

## **Houston Arboretum & Nature Center Conservation Director**

**Reports To:** Executive Director

**Employment Status:** Full-time

**Compensation:** Salary commensurate with experience. Excellent benefits are also provided.

### **About the Arboretum**

Houston Arboretum & Nature Center is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to provide education about the natural environment to people of all ages, and to protect and enhance the Arboretum as a haven and sanctuary for native plants and animals. Located on the western edge of Memorial Park, this 155-acre urban nature sanctuary encourages visitors to slow down and enjoy the natural world. One of the first nature education facilities for children in the state of Texas, the Arboretum proudly welcomes over 10,000 school children and 400,000 visitors annually. Since 2012, the Arboretum has been developing and implementing a Master Plan for the landscape, site infrastructure, and building facilities. Construction on this transformational Master Plan will be complete in early 2021.

Please visit our website for further information on the history, people, and programs of the Arboretum. <https://houstonarboretum.org/>

### **Job Description:**

Under the direct supervision of the Executive Director, the Conservation Director is responsible for the management of the Conservation Team regarding the grounds budget, staff work schedules, native habitat restoration, exotic and invasive species control, infrastructure maintenance, visitor safety, and public/volunteer interaction. The Conservation Director must work on multiple projects simultaneously, set priorities, and maintain schedules to meet obligatory deadlines.

Additionally, the Conservation Director is responsible for overseeing the management and long term-scientific monitoring of the site's various ecosystems while providing guidance and leadership regarding native landscape areas that function as gardens. The Conservation Director also assists with implementation of grounds projects and leads volunteer activities.

As a member of the Conservation Committee of the Board of Directors, the Conservation Director develops cooperative relationships with key constituencies including mission-aligned non-profit organizations, civic community groups, and public agencies to achieve the defined conservation goals and objectives of the Arboretum.

This is a full-time position with occasional evening and weekend events, and meetings, and also assistance in staff-wide Arboretum events throughout the year.

### **Duties and Responsibilities:**

- Oversee and manage site restoration - documentation, management plans, phasing, and methods
- Oversee and manage all site research - both internal as well as external studies relating to flora and fauna of the site
- Direct projects, develop the team, and implement the vision of native landscape areas to display native plants
- Facilitate/teach native landscaping classes in order to inspire attendees to use native plants in their own landscapes
- Work with Conservation Team to oversee nursery operation for restoration, grounds, and plant sales
- Work with the Executive Director and Conservation Team to organize and plan annual spring and

- fall plant sales
- Work with Executive Director and other Directors to communicate Conservation activities to others outside the organization
- Ensure that conservation matters are consistent with Arboretum's mission and goals
- Act as liaison among other organizations such as Memorial Park Conservancy (MPC), Houston Parks & Recreation (HPARD) and other Consultant(s)
- Responsible for the safety and security of volunteer staff under his/her supervision
- Support and assist Conservation Committee and other board members
- Collaborate with the Executive Director and the Conservation Team to identify and differentiate grounds projects appropriate for volunteer groups and staff
- Inform the Volunteer Manager of specific opportunities for corporate volunteer groups to perform community service projects
- Lead Conservation Team in engaging individual volunteers in meaningful work and providing a healthy work and volunteer environment
- Interface with outside contractors hired to complete conservation projects on the grounds
- Interface with HPARD regarding projects requiring city oversight or involvement
- Train and supervise Conservation Interns in the completion of special projects
- Work with Conservation Team to ensure adequate supplies of tools, herbicide, and safety equipment
- Work with the Development Director to identify and pursue grant opportunities from private and government sources to fund conservation projects
- Work with the Rentals Manager to ensure that potential renters respect and abide by written restrictions designed to protect wildlife and the grounds from harm and evaluate special requests
- Research and develop a potential consultancy practice that would provide native landscaping consultation to area homeowners

#### **Education and Experience:**

- Master's Degree in Forestry, Ecological Restoration, Natural Resource Management, Landscape Architecture, or other relevant programs
- Five to ten years of experience managing natural resource projects. Prescribe fire training and field experience would be beneficial
- Leadership skills and demonstrated successful management of people with differing personality types, job descriptions, and work styles
- Strong working knowledge of native plants to the Houston area
- Ability to translate the Master Plan design team vision to the ground and provide leadership to the native landscape team as part of the Conservation Team
- Ability to work effectively with others to build mutual respect
- Demonstrated ability to work independently. Ability to work creatively and resourcefully within a determined budget and within the public/private framework of the Arboretum
- Ability to effectively manage projects and project personnel, both volunteer and contract
- Ability to put together clear and concise project plans and project budget
- Ability to read, analyze, and interpret project plans and cost estimates submitted by contractors from the standpoint of Arboretum objectives, goals, budget allotment, and long-term objectives
- Ability to write reports, business correspondence, and procedure manuals
- Ability to efficiently respond to questions from membership, staff, and members of the community
- Ability to define problems, collect data, establish facts, and present viable solutions to the Executive Director and/or Board
- Exhibit independent logical judgment in the development of plans and ideas and to discuss those in a productive manner with Executive Director, Conservation Committee, or Houston Parks and Recreation staff

- Proficiency with Word, Excel, PowerPoint

**Personal Attributes:**

- Ability to lead, in thought and actions, across the stakeholder spectrum and cultivate relationships with individuals, foundations, government, and corporate donors
- A passion for the mission of the Arboretum
- Outstanding verbal and written communications skills
- Strong organizational skills
- Excellent interpersonal skills
- A confident demeanor with good executive presence
- Dynamic, energetic, flexible, and adaptable
- Relationship builder with internal and external audiences
- Collaborative problem solver
- Collegial colleague and consensus builder

Send resume and cover letter to: Deborah Markey [dmarkey@houstonarboretum.org](mailto:dmarkey@houstonarboretum.org)