



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contact:

Paige Crane, Ijams Education Director

pcrane@ijams.org / 865-577-4717, ext. 1010

**Celebrate the Magic of Autumn at Fourth Annual Hallo-Week
at Ijams Nature Center Oct. 20-31**

(KNOXVILLE, TENNESSEE, 10/8/2026)—As the leaves begin to turn and the air grows crisp, a season of enchantment, wonder, and fun awaits during the fourth annual Hallo-Week at Ijams Nature Center!

The nonprofit nature center will host a variety of festive, family-friendly programs, from night paddles and fungi identification to spooky stories and trick-or-treat adventures in an enchanted forest from Oct. 20 to Oct. 31.

Hallo-Week combines nature, imagination, and community to celebrate the season. Whether you're a lifelong nature lover or simply seeking some fall excitement, there's something for every age and interest.

Each event requires its own ticket, and space is limited. To view the full schedule and event descriptions, and to purchase tickets or reserve a space, visit ijams.org/hallo-week-at-ijams.

Featured Events

Oct. 20 – Spooky Poetry Night with Knoxville Poetry Slam (7-9 p.m.)

Join the Knoxville Poetry Slam and Ijams Oct. 20 for a hauntingly fun night of haikus, poems, sonnets, and more at Spooky Poetry Night! This event features an Open Mic for poets who wish to share their work (major bonus points for bringing works that feature a spooky theme)!

Oct. 21 – Playing 'Possum (6-7 p.m.)

Learn about Ijams' newest animal ambassador: Orta, a young Virginia opossum! These misunderstood marsupials enrich our ecosystem and use cool adaptations to survive in their environment. Along with an animal presentation, you'll learn the basics of nature journaling and make your own opossum masterpiece!

Oct. 21 – Improv in the Wild with Manatee Vanity Improv

Get ready for a night of big laughs, bold choices, and completely unscripted comedy as Manatee Vanity Improv presents four improv groups that bring their own style, energy, and surprises to the stage. Teams include the Manatee Vanity Level 1 Student Showcase, UT's Cumberland Strip Tease, the Librarians, and Nothing Prepared, with the accompaniment of Michael Ray on keyboard.

Oct. 23 – Ijams After Dark: Mischief Night (7-9 p.m.)

Discover Ijams after dark during this experiential adventure! You'll meet some of Ijams' nocturnal animal ambassadors, learn about some not-so-creepy critters, and take a fun-filled, guided hike on the trails. This Halloween-themed program focuses on all the mischief critters get into at night!

Oct. 24 – Storytime at the Ijams Nature Playscape at Grayson Subaru Preserve (10 a.m.-12 p.m.)

Head into the woods to listen to a selection of books read by volunteer storytellers. This week's theme is Fairy Tales. You'll also enjoy themed crafts and explore the Playscape at this FREE program!

Oct. 24 – October Stained Glass Workshop with Visualize Art Studio (11 a.m.-1 p.m.)

Create your own stained glass bat, hummingbird, or cowboy hat with Visualize Art Studio! This two-hour abridged introductory class provides students with a pre-cut and ground kit so they can learn how to copper-foil and solder their piece.

Oct. 24 – Ijams Enchanted Forest (3-8 p.m.)

Dress up in your costume and get ready for a night of tricks and (lots of) treats in the Ijams Enchanted Forest! This event features seasonal crafts, games, and activities; Ijams animal ambassadors; and tasty treats, as well as some magical, life-sized critter puppets from Cattywampus Puppet Council!

Oct 25 – Full Moon Paddle: Celebrating the Hunter Moon (6:30-8:30 p.m.)

Get ready for a beautiful evening on the river under the full moon! Join Ijams naturalists for this two-hour, guided paddle to uncover the secrets of the Tennessee River after dark and learn about the night sky while searching for plants, animals, and geologic features.

Oct. 27 – A Night of Scary Stories with the Smoky Mountain Storytellers Association (7-8:30 p.m.)

Join the Smoky Mountain Storytellers Association for a night of classic ghost stories, urban legends, historic horror, silly tales, and more!

Oct. 28 – Nature Nuggets (10-11 a.m.)

Celebrate birds of prey at Nature Nuggets, a FREE program for children 18 months and older and their caregivers. You'll gather at Jo's Grove, hike, and meet Zoe, Ijams' resident turkey vulture.

Oct. 30 – Starlight Paddle (7-9 p.m.)

Join Ijams naturalists for a two-hour, guided paddle under the stars to uncover the secrets of the Tennessee River after dark and learn about the night sky while searching for plants, animals, and geologic features.

Oct. 31 – Fall Fungi ID: Beginner Workshop (10 a.m.-12 p.m.)

Out in the field, fungi identification doesn't leave much room for guessing! Join an Ijams fun-guide (naturalist) for this immersive workshop. You'll learn the basics of fungi and lichen anatomy, identification, and their pivotal role in our ecosystems.

Oct. 31 – Storytime at the Ijams Nature Playscape at Grayson Subaru Preserve (10 a.m.-12 p.m.)

Head into the woods to listen to a selection of books read by volunteer storytellers. This week's theme is bats. You'll also enjoy themed crafts and explore the Playscape at this FREE program!

Oct. 31 – Playing ‘Possum (11 a.m.-12 p.m.)

Learn all about Ijams' newest animal ambassador: a Virginia Opossum! These misunderstood marsupials enrich our ecosystem and use cool adaptations to survive in their environment. Along with an animal presentation, you'll learn the basics of nature journaling and make your own opossum masterpiece!

Ijams Nature Center is a 336-acre nonprofit educational center in the heart of Knoxville and serves visitors of all ages, stages, and abilities. Its 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. Ijams features 14 miles of hiking and mixed-use trails, a public access river dock, swimming, boating, biking, and more. Hundreds of world-class educational programs and events are coordinated and offered annually. Ijams' grounds and trails are open every day from 8:00 a.m. until dusk. For more information, visit Ijams.org or call 865-577-4717.

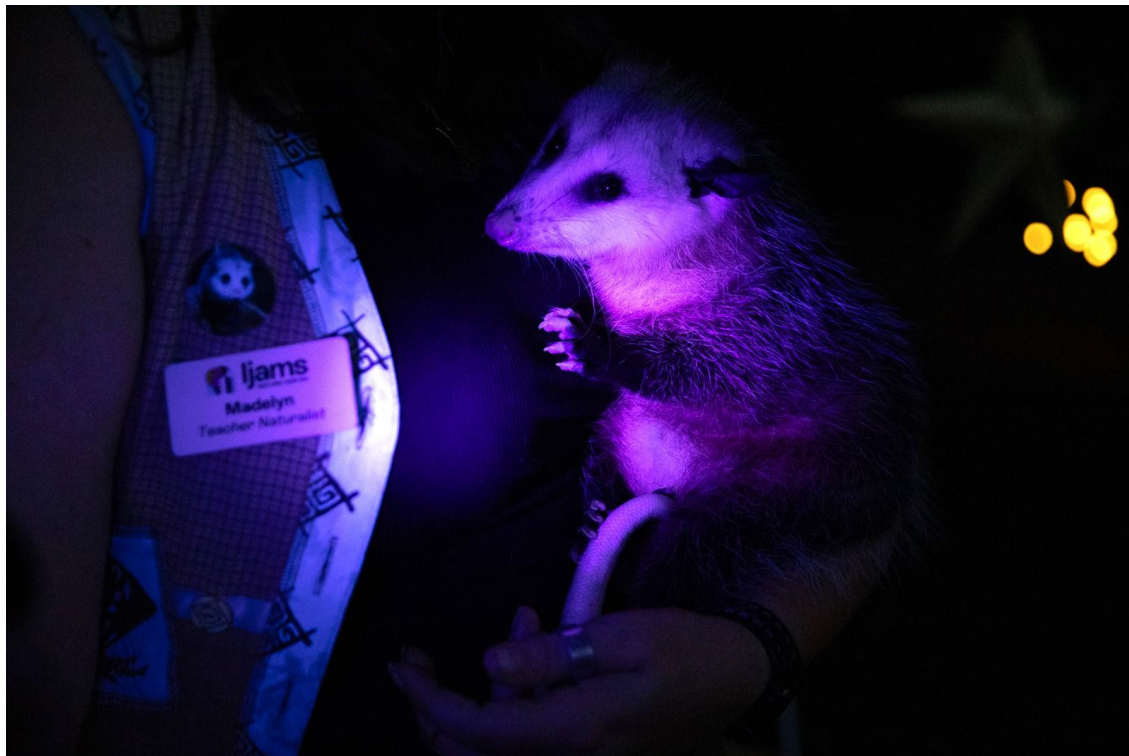
#

Photo Cutlines

All photos courtesy of Ijams Nature Center.



Nick Smith, an Ijams teacher naturalist, talks to children about Stevie, an eastern screech owl, during the Ijams Enchanted Forest.



Meet Ijams Nature Center's newest animal ambassador, Orta, a young Virginia opossum, during the Playing 'Possum program.



Children and adults learn about Narcissa, a gray rat snake, as they explore the Ijams Enchanted Forest.