



Preconference Tour

A Lowcountry Journey

Through Gardens, Tea & Oaks

Wednesday, October 28 | Folly Island, Charleston, Wadmalaw Island, and Johns Island, South Carolina

Overview: Experience an unforgettable Lowcountry day where coastal hospitality, healing landscapes, working tea fields, and legendary live oaks come together in one memorable tour. The journey begins with a bagged breakfast at The Tides on Folly Island before traveling to MUSC for an engaging behind-the-scenes look at gardens—including the urban Food Forest—that connect food, health, history, and urban tree preservation. The afternoon continues with lunch and a distinctive visit to Charleston Tea Garden, where blooming tea camellias create a charming “popcorn” effect across the fields. The tour concludes beneath the iconic Angel Oak, one of Charleston’s most treasured living landmarks, with a powerful story of stewardship, preservation, and care for future generations.

Agenda

8:00 a.m. Registration opens with a delicious, bagged breakfast provided as participants check in and begin boarding the bus at The Tides on Folly Beach.

8:30 a.m. Depart by bus for the Medical University of South Carolina in downtown Charleston for an energizing campus garden walking tour. Participants will have a guided tour of the urban Food Forest and Pocket Urban Farm, where food, health, horticultural therapy, and hands-on education come together in a vibrant urban setting. The visit will also include the Porcher Medicinal Garden, the MUSC Camellia Garden, and mature live oaks that have been thoughtfully relocated on campus grounds. Presenters will highlight plant selection, campus landscape planning, tree preservation, and the powerful role green spaces can play for patients, students, staff, and visitors.

11:30 a.m. Depart MUSC for Charleston Tea Garden on Wadmalaw Island, where a lunch included and a one-of-a-kind Lowcountry tea experience await. Participants will leave the urban medical campus behind and enter a working agricultural landscape surrounded by sweeping rows of *Camellia sinensis* plants. A special highlight will be the delightful “popcorn” effect created when blooming tea camellias dot the green fields with small white flowers. This stop connects camellias, tea production, agritourism, and the beauty of cultivated landscapes in a memorable and inspiring way.

1:30 p.m. Depart Charleston Tea Garden for Angel Oak on Johns Island for a grand finale beneath one of Charleston's most visited and treasured live oak landmarks. Charleston Parks and Recreation will bring the story of Angel Oak to life, sharing its cultural significance, enduring appeal, and the stewardship required to protect a tree of this scale and importance. Participants will also learn how Bartlett Tree Experts helps maintain Angel Oak with exceptional care and protection. This closing stop will leave participants inspired by the power of preservation, public access, heritage tourism, and the lasting value of landmark trees.

3:30 p.m. Depart Angel Oak and return to Folly Island, where one final Southern treat will be waiting as participants say farewell. Dinner is not included in the tour; participants may enjoy dinner at their own expense at one of Folly Island's many restaurants, including The Tides' new Pinky's hotel restaurant.

During tour travel time, participants will enjoy guided discussions on tree health issues and related concerns. Topics will include signs of Asian longhorned beetle damage, oak wilt symptoms and spread, the presence of resurrection fern on tree limbs, Spanish moss and its effects on trees, and invasive pests such as the yellow-legged hornet and spotted lanternfly. Printed materials will be provided to support these discussions and give participants helpful information to take with them. These conversations will help participants connect what they see in the landscape with the insects, diseases, and plants that can influence tree health and appearance.

CEUs applied for



Looking Back & Leaping Forward TREES SC ANNUAL CONFERENCE

October 29-30 – Folly Beach SC
The Tides

CONFERENCE

Join us October 29-30, 2026, in Folly Beach, SC, for the 2026 Trees SC Annual Conference, where we will look back at the roots of urban forestry and leap forward into the future of resilient urban forests. This year's program is designed for urban tree care professionals and enthusiasts who are driving innovation and stewardship in their communities. With expert-led sessions, networking opportunities, and valuable CEUs, this conference will equip you with insights and relationships to elevate your work.

THURSDAY

- 7:30-8:30 Breakfast and Registration
- 8:30-8:40 Welcome Trees SC President Amanda Flake
- 8:40-9:25 Xiao Yang, Clemson Extension- Emerging Tree Diseases
- 9:25-10:10 Bob Polomski, Clemson Extension – *Native vs Non-Native Trees*
- 10:10-10:55 Michele Dani Sanchez, Clemson Extension – *SC Native Tree Propagation and Conservation*
- 10:55-11:10 Networking Break
- 11:10-11:55 Travis Rogers, The Orion Companies – *Innovative Technology for Asset Management and Monitoring field conditions*
- 11:55-12:15 Awards, Presentation, Trees SC Business Meeting, Tree City USA Recognition
- 12:15-1:30 Networking Lunch
- 1:30-2:15 Dominique Werboff, ISA Southern – *Beyond the Chainsaw: Rebranding Arboriculture through Education, Communication, and Community*
- 2:15-3:00 Oak Wilt Panel Discussion – Aaron Campbell, Xiao Yang, etc.
- 3:00-3:15 Networking Break (board election ballots due)
- 3:15-4:00 Sarah White, Clemson University - *Writing Specifications for Nursery Trees*
- 4:00-4:45 KEYNOTE – Tom Smiley, Bartlett Tree Experts - *Updates on Tree Risk Assessment*
- 5:00-6:00 Networking Social

FRIDAY

- 8:00-8:30 Breakfast, Auction Results,
- 8:20-8:30 Welcome
- 8:30-9:15 Elizabeth Bradley, Clemson – *Managing Wildlife Damage on Urban Trees*
- 9:15-10:00 Jesse Peery, Envu Environmental Science – *Site Assessments for Industrial Herbicide Applications*
- 10:00-10:15 Networking Break

10:15-11:00 J.C. Chong, Sapro—*Pests and Diseases of Palms*
11:00-11:45 Tom Smiley, Barlett Tree Experts – *Lightning Protection for Trees*
11:45-12:00 Raffles (need to be present to win), Conference Wrap Up

CEUs applied for.