



FOR RELEASE: October 26, 2011

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Embark on an Outdoor Adventure on Geocaching Day at The North Carolina Arboretum

ASHEVILLE, NC – The high-tech treasure hunt activity known as geocaching is gaining popularity in the mountains of Western North Carolina and around the world. On Saturday, November 5, The North Carolina Arboretum will host its second annual Geocaching Day, offering families, individuals, and groups an opportunity to take part in an outdoor adventure.

By using a handheld GPS unit, along with coordinates downloaded from www.geocaching.com, geocaching enthusiasts can solve clues to find one of 1,215,555 geocaches located around the world. These geocaches contain a log book and pencil for recording the find, and often include trinkets that can be traded out as a memento of the experience.

The Arboretum owns and maintains nine active geocaches located within the borders of the Arboretum by special use permit from the United States Forest Service. The first geocaches on property were placed in the summer of 2009, and have received more than 400 visits from guests of the Arboretum. In honor of Geocaching Day, a special “series” cache will engage participants in a trek around the Arboretum on a search for clues to its location. The new cache, titled “Arboretum Adventure,” will have starting coordinates available at www.geocaching.com just prior to the event.

Experienced geocachers with their own equipment may begin seeking caches as early as 8:00 a.m. Newcomers to the sport are invited to attend a demonstration led by Arboretum educators prior to embarking on their own adventure. The program will be offered at 1:00 and 3:00 p.m. Diamond Brand Outdoors, a Community Partner of the Arboretum and sponsor of its youth education programs, has donated GPS units that may be borrowed for the guided program. Also beginning on Geocaching Day, families and youth groups may borrow one of eight GPS units provided by Diamond Brand Outdoors to seek caches within the Arboretum, free of charge.

Pre-registration to seek caches or attend the guided programs is not required, though regular Arboretum parking fees apply (\$8.00 for personal vehicles, \$30.00 for commercial vehicles, and \$50.00 for buses). Families and individuals wishing to seek caches on their own may visit geocaching.com to set up a free account and download geocache locations and descriptions to their handheld GPS unit or phone.

For more information about the event, visit www.ncarboretum.org, or call (828) 665-2492, Ext. 228. The central mission of The North Carolina Arboretum, an affiliate institution of the 17-campus University of North Carolina system, is to cultivate connections between people and plants.

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The NC Arboretum is located next to the Blue Ridge Parkway entrance at Milepost 393. From I-26, take Exit 33 and follow Blue Ridge Parkway signs for two miles to the entrance ramp. Visit www.ncarboretum.org plan-a-visit for parking fees, property hours and building hours. For general information call (828) 665-2492 or visit www.ncarboretum.org.