



THE NEW YORK BOTANICAL GARDEN

For Immediate Release  
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## Get Spooked with Family Fun at The New York Botanical Garden

Giant Pumpkin Carving, Live Spooky Nighttime Adventures, and Creepy Creatures in  
*The Haunted Pumpkin Garden*

*Saturday, September 20–Friday, October 31, 2014*



*The Haunted Pumpkin Garden* at The New York Botanical Garden is sure to thrill and chill visitors from Saturday, September 20 through Halloween, Friday, October 31. Experience the spooky fun of the season with a garden full of large and interesting pumpkins and gourds. Halloween activities take place each day in the Everett Children's Adventure Garden, with additional weekend programming. On October 18 and 19, Master Carver Ray Villafane and his team will sculpt the giant and unusual pumpkins into 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. Each day, children can play inside a "gourd-geous" Pumpkin House; 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; read spooky stories; and watch pumpkin seeds sprout in their very own germination chamber. On weekends, children can read spooky stories and enjoy Halloween parades that travel throughout the Children's Adventure Garden.

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

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

Slithery snakes and scaly reptiles—some of the animals that make us scream—are actually the coolest animals around. Learn why these "creepy" animals aren't so scary after all. Participants will meet critters from around the world and some local to the Botanical Garden and the Bronx during these live animal presentations while discovering the unique adaptations that help them survive in their habitats.

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Presented by Erik Zeidler of New York Wild!, the selection of featured creatures (which varies each weekend) includes several large and small snakes, snapping turtles, a Dwarf Caiman, a Sulcata Tortoise, a Panther Chameleon, and an Argentine Tegu Lizard.

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

Back by popular demand, during Columbus Day Weekend, October 11–13, at 1 and 3 p.m., meet a Big Brown Bat from North America, the endangered Rodrigues bat, and come face-to-face with the largest bat in the world, the Gigantic Flying Fox of Malaysia. Bats have been surrounded by myths for years—it is time to learn the truth about these heroes of the night! In this family-friendly, live animal program, Rob Mies—conservation biologist, bat expert, author, and executive director of the Organization for Bat Conservation—tells visitors how bats impact humans and keep our environment healthy while further explaining what can be done to help these unique mammals. *Creepy Creatures of Halloween* takes place on Saturday, Sunday, and Monday of Columbus Day Weekend, as *The Haunted Pumpkin Garden* follows weekend hours and is open from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. all three days.



### **Spooky Nighttime Adventures for Families**

On October 18, 24, 25, and 31, from 6:30 to 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. Listen for critters of the night or sit in on a spooky ghost story. Capture a family photo with larger-than-life skeletons and costumed characters. Dig around for decomposers and decorate a Halloween gourd. For those who dare, journey along the meandering Mitsubishi Wild Wetland Trail. *Adults and kids of all ages: Non-Member \$20/Member \$15. Advance tickets recommended.*

### **Budding Masters: Creepy Pumpkin Carving Adventures**

On Saturdays, October 4, 11, 18, and 25, from 10 a.m.–12 p.m., children ages 8 and older can explore the intricately carved pumpkins on display around the Everett Children’s Adventure Garden and learn more about the amazing Cucurbitaceae (gourd family) fruit. Each child designs and carves his own creepy pumpkin to take home. Learn more at [nybg.org/buddingmasters](http://nybg.org/buddingmasters). This program is sponsored by MasterCard® Priceless New York.

### **Pumpkin Carving Weekend with Ray Villafane**

On Saturday and Sunday, October 18 and 19, watch Master Carver Ray Villafane transform giant and unusual pumpkins into unearthly creatures. Villafane has been featured on Food Network’s *Halloween Wars*. Enjoy daily Q&A sessions with the carver and snack on seasonal treats provided by Whole Foods Market®.

### **Giant Pumpkin Display**

The largest pumpkins from around the world once again 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 growing technique. (Last year’s largest pumpkin weighed more than 2,000 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.

**For more information about *The Haunted Pumpkin Garden*, visit [www.nybg.org](http://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](http://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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