



# Fall Walking Tour



**1** Start your walk at the **Charles A. Dana Discovery Center**, on the northern shore of the Harlem Meer. Central Park designers Frederick Law Olmsted and Calvert Vaux named this man-made water body “the Meer” – Dutch for “lake,” as a nod to the 17th century European settlers who first inhabited the village of Harlem. Today, the Harlem Meer is a thriving wildlife habitat, home to fish, turtles, and waterfowl. Several varieties of trees, including Red Maple, Bald Cypress, and Gingko will show vibrant foliage in shades of red and yellow. Stop by the Dana Discovery Center to learn more about the Conservancy’s free education and community programs, seasonal exhibits and holiday celebrations.

**2** Continue south along the eastern edge of the Park near Fifth Avenue towards the **Conservatory Garden**. Restored by the Conservancy in 1981, the Garden is divided into three distinct styles – French, Italian, and English. Spend some time in the northern French-style garden, which showcases a stunning array of chrysanthemums in full bloom in the last week of October. Stroll by the Burnett Fountain and you’ll find the Park’s largest crabapple tree with its stunning yellow leaves. Don’t leave before strolling through the rest of the garden to view the other flowers before the frost.

**3** Head west out of the Conservatory Garden’s southern end, and you’ll pass a large Turkey Oak tree displaying vibrant, rust-colored leaves. Keep an eye out for the **Mount**, where Conservancy staff and volunteers deposit the fallen leaves of the Park’s 24,000 trees. Each year, more than 3,000 cubic yards of leaves are taken to the Mount to be broken down into compost, which is used year-round in all of the Conservancy’s planting and horticultural projects. As you walk south toward the East Meadow, notice the twisting and turning in the Park’s paths. They were intentionally designed that way by Olmsted and Vaux, who chose to eschew the straight lines and hard angles of the streetscape to enhance the natural beauty and peacefulness of the Park for its visitors.

**4** You’ll soon arrive at the **East Meadow**, which was recently restored from dust bowl to lush lawn after a \$3 million effort by the Central Park Conservancy. The entire northeast section of the Park, including the area around the East Meadow, was originally intended to be an arboretum by Olmsted and Vaux. Walk along the perimeter path to see American Elm, European Beeches, and London Plane trees in autumn colors of red, yellow, and rust. An American Elm tree that lines the northern edge of the Meadow is one of the Park’s oldest trees, dating to the construction of the Park in the mid 19th century.