

Job description - Plant Health and Propagation Officer (PB6A)

Job summary

As part of the Westonbirt Tree Team, you will play a vital role in safeguarding the health of the collection, ensuring compliance with national and international legislation. You'll work with our propagator to support nursery operations and make sure that all material entering or leaving the arboretum nursery is free from pests and pathogens, upholding the highest standards of biosecurity aligned with our vision to be a world leader in trees through conservation, education, and participation.

Key responsibilities & accountabilities

Plant Health Compliance:

- oversee and maintain Westonbirt's Plant Healthy Certification Scheme accreditation and Plant Passport authorisation
- work with Propagator to ensure incoming and outgoing nursery material complies with national and international regulations and the Plant Healthy Certification Scheme requirements
- work with Curator to ensure the Integrated Pest Management strategy is kept up to date in compliance with the UK Woodland Assurance Standard
- maintain mandatory records and delivery/dispatch information as necessary on plant records database
- record use of biological controls
- work with Propagator to monitor for pest and disease within the nursery and record findings
- support Bedgebury National Pinetum in attaining Plant Healthy Certification Scheme accreditation for their nursery

Plant Health and Biosecurity:

- ensure biosecurity compliance among staff and visitors to nursery
- uphold and comply with nursery biosecurity measures and environmental obligations
- act as Westonbirt's Tree Health Champion and point person for Westonbirt's role within the International Plant Sentinel Network
- support Westonbirt's Tree Conservation Manager in organising national and international fieldwork, particularly in relation to permits and phytosanitary certification
- represent the arboretum at plant health related meetings and conferences both internally and externally
- liaise with Forest Research on plant health matters
- facilitate plant health related research within the collection

Propagation Support:

- assist with watering (including some weekends as required)
- work with Propagator to process incoming seed as required
- assist with fieldwork activities as appropriate

Training and Development:

- maintain up-to-date information on plant pests and pathogens, and disseminate this within the wider team
- provide biosecurity support to wider team
- keep a register of Tree Team plant health responsibilities and maintain Tree Team training record
- actively develop your skills and knowledge through personal development and training

Supervisory:

- supervise and facilitate the work of the volunteer Phenology Group

And any other tasks, reasonably requested by your line manager.

Skills, knowledge & experience

Essential professional and technical experience

- organisational, communication and independent working skills
- ability to manage own time and workload efficiently, prioritise and meet tight deadlines
- strong written and oral communication skills
- good botanical knowledge (particularly temperate trees)
- knowledge of pest and disease threats to temperate tree species

Desirable professional and technical experience

- practical fieldwork experience
- experience working within botanical collections

Qualifications

Essential

- experience and/or a qualification in conservation, plant health, horticulture, arboriculture or another relevant discipline
- relevant plant science, forestry or horticulture degree or diploma (or equivalent)