



The 13th International Turfgrass
Research Conference



13th ITRC Technical Tour Information Sheet

Central Park – New York City



On July 21, 1853, the New York State Legislature enacted into law the setting aside of more than 750 acres of land central to Manhattan Island to create America's first major landscaped public park; they would soon refer to it as "the Central Park." Frederick Law Olmsted and Calvert Vaux, the winners of the 1858 design competition for Central Park, along with other socially conscious reformers understood that the creation of a great public park would improve public health and contribute greatly to the formation of a civil society. Immediately, the success of Central Park fostered the urban park movement, one of the great hallmarks of democracy of nineteenth century America. – From The Official Website of New York City's Central Park (<http://www.centralparknyc.org/>).

Today Central Park has expanded to 843 acres, and is managed by a Public/Private partnership known as the Central Park Conservancy. The Conservancy is a private, non-profit organization made up of a Governing Board, Trustees, and hundreds of employees that “work toward the common goal of preserving and enhancing Central Park for future generations”. The Conservancy contributes 75% of Central Park's \$57 million annual budget, and employs over 80% of the Park's maintenance staff. The Mission and Guiding Principle of the Conservancy are to:

Restore, manage, and enhance Central Park in partnership with the public; as Central Park is a masterpiece of landscape architecture created to provide a scenic retreat from urban life for the enjoyment of all and, in so doing, helps establish New York's place among the great cities of the world. As the organization entrusted with the responsibility of caring for New York's most important public space, our work is founded on the belief that citizen leadership and private philanthropy are key to ensuring that the Park and its essential purpose endure. – From The Official Website of New York City's Central Park.

Sites not to be missed: Strawberry Fields, Alice in Wonderland Sculpture, Belvedere Castle, Bethesda Fountain and Terrace, The Mall and Literary Walk, Kerbs Boat House, the Carousel, the Great Lawn, the Sheep Meadow, the Reservoir, and the Central Park Zoo.

Turf in Central Park: Central Park serves as one of the primary recreational facilities for Manhattan – an island of 1.626 million people. The dozens of baseball, football and soccer fields are in constant use by school children, recreation programs, and adult sports leagues. Of historical interest: Dr. C. Reed Funk collected the primary germplasm for ‘Manhattan’ perennial ryegrass in Central Park's Sheep Meadow in 1962.