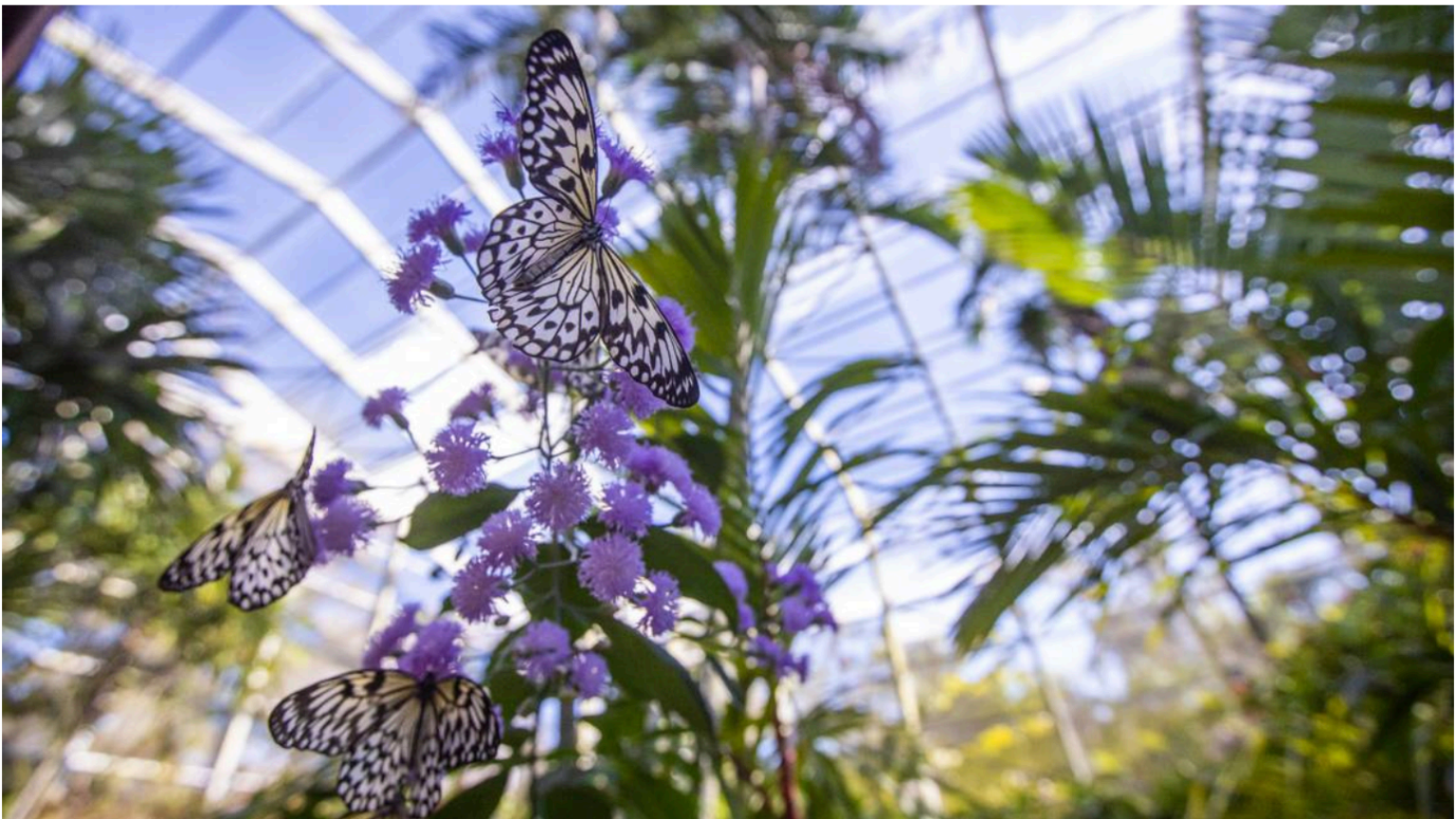


Forget Black Friday. Here's where to spend time outdoors instead of heading to the mall



Why battle Black Friday crowds when you can enjoy the peace of the butterfly exhibit at Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden?

The day after Thanksgiving is coming. But do you really want to go anywhere near a mall?

Even at the best of times, Black Friday shopping is a preview of hell, full of fury and desperation and angry, sweaty people who will have no problem shoving you aside on their way to a bargain.

And now, with the COVID-19 pandemic surging ahead like that lady at Wal-Mart who really, really wants that half-price flatscreen TV, the whole idea of being around a bunch of pushy, out-of-breath shoppers is even less appealing.

May we suggest getting some fresh air instead?

After a thoroughly soggy October and November, the sun is out and the breeze is balmy in Miami. Here are a few of our favorite alternatives to mall madness. Bring the kids and your mask. You can stop at your favorite small business and support them on the way home.

FAIRCHILD TROPICAL BOTANICAL GARDEN

Enjoy the beauty of nature amid tropical greenery. In addition to reducing the number of touch surfaces — that means fewer benches, for the record — the garden has created a one-way route and canceled tram tours. You no longer have to buy a specific time slot, but masks are required. More information and tickets at fairchildgarden.org

ZOO MIAMI

Visit the largest zoo in Florida and see the animals by day or roam the grounds after dark under a million LED lights at the [annual Zoo Lights event](#). Tickets must be purchased online at www.zoomiami.org

VIZCAYA MUSEUM AND GARDENS

Stroll around 10 acres of Italian gardens and enjoy the fact it's not raining. Finally! Just don't forget your mask — they're required. Tickets must be purchased online at vizcaya.org

JUNGLE ISLAND

Work off some of that turkey (or whatever you ate at your socially distanced Thanksgiving) at the new and improved [eco-adventure park](#) with zip lines, obstacle courses and more. Make reservations at www.jungleisland.com