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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MIGRATION CELEBRATION LURES CITIZEN SCIENTISTS IN TAGGING MONARCH BUTTERFLIES AND BANDING BIRDS

OTTO, NC – Migration Celebration will take place at Tennesse Bottomland Preserve on Saturday October 2nd. The event is being hosted by the Land Trust for the Little Tennessee (LTLT), Southern Appalachian Raptor Research (SARR), and the Coweeta Long Term Ecological Research (LTER) program to help gather data about butterfly and bird migrations in the Little Tennessee River migration corridor. The event is free and open to the public from 8am to 1pm.

The organizations are looking for volunteers, ages 4 – 94, to act as ‘citizen scientists’ to help catch, tag, and release Monarch butterflies as they journey south to overwinter in the Transvolcanic Mountains near Mexico City. This is a great opportunity to learn more about Monarch butterflies while assisting with real science. Nets will be provided for participants. While the main focus will be Monarchs, participants will also help catch other butterflies for identification; over 42 species of butterflies have been found at Tennesse Bottomland Preserve.

While participants run around chasing butterflies with aerial nets, others can walk down to the floodplain to assist biologists and citizen scientists as they capture, measure, band, and release Neotropical migrant birds, which are also migrants making their way south to warmer climes. In the summer, biologists from SARR led eight bird banding sessions at Tennesse, yielding 333 birds of 27 different species as part of an effort to study bird reproduction and survivorship. Tennesse Bottomland Preserve is stop #53 on the North Carolina Birding Trail, with 119 species of birds documented at the site.

Tennesse Bottomland Preserve is owned and managed by the Land Trust for the Little Tennessee, who bought the former dairy farm for permanent conservation in 1999 and has recently expanded it to 70 acres. Today the former farm is actively managed to promote diverse wildlife habitats, maintain water quality, and provide sustainable supply of forest products such as river cane to Cherokee artisans.

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For more information, please contact Jason Love at 828.524.2128 x 113 or jplove@uga.edu.

Websites: Land Trust for the Little Tennessee: <http://www.ltl.org/>
Southern Appalachian Raptor Research: <http://www.bigaldbanding.org/>
Coweeta Long Term Ecological Research: <http://coweeta.uga.edu/>