

# 13th International Turfgrass Research Conference Quickly Approaching

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The 13th International Turfgrass Research Conference (ITRC) that will be held at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in New Brunswick, NJ USA from 16-21 July, 2017 is quickly approaching.

## Conference and Hotel Registration is Open

Conference and Hotel Registration (<http://www.turfsociety.com/itrc2017/?p=reg>) is now open. Discounts for conference registration are available until 30 April; however, many of the technical tours and special events have limited capacity so register early to ensure that you receive your first choices.

## Conference Highlights at a Glance

### Turfgrass Industry Session

There will be a special Turfgrass Industry Session Sunday afternoon, 16 July just prior to the evening welcome reception. This event will feature a brief mixer followed by a 1-hour session highlighting recent advancements in the turfgrass industry.

### Opening Reception

The Conference itself will kick off with an opening reception on Sunday night with a Mardi Gras theme. The reception is something that the entire family will want to attend and will feature a Dixieland band, jugglers, card tricks, and plenty of Mardi Gras beads. This is an opportunity to socialize and just sit back and enjoy a night of music, drinks and hors d'oeuvres. This will be followed by a week packed with educational and social opportunities (<http://www.turfsociety.com/itrc2017/pdf/Preliminary-Meeting-Schedule.pdf>) that will allow you to re-engage with old friends and network with new acquaintances from all over the world.



Rutgers Horticultural Turf Research and  
Extension Farm 2, New Brunswick, NJ

### Keynote Presentations

Keynote addresses will be presented on Monday morning, 17 July by internationally renowned scientists focusing on the conference theme "Meeting the Challenges of a Changing Environment." Dr. Timothy Colmer (University of Western Australia) will discuss "Managing water use by warm-season turfgrasses in a drying climate." Dr. William Meyer (Rutgers University, USA), will present "Breeding improved cool-season

turfgrasses for stress tolerance and sustainability in a changing environment.” Dr. Jerry Hatfield (National Laboratory for Agriculture and the Environment, Ames, Iowa, USA) will talk about “Climate impacts on crops and turfgrass: Building effective adaptation strategies.” Dr. Christine Hawkes (University of Texas at Austin, Austin, TX, USA) will discuss “Can the plant mycobiome serve as a tool for improving grass stress resistance?”

### **Oral Paper Sessions**

A draft of the scientific program is available at the conference website (<http://www.turfsociety.com/itrc2017/pdf/Preliminary-Meeting-Schedule.pdf>); however, the final program with the actual date and time of each presentation will not be released until the majority of manuscripts have been accepted. The current plan is to have oral sessions on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday (17, 18, 20 and 21 July). Every effort will be made to limit the number of concurrent sessions. Each oral session will include an invited presentation, as well as volunteered presentations that fit within the session theme/category.

### **Poster Sessions**

Posters will be displayed on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday (17, 18 and 20 July) and, for the first time at an ITRC, one-minute, rapid (oral) summaries will be presented by poster authors prior to each poster session. To entice meeting attendees to meet poster authors and discuss their latest findings, light refreshments and hors d’oeuvres will be provided at each poster session.

### **Student Oral and Poster Competition and Travel Awards**

A Student Competition will be held at the 13th ITRC to showcase some of the exciting, cutting edge research that students are conducting. In addition, Student Travel Awards are available on a competitive basis (deadline is 31 January; <http://turfsociety.com/itrc2017/#student-travel-awards>).



### **Dr. James Watson Celebration**

ITS will host an evening program on Monday, 17 July highlighting the many contributions of Dr. James Watson, one of early leaders of ITS and a pioneer in the turfgrass industry. Come listen to Dr. James Beard (President and Chief Scientist of the International Sports Turf Institute, Inc.), Dr. Paul Rieke (Professor Emeritus, Michigan State University) and others reflect on Dr. Watson’s accomplishments and the founding of ITS, and socialize with other attendees at the reception that follows this special event.

### **Technical Tours and a BBQ Dinner**

A full day of technical tours is planned for Wednesday, 19 July highlighting the extraordinary range of turf venues in the New Jersey/New York City region. There are six tours from which to choose:

- 1) The United States Golf Association Museum / Testing Facility and Baltusrol Golf Club (the host location for the 2016 PGA Championship).

- 2) The Red Bull Arena (home of the New York Red Bulls Major League Soccer Team) and Bayonne Golf Course, called “the most audacious golf course in the world” by Sports Illustrated Magazine.
- 3) The Met Life Stadium Practice Facility (Home to the New York Giants and Jets American Football Teams) and Yankee Stadium (home of the world famous New York Yankees and the New York City Football Club of Major League Soccer).
- 4) Tuckahoe Sod Farm (one of the largest and most successful sod farms in the USA) and Monmouth Park Racetrack (the site of the 2007 Breeders Cup, one of the premier horse racing events in the world).
- 5) Central Park (the iconic green space on Manhattan Island) and the American Museum of Natural History /Hayden Planetarium (one of the world’s pre-eminent scientific and cultural institutions renowned for its exhibitions and scientific collections).
- 6) The Bronx Botanical Gardens (a National Historic Landmark and one of the greatest botanical gardens in the world, with its diverse landscape and extensive collection of plants and gardens).



Bayonne Golf Club, Bayonne, NJ

Be sure to “register early” for the conference since many of these tours will fill up quickly and space will be limited. The day will conclude with a cocktail reception, an American-style BBQ, and an opportunity to informally view research plots at the Rutgers Turf Research Facility at **Hort Farm 2** in North Brunswick, NJ. Brief, YouTube videos of the research trials will be accessible during the evening via free wireless internet. Wednesday night’s BBQ will have a ‘Beach Party’ theme and live music, so dress casually and be ready to have a great time under the stars.



### **Twilight Dinner Cruise of the NY/NJ Harbor and Statue of Liberty**

Immediately following the ITS Quadrennial Business Meeting and the Graduate Student Awards Presentations on Thursday, 20 July, attendees will board buses for a night on the town featuring a Twilight Dinner Cruise of the NY/NJ Harbor and Statue of Liberty, with awesome views of the New York City Skyline, great food and dancing. This is a once in a life-time event that your entire family will want to see.

### **Special Zoysiagrass Symposium**

The last day of the conference will include oral presentations and a Zoysiagrass Symposium Friday morning showcasing invited speakers who will give a world-wide perspective on this important and under-utilized turfgrass species.

### Optional Events (Additional charges may apply; see online registration form for details)

- Wine and Cheese Tasting, Zimmerli Art Museum, Rutgers University – Tuesday, 18 July (19:00-22:00) (<http://www.zimmerlimuseum.rutgers.edu/>)
- Night at Citi Field Major League Baseball Park, New York City – Tuesday, 18 July (16:30-23:30) (<http://newyork.mets.mlb.com/nym/ballpark/>)
- Rutgers Turfgrass Breeding Program Tour – Friday, 21 July (13:00-17:00) at the Rutgers Plant Science Research and Extension Farm, Adelphia, NJ (<https://turf.rutgers.edu/facilities/adelphia.html>). This tour will take place at the end of the ITRC. Come see the largest cool-season breeding program in the world, and hear about the latest advances in turfgrass breeding. Buses will leave from and return to the Hyatt. There is no additional charge for this tour, but pre-registration is required.

### Bring the Family

Accompanying persons will have a full range of activities to choose from during the conference (<http://www.turfsociety.com/itrc2017/pdf/Accompanying-Persons-Tours.pdf>) including: a trip to Longwood Gardens (one of the world's great gardens and a former summer estate of Pierre du Pont), the Bronx Zoo (one of the largest zoos in the United States), the Liberty Science Center (a state of the art science center with an IMAX theater), the Camden Adventure Aquarium (home to the largest collection of sharks on the East Coast, hippos, blue penguins and the longest shark bridge in the world), the American Museum of Natural History /Hayden Planetarium, and even a day trip to the beautiful white sand beaches of Point Pleasant, NJ.



National Botanic Garden, Washington, D.C.

### Outstanding Pre- and Post-Conference Tours

A Pre-Conference Tour will take in the sites of Washington, D.C. and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania during a 5-day trip that will provide a mix of history, fun, and of course turfgrass. Hotel accommodations will be in close proximity to the Nation's Capital, the Lincoln Memorial, and a myriad of museums including the Smithsonian in Washington, D.C. There will be plenty of time for sightseeing and visits to turf-related venues that will include the newly renovated National Mall, the Grass Roots exhibit at the National Arboretum, the National Botanical Gardens, Congressional Country Club, and National Park (home of the Washington Nationals Major League Baseball Team). In Philadelphia, participants will visit Lincoln Financial Field (home of the Philadelphia Eagles American Football Team), PPL Park (home of the Philadelphia Union Soccer Team), as well the iconic Liberty Bell, Independence Hall, local museums, and Longwood Gardens.



Wade Hampton Golf Club, Cashiers, N.C.



Pre-conference tour will visit the University of Maryland's 2017 Turf Research Field Day

A Post-Conference Tour had previously been planned for Miami, Florida; however, due to the recent Zika outbreak in southern Florida, this 4-day tour will be redirected to the beautiful mountains of [Asheville](#), North Carolina. Asheville is a city in western North Carolina's Blue Ridge Mountains known for its vibrant arts scene and historic architecture, including the dome-topped Basilica of Saint Lawrence. Participants will stay in the brand new [Village Hotel](#) at the world famous Biltmore Estate (America's largest house). The tour will include visits to several top-tier golf courses, as well as plenty of time for sightseeing in the nearby River Arts District. On the last evening, enjoy a [Pub Crawl](#) and sample the dizzying array of beer (> 100 local varieties) that Asheville offers. What a relaxing way to unwind after the 13th ITRC. Additional details and the cost of both tours are provided on the ITRC Website (<http://www.turfsociety.com/itrc2017/?p=home>).

### **Excellent Sponsorship Opportunities are Still Available**

More than three dozen companies and organizations including Syngenta, Bayer, Aquatrols, the USGA, BASF, TORO, DLF, PGG Wrightson Seeds, Ocean Organics, and the New Jersey Turfgrass Association / Foundation have already become major supporters of the 2017 ITRC (<http://www.turfsociety.com/itrc2017/?p=reg%20-%20sponsors#sponsors>) and plenty of excellent sponsorship opportunities are still available (<http://www.turfsociety.com/itrc2017/pdf/ITRC-Sponsorship.pdf>). Show your organization's support of turfgrass research and become a 2017 ITRC Sponsor today!

**REGISTER TODAY** (<http://www.turfsociety.com/itrc2017/?p=reg>) to attend one of the largest and most comprehensive gatherings of turfgrass professionals anywhere in the world. Learn about the latest discoveries in turfgrass science and get inspired by the scientific sessions, field tours, and stimulating discussions. Share your research with colleagues from throughout the world, and meet friends, network and see all that the New York City/New Jersey area has to offer. I look forward to seeing all of you at the 13th ITRC in July!