

Role Title	Senior Horticulturist – Alpine & Woodland
Team	Horticulture
Reports to	Head of Horticulture and Curation
Direct Reports	Daily supervision of volunteers and trainees; 1 direct line report currently
Salary	£27,000 - £29,400 depending on experience
Hours	Full time, Monday to Friday with weekend duty rota

Introduction

Birmingham Botanical Gardens is one of the most historically significant Botanic Gardens in the UK; a sole survival of its type from the group of early 19th century Botanic Gardens that were set up with public subscriptions in the UK's major cities. The registered Grade II* landscaped Gardens occupy 15 acres, 1 mile from Birmingham City Centre, and opened to the public in 1832.

The Gardens have a strong history of cultivating Alpine and Rock Garden Plants, with the Hugh Nettlefold Alpine Garden being laid out in 1894-5, designed by Backhouse and Sons of York. Today, the Alan King Alpine Garden and associated glasshouses provide the opportunity for Alpine plant conservation and cultivation, with the Nettlefold garden being planted with woodland and aquatic plants.

In the present day, Birmingham Botanical Gardens is an independent educational charity aiming to offer world class environmental education in a green environment to audiences in all sectors of the community. We are in the development phase of a National Lottery Heritage fund capital project, to significantly restore and develop the site. We are seeking a talented Senior Horticulturist to develop the Alpine and Woodland Garden areas.

Role Purpose

- To maintain and develop the Alpine, Rock and Woodland Gardens living collections at Birmingham Botanical Gardens to an exceptionally high standard of presentation and curation
- To work within a small team, regularly participating in Team activities, meetings and covering critical horticultural tasks across the gardens and glasshouses as and when required
- Daily supervision of volunteers and assigned trainees or apprentices

- Working Monday – Friday and Weekend duty cover, with time off in lieu
- Assisting audit and development plan for own areas in consultation with Director of Horticulture and Curation and in line with the living collections and Garden Strategy
- Undertaking labelling, accessioning and verification on the plant database
- Planning work maintenance schedule and agreeing with Line manager
- To deliver all horticultural tasks in line with risk assessments health and safety legislation, COSHH assessments
- Purchasing and horticultural activities conducted in line with plant acquisition, biosecurity, ethical / sustainable sourcing policies pertinent to post
- Delivering integrated pest & weed management programme for own areas and management of plant nutrition
- Supporting interpretation and engagement strategy by contributing to copy for interpretation & marketing as well as delivering tours

Principal Accountabilities

1. To work in accordance with BBG's Values and behaviours, to ensure that you are working hard and go above and beyond to deliver excellence to maintain and improve BBG for current and future generations
2. Positively contributing to ensuring that the BBG work environment is one that supports Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion for all – including, but not restricted to: staff, volunteers, trainees and apprenticeships, members of the public
3. Be an enthusiastic ambassador for BBG, contributing to the visitor experience by delivering tours and contributing to interpretation and marketing

Specific Responsibilities

TEAMWORK, APPRENTICE, TRAINEE AND VOLUNTEER DEVELOPMENT

- To regularly attend and contribute to team activities – including team hits, meetings and covering other areas, contribute evenly to shared irrigation and mowing responsibilities
- Supervise a team of garden volunteers, apprentices, trainees, interns and volunteers, delivering training where appropriate
- Identify short- and long-term tasks and discuss with Line Manager
- Help plan and lead separate volunteer / corporate away days where appropriate to cover large seasonal tasks
- Assist with department inductions for all new staff, apprentices, trainees, interns and volunteers
- Have regular contact with Line Management and deputise as necessary

HORTICULTURAL MAINTENANCE AND DEVELOPMENT

- Carry out all horticultural tasks to a high standard
- Take responsibility for designated areas as necessary, to ensure high horticultural standards are reached and maintained
- Keep plant records and assist in the updating of electronic plant records database/spreadsheets

- Be aware of changes in horticultural practices
- Develop and execute a garden maintenance plan in line with the Living Collections Strategy for the Hugh Nettlefold Rock Garden, Alpine Houses, Cyclamen Collections, Alpine Meadow, Alan King Alpine Garden and other areas as appropriate

EQUIPMENT AND MATERIALS

- Ensure all tools and equipment are used correctly and cared for, efficiently and safely by assigned volunteers, trainees and apprentices in keeping with current health & safety practice
- Assess equipment needs and make costed recommendations to Line Management
- Support new equipment and materials purchases and associated paperwork
- Support in receipt of sign off garden supply deliveries
- Help organise and keep the storage rooms tidy

HEALTH AND SAFETY

- Carry out all duties in accordance with any relevant Health and Safety legislation including the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, paying particular attention to the public's safety
- Identify potential risks at work and write risk assessments and safer systems of work procedures for specific tasks and complete incident forms
- Carry out health and safety awareness talks with the volunteers, trainees and apprentices before starting a new job when appropriate
- Operate the machinery in a safe manner in accordance with the BBG Health and Safety Policy, the Codes of Practice for safe handling and manufacturer guidelines
- Assist in supervision and monitoring of contractors and ensure they are adhering to the procedures and method statements agreed

ENGAGEMENT & INCOME GENERATION

- Assist garden-based engagement sessions at The Gardens in liaison with the Engagement & Commercial teams
- Enhance visitors' enjoyment of The Gardens, through tours and workshops
- Assist members of the public with queries, problems and incidents
- Develop the commencement of Horticultural Winter Festival, particularly the display of the Cyclamen and Alpine collections
- Develop Horticultural conservation activities in fulfilment of BGCI Accreditation criteria
- Support the wider team with events, including preparation, the running of and clearing up
- Assist the wider team to ensure that contractor run events and projects are managed within the guidelines set by Birmingham Botanical Gardens.

WORKING CONDITIONS

Office environment, outdoor gardens and glasshouse environments, involves lifting/manual handling, weekends, late evenings, some lone garden working whilst other BBG staff are on site etc, hot and cold weather.

PERSON SPECIFICATION – ALPINE & WOODLAND

Area	Essential	Desirable
Knowledge	Good knowledge of a range of Woodland, Alpine, Rock Garden and other hardy and tender plants	Knowledge of Birmingham Botanical Garden’s heritage and value
	Knowledge of Alpine plant conservation activities and horticultural conservation activities	Knowledge of key frameworks and policies governing Botanic and Heritage gardens
	Have a wide working knowledge of horticulture practices and techniques including diverse plant knowledge; Knowledge of good plant husbandry; Tufa planting; Alpine Nursery work, Meadow management; pot culture maintenance; P&D control; wide range of machinery; Propagation	Good knowledge of Cyclamen cultivation and display
Experience	Substantial experience in a Botanical Garden or Historic Garden setting	Experience of developing and delivering high quality pot displays and temporary horticultural festivals or shows
	Experience of leading and training volunteers and trainees in a horticultural setting	
	Experience with a range of horticultural machinery including use and routine maintenance. Experience in lawn care and hedge cutting.	
	Experience of cultivation and propagation of Alpine plants, to include tufa, cold glasshouses, plunge pots, rock and crevice gardening; particularly Cyclamen	
Qualifications	RHS level 2 or above or equivalent	RHS level 3, above or equivalent
	FEPA PA1 & PA6 Qualified	Design qualification or equivalent
	Maintenance of a wide range of horticultural machinery with certificates to demonstrate competency	
Skills	Good communication skills	Good IT Skills, to include Microsoft Office package, Plant database systems such as IRIS BG, BGBASE and others

	Able to carry out tasks requiring high levels of manual dexterity, as well as physically demanding tasks, such as shovelling, digging, mulching lifting and carrying, working on rocks, working at height	Confident working at height, able to devise and train in safe systems of work for significant plant moves and maintenance
	Able to plan, prioritise work and take responsibility for the task in line with Business Plan, charitable mission and objectives	
	Able to train staff and volunteers in correct horticultural procedures	
Other	High attention to detail	
	Flexible – be willing to give support where necessary and be able to change plans at short notice to adapt to changing priorities	
	Approachable and positive	
	Problem solving approach	