



Media Release • For immediate release

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Howard County Library System

New Monarch Waystation Trail and Educational Outreach Endeavors to Save Howard County's Monarch Butterflies *Butterfly Tagging on September 17 in HCLS Enchanted Garden*

ELLICOTT CITY, MD -- Howard County Library System (HCLS) announces the new Monarch Waystation Trail to educate the community about the plight of and ways to save the endangered monarch butterfly. The trail features a network of nine outdoor education venues in Howard County with habitats beneficial to both larval and adult monarchs. The trail is a fun, family-friendly way to discover the beauty of the butterflies, the benefits of native plants, and to better understand the plight the butterflies currently face due to the loss of their natural habitat.

The joint effort to save the species and educate others on how to plant nurturing habitats for monarchs currently includes Breezy Willow Farm, Clark's Elioak Farm, Howard County Conservancy, Howard County Living Farm Heritage Museum, Middle Patuxent Environmental Area, Robinson Nature Center, Sharps at Waterford Farm, and Whipps Garden Cemetery. Each location in the trail network is certified by MonarchWatch as an official Monarch Waystation. A new brochure and an interactive trail map produced by HCLS is available in branches and at hclibrary.org

In addition to publishing the brochure, HCLS instructors teach classes to educate students and families about the monarch's life cycle, habitat, and current plight. **Monarchs from HCLS' Enchanted Garden will be tagged on Thursday, September 17 to assist in MonarchWatch's efforts to track the species during their epic migration.**

The monarch butterfly is a highly beneficial pollinator that migrates annually across North America to roosting grounds in Mexico. It takes three to four generations of butterflies to complete the journey. Each monarch generation depends on habitats rich in native milkweed to lay eggs and feed the young caterpillars. Once plentiful, native milkweed has declined steeply in recent years resulting in a corresponding decrease in the monarch population.

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