



THE NEW YORK BOTANICAL GARDEN

For Immediate Release
September 16, 2013

Get Spooked with Family Fun at *The Haunted Pumpkin Garden*

**Pumpkin Sculptures, Giant Pumpkin Carving, Live Bat Encounters, and Spooky Nighttime Adventures
Thrill at The New York Botanical Garden**

Saturday, September 21–Thursday, October 31, 2013



The Haunted Pumpkin Garden at The New York Botanical Garden is sure to spook and thrill visitors from Saturday, September 21 through Halloween, Thursday, October 31. Experience the thrills and chills of the season with a garden full of intricately carved pumpkin sculptures, bugs, bats, parties, and parades; Halloween activities take place each day in the Everett Children’s Adventure Garden, with additional weekend programming. On October 19 and 20, Master Carver Ray Villafane and his team will sculpt the world’s largest pumpkins as carnivorous plants and unearthly creatures.

The Haunted Pumpkin Garden in the Everett Children’s Adventure Garden is open all day for exploration, with guided activities from 1:30 to 5:30 p.m. on weekdays and 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. on weekends. Pumpkin sculptures of spooky scarecrows, frightening spiders, sneaky snakes, and more await discovery. The display includes more than 500 orange and multicolored, hand-carved pumpkin sculptures, including scarecrows, bugs and insects, bats, spiders, and snakes. All are sure to capture a child’s imagination. Each day, children can play inside a “gourd-geous” Pumpkin House; join afternoon Halloween parades; go on a scavenger hunt for fall fruits; look for wiggly worms under a rotting log; put on their own performance in the Pumpkin Puppet Theater; and enjoy spooky readings from favorite Halloween storybooks on weekends.

The following weekend programming will also take place in the Everett Children’s Adventure Garden:

- ***Ugh! Bugs & Creepy Creatures of Halloween***
Saturdays and Sundays, 12 & 2 p.m.

Some of the animals that make us scream are actually the coolest animals around. Come slither, slide, creep, and scurry along with us and learn why these “creepy” animals aren’t so scary after all. Participants will meet critters from around the world for some hands-on animal presentations and discover the unique adaptations that help them survive in their habitats. The selection of featured creatures (varies each weekend) includes a Colombian boa, a bearded dragon, corn snakes, a rose-haired tarantula, millipedes, Vietnamese stick bugs, a Madagascar hissing cockroach, an emperor scorpion, a box turtle, and an Argentine tegu lizard. The Creepy Creatures are presented by the organizations The Nature of Things and the Theodore Roosevelt Sanctuary & Audubon Center.

– more –

- ***Pumpkin Carver's Studio***

Saturdays and Sundays, 11 a.m.–5 p.m.

Watch how pumpkin creations are carved as an expert carver translates ideas into art. Learn some tips to try at home on your own pumpkins and gourds.

Spend Columbus Day Weekend at *Gone Batty! Live Bat Encounter*

During Columbus Day Weekend, October 12, 13, and 14, at 1 and 3 p.m., meet a Big Brown Bat from North America and come face-to-face with the largest bat in the world, the Gigantic Flying Fox of Malaysia. Rob Mies, conservation biologist, bat expert, author, and executive director of the Organization for Bat Conservation, shares information concerning the benefits of bats, the need for their conservation, and what can be done to help these unique mammals. *Gone Batty! Live Bat Encounters* will be presented at the Clay Family Picnic Pavilions. *Ugh! Bugs & Creepy Creatures of Halloween* will also take place at 12 & 2 p.m. on Columbus Day, Monday, October 14, as *The Haunted Pumpkin Garden* follows weekend hours and is open from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Spooky Nighttime Adventures

On October 18, 19, 25, and 26, from 6:30–8:30 p.m., grab a Con Edison flashlight and explore the pumpkin sculptures as you travel along the Whole Foods Market® Trick-or-Treat Trail after dark, listening for critters of the night, digging around for decomposers, and decorating gourds. For those who dare, see the giant pumpkin displays illuminated in the darkness and journey along the meandering Mitsubishi Wild Wetland Trail. *Adults and kids of all ages: Non-Member \$20/Member \$15. Advance tickets recommended.*

Giant Pumpkin Carving Weekend

The largest pumpkins from around the world arrive at the Garden for Halloween. In collaboration with the Great Pumpkin Commonwealth (GPC), the recognized standard of weights, measurements, and fairness of competition, the winners of global pumpkin weigh-offs will be delivered to the Garden, where visitors can marvel at and take pictures with these wonders of nature and of growing technique. (Last year's largest pumpkin weighed more than 1,800 pounds.)

The GPC is the governing body of over 80 official weigh-off sites worldwide, their supporting clubs, and growers. These sponsored sites host hundreds of thousands of visitors to the ever popular annually run festivals and weekend events held each summer and fall. The GPC strives to foster an environmentally friendly approach using basic organic techniques that have shown extreme fruit development can be obtained without harming our surroundings. All the winning growers use the RTI Industries giant pumpkin program to obtain these weights and world records.

On October 19 and 20, watch Master Carver Ray Villafane and his team sculpt these pumpkins as carnivorous plants and unearthly creatures. Villafane has both been featured on *Food Network's* show "Halloween Wars." Enjoy daily Q&A sessions with the carvers and snack on seasonal treats provided by Whole Foods Market®.

For more information about *The Haunted Pumpkin Garden*, visit www.nybg.org.

Produced in collaboration with the Great Pumpkin Commonwealth

MasterCard® is the Preferred Card of The New York Botanical Garden.

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The New York Botanical Garden is a museum of plants located at Bronx River Parkway (Exit 7W) and Fordham Road. It is easy to reach by Metro-North Railroad or subway. The Botanical Garden is open year-round, Tuesday through Sunday and Monday federal holidays, from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. The best way to enjoy the Garden is with the *All-Garden Pass*, which includes admission to the grounds as well as to seasonal gardens, exhibitions, and attractions such as the Enid A. Haupt Conservatory, Everett Children's Adventure Garden, and Tram Tour. For ticket pricing, please check our Web site. For more information, please call 718.817.8700 or visit nybg.org.

The New York Botanical Garden, 2900 Southern Boulevard, Bronx, New York 10458

The New York Botanical Garden is located on property owned in full by the City of New York, and its operation is made possible in part by public funds provided through the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs. A portion of the Garden's general operating funds is provided by The New York City Council and The New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation. The Bronx Borough President and Bronx elected representatives in the City Council and State Legislature provide leadership funding.

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