

Gearing Up for 2013's "International Cycling Adventure"

On the heels of the most successful Tour des Trees in history, registration for the [2013 STIHL Tour des Trees](#) to benefit the TREE Fund is filling quickly. Half of the 100 full-Tour slots are already claimed, and the ride is expected to sell out for the second year in a row.



The 2013 Tour will showcase the scenery and favorite destinations of upstate New York and southern Ontario in a 585-mile trek around Lake Ontario. The ride will launch July 27 from Niagara Falls and conclude August 3 at the [ISA Conference and International Tree Climbing Competition](#) on Toronto Island.

New York's arboriculture community is embracing the opportunity to show off its "neck of the woods". [Bartlett Tree Experts](#), [National Grid](#), [Lewis Tree Services](#) and [STIHL](#) will host rider dinners in New York State, and [Morrisville State College](#) is hosting Monday's lunch at the Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge on Cayuga Lake. TREE Fund Trustee and NYSA member Brian Sayers shared his enthusiasm following NYSA's recent conference. "You can usually count on New Yorkers to be a 'tough sell.' Not so for the 2013 Tour! I haven't seen such enthusiastic arborist support for anything since the introduction of synthetic ropes."



Veteran Tour rider and Toronto arborist Warren Hoselton has been an active contributor to the planning process. "The northern coastline of Lake Ontario offers some of the best cycling in the Great Lakes," he says. "We have great cycling roads with fruit stands, wineries, pristine beaches and plenty of friendly Ontarians! And I can't wait to welcome my "tree family" to my pride and joy, Toronto Island."

Hoselton's cycling helmet is only one of the hats he'll wear during the Tour. He'll trade it for a white wig and matching lab coat on several occasions, teaching kids of all ages as [Professor Elwood Pricklethorn](#). With the support of the [Canadian TREE Fund](#) and [Bartlett Tree Experts](#), copies of Bonnie Worth's "I Can Name 50 Trees Today!" will be distributed to kids attending Professor Pricklethorn's educational programs and to local libraries. Pricklethorn and the library gifts are part of the Tour's mission to engage the next generation of tree stewards in learning and caring about the trees in their lives.



Title sponsor [STIHL](#) expects to field an international team of Tour riders this year, including one registrant from Germany, home to STIHL's corporate headquarters. The [Ontario](#) and [New York](#) Chapters of the International Society of Arboriculture are engaged in a friendly competition to register the most riders and, if past trends hold true, more than 60% of the 2013 roster will be veterans of the event.



[The TREE Fund](#) has set its sights on raising \$600,000 in 2013, a goal that seemed far-fetched just a few years ago. "We set our sights on that magic half-million dollar mark in 2009 when STIHL became our Title Sponsor," said TREE Fund President/CEO Janet Bornancin. "The Tour raised \$500,000 in 2011 and topped \$600,000 in 2012. This event has become a powerful engine for funding the TREE Fund's current and future research and education programs. Each of its riders can claim a share in helping to keep the world's urban trees healthy and the tree care workforce safe. Ask any Tour rider; they'll tell you it's more than a bike ride. It's a family reunion, a personal challenge and a labor of love for the trees. Many of them plan their summers around it year after year. We can't wait to welcome them all in Ontario this summer. Our goal is to offer our cyclists the ride of their lives, every year!"