



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Ijams Hummingbird Festival: Celebration of Wings Is Aug. 28

If you love learning about hummingbirds, butterflies and other things with wings, you won't want to miss Ijams Nature Center's 11th annual Ijams Hummingbird Festival: Celebration of Wings, presented by Ergon Terminals Inc. and The Trust Company of Tennessee, on Saturday, Aug. 28, from 7 a.m. to 2 p.m.

This year's outdoor festival features two tickets, a General Festival ticket and a Behind-the-Scenes Bundle, as well as activities that are free to the public.

Free activities include live raptor demonstrations, educational materials for parents and families, and a marketplace featuring arts and crafts, plants, gardening décor, access to food and drink, and more on the Ijams Visitor Center plaza.

The General Festival ticket includes all speaker sessions, a kids' area with activities and educational booths, dipnetting and relaxed, guided nature walks from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. Tickets are \$8 for adults and \$5 for children.

The Behind-the-Scenes Bundle features all general festival activities, plus a bird banding appointment, community science opportunities, a chance to meet the Ijams animal ambassadors, and more detailed, guided hikes. Bird banding is scheduled in 30-minute appointments starting at 7 a.m.; the last appointment is 11:30 a.m. The bundle activities run from 7 a.m.-12 p.m. to allow attendees to enjoy general festival activities before or after they attend the bird banding demonstration. Bundle tickets are \$12 and space is limited to ensure physical distancing.

During a banding appointment, Mark Armstrong, a certified master bander, demonstrates how ruby-throated hummingbirds and other birds are harmlessly captured, weighed, measured and banded.

Ruby-throated hummingbirds normally weigh about one-tenth of an ounce. Armstrong talks about these tiny creatures during the demonstration. The band helps scientists track the bird's migration. When banding is complete, the hummingbird is released and can continue its journey, which includes a 500-mile, nonstop flight across the Gulf of Mexico to wintering grounds in Mexico and Central America.

This overseas flight takes about 20 hours in favorable conditions. During that time, the bird's heart rate is about 1,200 beats per minute and its wings beat 53 times per second. To prepare, these fierce omnivores double their body mass by feeding on nectar and insects in the weeks prior to departure and can be seen chasing other birds and bees from their favorite food sources.

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Native species such as trumpet honeysuckle, bee balm, cardinal flower, trumpet vine, salvia and columbine are excellent food sources for ruby-throated hummingbirds. Feeders are a great way to supplement natural nectar, but must be cleaned regularly to keep birds safe.

To make nectar, mix one cup of refined white sugar with four cups of water and stir until sugar dissolves. Store any extra nectar in the refrigerator. Avoid using products containing red dye or other additives that are harmful to hummingbirds. If your tap water is high in chemicals or has a strong taste or odor, use bottled or purified water. In cooler temperatures, feeders can be cleaned once a week, but during warmer weather it's important to clean your feeder more often to ensure the nectar is fresh and there is no mold.

The 11th annual Ijams Hummingbird Festival: Celebration of Wings is sponsored by Ergon Terminaling Inc., The Trust Company of Tennessee, WBIR-TV Channel 10, HomeTrust Bank, Stanley's Greenhouse, and Tennessee Wildlife Federation.

For more information about the festival, visit <https://ijams.org/ijams-hummingbird-festival>.

Ijams Nature Center is a nonprofit, 318-acre educational nature center for all ages, abilities and walks of life. Ijams' mission is to encourage stewardship of the natural world by providing an urban greenspace for people to learn about and enjoy the outdoors through engaging experiences. Located just three miles from downtown Knoxville, Ijams features 12 miles of hiking and mixed-use trails, a public access river dock, swimming, boating, biking and more. The center offers hundreds of educational programs annually for all ages. The Ijams grounds and trails are open every day from 8 a.m. until dusk. The Visitor Center is open daily from 10 a.m.-6 p.m. For more information, visit ijams.org.

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