

## CITY



JEAN LEVAC, THE OTTAWA CITIZEN

Two butterflies mate in the greenhouse at Carleton.

## Carleton opens doors to butterfly lovers

BY TONY LOFARO

They are among the most beautiful creatures in the world. They are also nature's early warning system for environmental change. They are butterflies.

And for Carleton University's Ed Bruggink, there's a kind a magic, a wonderment, to the very fact of their existence. As the botanist puts it: "They're magical and people believe they are magical."

Members of the public will have the opportunity to share Mr. Bruggink's sense of wonder tomorrow when the university stages its annual butterfly exhibition. The 10-day event has been a hit since it began in 1999.

It's an event for which Mr. Bruggink shows endless enthusiasm, and concern. "They are nature's indicators that there is something wrong in the world. They are extremely fragile and one day we may lose them because our environment is changing."

This year, as in past years, the public can tour the university's greenhouses to observe several hundred exotic butterflies from at least 25 different species. They will see the butterflies flying around in the greenhouses and also observe a hatching

cage in which butterflies spring to life. And they can ask questions.

According to Mr. Bruggink, the mostly commonly asked question is whether butterflies are at all poisonous. They aren't, he says.

The show, which attracts upwards of 1,000 people on weekends, is a family favourite and popular with school groups. "I wanted to give the community a treat. We can do it here (because of the greenhouses) so why not do it," he said.

Mr. Bruggink said many of the butterflies in the exhibit are ordered through a catalogue from a company in England that hires families living in tropical forests to harvest chrysalises, the smooth, pod-like cocoons in which butterflies incubate. Each chrysalis is wrapped in cotton and batched in a box and then placed in warm, humidified containers until they emerge to dry their wings, when they are released into the greenhouse.

The show is open daily from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. until Oct. 10 at the Carleton University greenhouses at the Nesbitt Biology Building, on the corner of University Drive and Raven Road. Admission is free, but donations are accepted. Call 520-3513 for information.