

Position: Camellia Horticulturist

Department: Horticulture

Status: Non – Exempt, Full – Time, 40 hours weekly

Reports to: Director of Horticulture and Gardens Operations

This is a full-time hourly 40 hour per week non-exempt position and may include some evening and/or weekend hours depending on the needs of the organization.

The Camellia Horticulturist is responsible for Descanso's historic and largest plant collection, the Camellia Forest. One of the largest camellia collections in the U.S., the Camellia Forest at Descanso has an estimated 6,000 camellia plants including 42 unique species and over 600 cultivars. Care and revitalization of the current collection as well as development of new areas emphasizing camellias will be an essential part of the position. The candidate should be skilled at camellia culture and identification. Familiarity with current developments and best practices in the camellia conservation community is a plus. The Camellia Horticulturist will be responsible for leading gardeners and volunteers through the ongoing cultivation of plants throughout the Camellia Forest.

Additionally, the Camellia Horticulturist cares for Descanso's Japanese Garden and a significant collection of over 100 species and varieties of cycads in the Ancient Forest. The candidate will be expected to have a working knowledge of the needs of all these areas in order to further the mission and development of each. To this end, a significant part of this responsibility is working with the Garden Records Coordinator, the Education Department, and the Director of Horticulture to ensure the best possible documentation, mapping, interpretation and care of these collections. Additionally, networking and participation with other public gardens and with related local and national plant societies is required. This position requires an astute knowledge of botanical nomenclature, exemplary horticultural skills, and the ability to perform hard physical labor, a collaborative work ethic, and a personable attitude toward the public.

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS, DUTIES, AND RESPONSIBILITIES include but are not limited to:

- Responsible for planning, preparing and executing a strategy for the Camellia Forest, Ancient Forest, and Japanese Garden collections at Descanso Gardens.
- Participates in day-to-day care of the collections including planting, weeding, fertilizing, irrigating, staking, pruning, dead wooding, removing plants, and other general gardening duties.
- Orders new plants and plant materials.
- Leads staff on work days in the collection.
- Trains and oversees volunteers for work activities by providing support, direction, and encouragement.
- Manages irrigation systems in collection areas.

Other Duties:

- Participates in public education programs as they relate to the Collections and the landscape. Works with Public Programs in the presentation of horticulture talks, the offering of tours, classes, and docent training. This position is occasionally responsible for writing articles that appear in the Descanso Gardens Newsletter, or other publications.
- Provides public information about the plants in the collection. Furnishes information to the Plant Records Coordinator to facilitate accessioning of new plants, deaccessioning of dead plants, mapping, and the production of public identification labels and accession tags.
- Meets regularly with the Director of Horticulture and Facilities and other Horticulturists to address the management of the Descanso Gardens landscape and collections.
- Minor irrigation repairs.
- Knowledge of organic IPM and weed management practices.
- Completion of other duties as assigned.

EQUIPMENT USED:

This position is responsible for the safe operation and maintenance of a full range of manual and power tools; standard manual, electric, and gas powered gardening equipment and tools including weed whip, chainsaw, pole saw and pole pruner, bypass pruner, lopper and folding saw; electric carts, company trucks, skid steer, tractor; computer and two-way radio.

QUALIFICATIONS & REQUIREMENTS:

- Degree in horticulture, botany, or plant science or equivalent experience.
- Minimum of three years of increasing responsibility in a public horticulture setting.
- Strong knowledge of and previous work experience in the care and presentation of a diverse collection of trees, shrubs, and perennials using organic horticultural techniques.
- Demonstrated experience scheduling staff, planning tasks and organizing projects.
- Knowledge of use and safe operation of manual and power gardening tools.
- Ability to effectively lead and work in teams.
- Strong interpersonal communication skills.
- Basic computer skills including MS Office.
- Valid Class C California Driver's License.

PHYSICAL DEMANDS:

This is an outdoor physically-orientated and demanding position which requires:

- Ability to move equipment to various locations within the Gardens which may not be accessible via motor vehicle or paved road.
- Must be able to walk long distances and access various areas of the Gardens including areas not accessible by paved roads or dirt trails.
- The ability to lift and carry 50 lbs.
- The ability to walk, kneel, bend, stoop, sit, crouch, drive vehicles, and climb ladders on regular and ongoing basis.
- Exposure to various noise levels on a daily basis.
- Working outdoors in inclement weather, including cold, rain and heat, as well as night time conditions.

Rate

\$24.00 to \$26.00 per hour

To apply: Interested parties may apply by submitting a MS Word or PDF Letter of Interest and Resume to jobs@descansogardens.org with HORT2025 in the subject line. Only those meeting the minimum requirements and submitting all required information may be contacted for further inquiry. We will accept resumes until the position is filled.

No phone calls, please.

Descanso Gardens Guild Inc. acknowledges that equal opportunity for all persons is a fundamental human value. Each employee will be considered on the basis of individual ability and merit, without regard to race, color, age, religion, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, sex, or marital status.