You can’t ordinarily see Blue Morpho (Morpho peleides) butterfly resting with it’s wings open, as they are active flyers and normally come to rest with their wings closed. They are easily identified by the bright blue wings which are used to establish territory, signal to mates, and fool predators in their native habitat. The brilliant blue isn’t actually a colored pigment at all, but rather the effect of refracted light on their scaled wings, making the color appear to change depending on the angle of view. What appears to be a random flight pattern is actually a purposeful activity. Males cruise about during the day to establish a territory and attract females. If another male invades the space, he is soon chased away

When resting, the mottled brown underside of the butterflies’ closed wings helps them to blend in with their surroundings, once again fooling predators who mistake their spots for animal eyes. When open, the wingspan of the Common Blue Morpho can reach up to eight inches.

At night, the butterflies roost on the underside of large leaves and branches in the forest understory. When hungry, blue morphos feast on such delicacies as rotting fruit, tree sap, dung and dead animal carcass. At the Butterfly House, the animals’ vegetarian diet mainly consists of bananas and other fruits presented on hanging feeding plates.