

Jack-O-Wisps

Description: the faintest green flicker of several connected speckles of light. There is perhaps a faint smell of dirt and burnt fiber. A Jack-O-Wisp that touches human flesh will cause that flesh to shiver slightly.

Jack-O-Wisps, sad to say, are only barely supernatural. Strictly speaking, they're merely quasi-physical byproducts of ghosts and other disincorporated spirits; Jack-O-Wisps themselves are as about as active or free-willed as smoke in the air. In fact, when things are working properly, one will never see a Jack-O-Wisp at all.

It all starts with the traditional jack-o-lantern. [It's often suggested](#) that the jack-o-lantern is used to attract spirits and neutralize them in some fashion; the truth is, jack-o-lanterns are used by the spirits *themselves* to purge themselves of various detritus that collects to them over the year. Why they do this, and what benefit that gives them, is somewhat difficult for mortals to understand. It is done; let that be enough.

Most of the time, it ends there: the detritus either burns up, or else it sticks to the pumpkin and eventually falls apart.

However, every so often there's enough of a buildup that a Jack-O-Wisp forms, and then it floats around in the air for a bit before it falls apart there. And even then that's not really a big deal unless the Jack-O-Wisp happens to touch the bare flesh of someone who is supernaturally 'sensitive.' If that happens, the person affected is likely to have a remarkably vivid and somewhat nightmarish dream that night; which may or may not serve as a supernatural beacon to various supernatural entities looking for a vulnerable sensitive (which this person would be, at least for the night).

But that's a low-probability event, OK? A very very low-probability event. As in, once per century or so. That's why nothing has ever really been done about Jack-O-Wisps; even when everything goes badly and somebody ends up getting possessed, it's going to be by a weak spirit. That can be a problem, down on the street; but on the macro level it doesn't even set off the sensors. There are simply more important problems that require priority.

Yes, yes, none of this really helps when it comes to helping that victim over there with the incredibly bad luck. Sorry about that.

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