

midwest 

NET RESULTS

**Crowds Descend to Help Tag Monarch Butterflies**

Members of the community gathered at the Neal Smith National Wildlife Refuge in Iowa on September 10 to help tag migrating monarch butterflies in an annual event called "Monarch Madness."

After learning why and how the refuge and its volunteers should catch and tag monarchs, the 170 volunteers set out to find them. Tagging monarchs provides information about their migration routes and how factors like weather may influence their migration and survivorship, and on this day the migrating monarchs kept the volunteers busy!

The monarchs were easy to find, busily feeding and preparing for their fall migration. The newly trained butterfly capturers could be seen running through the prairie with their nets raised high and still just barely cresting above the tall grasses and sunflowers. Excitedly volunteers captured monarchs and triumphantly emerged from the sea of grasses.



Tag, you're it. Two volunteers head out help collect butterflies for tagging.

Rangers tagged the monarch with a small sticker on its wings. With the help of experienced volunteers, the rangers also recorded the date, capturer's full name, the sex of the monarch. Lastly, rangers placed the butterfly in the volunteer's hand and the volunteer released it.

In just an hour, 116 monarchs were tagged!

One important factor that contributed to this year's success was an extraordinary effort by the community. In one day, 66 walk-in visitors came to show their support of the refuge. Counting visitors and volunteers, 236 people visited the refuge to learn, explore and help the prairie. Their combined efforts made "Monarch Madness" a thrilling, fun and rewarding experience for all involved. □

MICHELLE GARCIA, Neal Smith National Wildlife Refuge, Midwest Region



southeast 

LONGEVITY

**Orangeburg National Fish Hatchery Celebrates a Century**

It has been 100 years since the first pond was excavated, with the help of mules and pond scoops, in the creation of Orangeburg National Fish Hatchery. Today the hatchery is an integral part of the community in Orangeburg, South Carolina, near lakes Marion and Moultrie.

"It's an honor to witness a huge milestone of one of the real gems in the Service's National Fish Hatchery System," says Cindy Dohner, Southeast Regional Director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. "Orangeburg has served a critical role in fisheries conservation in our Region, and its good work will become even more critical in the century to come."

Orangeburg National Fish Hatchery has always adapted to serve the needs of Americans. When first established it provided fish for subsistence, stocking local farm ponds and sending other fish by railcar all across the county. Today it works with endangered species, including the shortnose sturgeon and freshwater mussels. It also produces fish for recreation, like striped bass, a popular sport fish. The hatchery has made significant contributions to the area's renowned fishing opportunities.

The total economic impact of recreational fish production at Orangeburg was more than \$13.3 million in 2010, generating 127 jobs throughout many industries, worth \$3.3 million in wages.

"The hatchery has been here for 100 years, that shows you the value of what we do," says Willie Booker, the hatchery's manager for the past 20 years. "This hatchery and the work we do really mean a lot to people. I am proud to be a part of it."

Orangeburg is a popular destination for tens of thousands of people each year, offering innovative outdoor classrooms, a nature-explore playground, trails, bird watching, a 100-acre lake and a visitor center with aquarium. By hosting events throughout the year for youth, special needs groups and senior citizens, the hatchery promotes the increased quality of life and conservation benefits provided through fishing and the importance of connecting people, especially children, to nature.

Orangeburg celebrated a century of fisheries conservation with festivities at the hatchery on September 28, 2011. For more information, visit <[www.fws.gov/orangeburg](http://www.fws.gov/orangeburg)>. □



Willie Booker (right), Hatchery Manager for the past 20 of the hatchery's 100 years, works closely with South Carolina Department of Natural Resources on fisheries management issues.