



## **CURATOR OF GROUNDS AND HORTICULTURE**

The Buffalo Zoo is seeking a highly motivated, energetic, and highly articulate individual to serve as the **Curator of Grounds and Horticulture**.

To apply, please send resume and cover letter no later than July 25, 2021 in **Word document or PDF** by email to: [zooapplications@buffalozoo.org](mailto:zooapplications@buffalozoo.org) No telephone calls please. Position open until filled. For more information about the Buffalo Zoo, please visit our website by the following link: <http://www.buffalozoo.org>

Full Job Posting - <https://buffalozoo.org/about/#careers>

### **The Buffalo Zoo**

As one of the crown jewels of Western New York's cultural and recreational attractions, the Buffalo Zoo welcomes 500,000 guests on an annual basis. The Zoo sits on 24 acres and includes a variety of buildings and habitats. Many of the components of the campus have historic significance. The Zoo is operated by the Zoological Society of Buffalo, Inc. under a lease agreement with the City of Buffalo. Since 2000, more than \$50 million worth of capital improvements to exhibitry and infrastructure have been completed. In 2019, the Zoo's five-year strategic plan was completed. Our mission of Building Community → Creating Connections → Saving Wildlife is guiding our masterplan that is under development. This masterplan will guide the growth and development of the Zoo for the next twenty years.

### **Overview of Position:**

#### **Basic Purpose and Responsibility:**

Reporting to the Chief Zoological Officer, the Curator of Grounds and Horticulture plans, organizes, and supervises all work of the grounds department (horticultural and general housekeeping) to provide a comfortable, visually pleasing and safe environment for Zoo visitors. The Curator of Grounds and Horticulture is responsible for directing cleaning and landscape duties and functions as necessary to meet operating needs with a high degree of efficiency and independence. Maintain performance standards, coordinate assigned staff, and foster positive team environment. Assist in design, planning and review of Zoo's horticulture projects for high quality landscapes, naturalistic exhibits.

#### **Essential Functions:**

##### **General Responsibilities -**

- Primary accountability for specific functions and results. The list of essential functions is not exhaustive and may be supplemented or changed as necessary.
- Design, coordinate, and supervise the installation and maintenance of Zoo landscape and gardens to include all plant material and turf in both inside and outside of buildings, public areas, animal exhibits, and behind the scenes areas. Position is responsible for overseeing all aspects of plant maintenance and landscape constructions including but not limited to plant identification, watering, sowing, propagating, transplanting, fertilizing, weeding, mowing, trimming, pruning, pest management, irrigation, and general construction (i.e. overseeing the building of a raised bed).
- Establish weekly work and project priorities for the Grounds and Horticulture Department and draft daily work schedules, schedule projects, obtain or propagate necessary plants, organize and order supplies, make work arrangements with other divisions using project timetables, Zoo timeframes, equipment, personnel, and supplies availability, informal team discussions, and Grounds and Horticulture Department staff meetings.
- Supervise daily cleaning and maintenance of interiors of some buildings, pathways and parking lots.

- Coordinating and working with Guest Experience clean team and Erie County Work Crews to accomplish overall janitorial and cleaning services throughout the Zoo. Maintain all buildings and grounds to provide a clean and appealing environment.
- Supervise daily operation and maintenance of all types of grounds equipment and vehicles, especially those related to horticulture, landscape, and cleaning to include mowers, edgers, string trimmers, blowers, tractors, pick-up trucks, dump trucks, skid steers, floor cleaners and sweepers.
- Supervise daily snow and ice removal as needed in the winter months.
- Assists with the management of the Zoo's browse program and supervise installation and maintenance of animal browse tree and shrub plantings.
- Assist with inspection and maintenance of Zoo perimeter fence to include removal of weeds/vines and repair of unsecure areas of fencing.
- Supervise daily trash and recycling removal from Zoo public and work areas to include daily animal waste removal from animal areas.
- Develop and assist with Sustainability/ Green initiatives (i.e. compost, trash recycling, cell phone recycling, drought tolerant and native plantings, etc.).
- Assist with identification and resolution of problems within the plant collection, the department, and the Zoo.
- Develop and execute an Invasive Plant/Weed Management program to include removal of invasive/weed plants.
- Develop and execute an Integrated Pest Management program.
- Oversee and implement preparation of Zoo grounds and meeting spaces for various uses and special events. Provides assistance to other departments in setting up special events, fund raisers, meetings, etc.

#### **Curatorial/Supervisory Responsibilities -**

- Most importantly, leads a workforce including full-time, part-time and seasonal staff in a workplace with a strong emphasis on animal welfare and guest experience. Oversees the supervision of the Grounds Department including hiring, training, and scheduling of Grounds Keepers I, II, III, team lead, managers, and seasonal employees. Manage employee schedules, reviews employee timecards, and manages time off requests in Time and Attendance software.
- Acts as a key management representative for department on collective bargaining matters, serving on labor / management committees, processing grievances, and participating in labor / management initiatives, etc.
- Conducts performance evaluations. Makes recommendations regarding personnel replacements or additions, hiring and terminating, evaluations, disciplinary actions, grievances and related matters.
- Inspect job sites on a regular basis to assess work progress, problems, work and safety conditions and plant health using visual inspections, employee input, goals list, Standard Operating Procedures, and staff expertise.
- Monitor employees' adherence to Grounds and Horticulture Department policies such as standard operating procedures on all equipment they use, Buffalo Zoo safety, emergency, and personnel policies on attendance, breaks, disciplinary action, to ensure safety of personnel, guests and animals and to establish an efficient safe operation and effective job performance.
- Manage and assist with training and development of full-time, part-time, and seasonal employees as well as students, interns, and volunteers.
- Oversee and actively participate in development of departmental budget and plant collection planning.
- Coordinate with the Animal Care Department on projects and activities while keeping Animal Welfare as highest priority for the Zoo and team members.
- Actively manage Grounds and Horticulture equipment and living plant collection inventory and purchasing process.
- Actively participate in the Zoo's Emergency Response Team, and is a member of the Emergency Inclement Weather Team.
- Oversees, develops, implements horticultural Integrated Pest Management plans.
- Presents public and professional talks regarding the operations of the Grounds and Horticulture Department.
- Responsible for providing data and coordinating major projects dealing with the other Zoo departments.
- Reads appropriate publications and other sources for ideas and to keep current in the field.

- Actively participate in workshops, seminars, and activities aimed at improving job knowledge.
- Ensure workplace productivity through clear, relevant and timely exchanges of verbal and non-verbal communication in all employee activities.
- Build constructive working relationships characterized by cooperation, respect and teamwork to achieve goals.
- Helps promote the Buffalo Zoo's mission, vision and core values to our internal team, guests and all stakeholders.
- Act as Director on Duty as assigned.

**Record Keeping -**

- Provide Chief Zoological Officer with a weekly projects report.
- Maintain pesticide and fertilization logs, listing rate applied (where, when, how, whom) and amount applied to meet regulation.
- Maintain plant and equipment inventories.
- Maintains required Safety Data Sheets (SDS).
- Maintain current appropriate records and files such as: work orders, plant purchase sheets, tool and equipment catalogs, inventories, plant donations, accounting systems, planting logs, purchasing logs, purchasing forms, and personnel documentation.

The duties listed above are intended only as an illustration of the various types of work that may be performed. The omission of specific statements of duties does not exclude them from the position if the work is similar, related or a logical assignment to the position. Additional duties as assigned by the Chief Zoological Officer or the President/CEO.

**Position Qualifications:**

To perform this job successfully, an individual must be able to perform each essential duty satisfactorily. The requirements listed below are representative of the knowledge, skill, and/or ability required:

*Education and Experience (Minimum Needed):*

- Associates or Bachelor's Degree in horticulture, landscape technology, etc. highly desired.
- Minimum 3-5 years' experience working in landscape, horticulture, and/or botanical garden highly desired.
- Minimum 3-5 years' supervisory experience in facilities/grounds/horticulture or related field is mandatory.
- Experience working in a zoo, thematic park, or a related recreational operation desirable.
- Management experience in a collective bargaining environment desirable.
- High level of computer skills in MS Office Suite (Word, Excel, PowerPoint). Working knowledge of personal computers and other software applications (google applications).

*Special Skills:*

- Must be able to work independently and with high degree of efficiency.
- Must be able to maintain effective working relationships with other employees and the public.
- A thorough knowledge of general horticultural principles, plant identification, pest management, landscape design, and the ability to operate all equipment within the department is essential.
- Extensive knowledge of landscape plants, (particularly Buffalo, NY zoned) and tropical plants, is desired.
- Proficiency in the operation and maintenance of all types of grounds equipment, especially those related to horticulture, lawn care, and snow removal (i.e., mowers, plows, skid steer loaders, forklifts, and tractors).

*Other:*

- Must possess a current NYS Pesticide Applicator permit or have the ability to get one.
- Must possess or be able to obtain within 30-days of employment a valid New York State driver's license and have an average or better driving record based on the evaluation process of our insurance company. Retention of position is contingent upon maintaining required license. Must upgrade to classification appropriate to requirements (non-CDLC or CDL class).
- Successful completion of a post-offer pre-employment general medical screen and drug test prior to starting work.

- Successful completion of a post-offer pre-employment background check.
- Successful completion of a post-offer pre-employment fit-for-duty test.
- TB Test conducted annually.
- Must have the ability to work flexible hours, including weekdays, weekends, holidays and evenings as necessary.

**Physical Demands:**

The physical demands described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of this job. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

A large percentage of duties are performed outdoors in various weather conditions, ranging from rain, wind, cool to cold weather, and extreme heat and humidity. It is possible the employee will be exposed to dust and harsh chemicals that if not handled properly may present a health hazard. The noise level in the work environment is usually moderate.

While performing the duties of this job, the employee is regularly required to stand; walk; use hands; reach with hands and arms; stoop, kneel, crouch, or crawl and talk or hear. Use computer hardware and software for extended periods of time (repetitive motion). Sitting for long periods of time. Specific vision abilities required by this job include close vision, distance vision, peripheral vision, depth perception and ability to adjust focus.

A fitness for duty test will be required in order for the successful candidate to be given further consideration for the position.

**Compensation and Benefits**

This is a full-time, exempt position. Salary \$58,000 to \$62,000 depending on qualifications. Benefits available include health plan, life insurance, dental, vision, 403B retirement plan, annual leave time, holiday time, and sick time. Benefits are available after the successful completion of an introductory probation period of 60 days of work. Sick time available upon hire.

The Buffalo Zoo is an At Will employer and all Buffalo Zoo employees are subject to employment eligibility and background security checks as well as testing for illegal substance use as allowed by law.

*Equal Opportunity Employer*

**300 Parkside Avenue, Buffalo, NY 14214-1999**