

Plant Records Officer

Plant Heritage is looking for a Plant Records Officer to join the conservation team. This is a great opportunity to make a difference by helping us to protect more plants and the data about them for the future.

Who we're looking for

The right person will be passionate about plants and plant conservation, confident working with plant data including digital records, and good at communicating information about our work to a wide audience. Whilst you'll have your own areas of responsibility, we're a small team supported by lots of incredible volunteers, so looking for someone who's happy to get stuck in and help us to achieve the maximum impact together.

About Us:

Plant Heritage is the home of the [National Plant Collections](#)[®] and the [Plant Guardian](#)[®] scheme. We are a charity, founded in 1978 with a unique mission to protect the diversity of garden plants across the UK and Ireland. With our members, we are safeguarding around 95,000 different plants by growing them, sharing them and recording information about them in our plant records system [Persephone](#). We also assess which cultivated plants are most at risk through our [Threatened Plants Programme](#). Our work is even more important because of climate change and the biodiversity crisis, as well as restrictions that make it harder to move plants across borders. We need to celebrate the plants we have and to conserve their genetic diversity for the future.

Plant Heritage is not just about plants. It's also about people and partnerships. We have thousands of members across the UK, supported by local groups who organise events like talks, visits and plant fairs, and affiliates in Ireland, Guernsey and the Isle of Man. We work closely with a wide range of organisations including the Royal Horticultural Society (RHS), national botanic gardens, the National Trust and the National Trust for Scotland.

The Role:

You'll be working mostly closely with the 3 other members of the conservation team and volunteers working on plant conservation and Persephone.

Specific responsibilities:

- Ensure accurate digital records for all plants in new National Collections and the Plant Guardian scheme – encouraging people to input and maintain their own records in Persephone where possible, doing imports and updates yourself when necessary.
- Provide timely support to Persephone users, including to set up new users and to help them to become proficient on the system, including training sessions, dealing

with queries and support on data imports (including via a volunteer mentor network).

- Identify potential improvements to Plant Heritage's systems and processes, based on feedback from users (complex changes are done by professional developers).
- Work on production of the annual Directory of National Plant Collections, including developing and overseeing plans for a digital version from 2026.

Team-wide responsibilities

- Work with the rest of the conservation team to embed sustainability across our work, including adapting to the challenges of climate change and ensuring that important National Collections are duplicated/shared so they are not lost over time.
- Contribute to communications material, including updates for the website, social media, member newsletters and our published Journal as well as progress reports for the Board/funders as necessary.
- Help us to create an online archive for Plant Heritage and an online, interactive version of the National Collections. We are digitising our paper records and making more information available via our website but want to go much further. We aim to secure funding to achieve this by our 50th anniversary in 2028.

Key Skills and Experience

We're open-minded about where you've come from. If you think you can meet most of the criteria we've asked for and you're committed to learn, please get in touch.

- **Horticultural knowledge and a great eye for detail:** you don't need to be the global expert (we have a few of those!) but you do need to be confident dealing with plant names and detailed data about plants and helping others with this. We'd expect you to have completed at least the RHS Level 2 or equivalent.
- **Digitally savvy:** as well as Microsoft packages like Word, Excel, Powerpoint, Teams and Sharepoint, you'll be using our plant records system Persephone which has integrations with Kew Garden's [Plants of the World online](#), the International Union for the Conservation of Nature ([IUCN Red List](#)) of threatened species and the Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) [Plant Finder](#). Once up to speed, you'll be encouraging and training other people to use Persephone.
- **Excellent communication and listening skills** are essential, so you can help others to learn about plant recording. You'll also be helping to create engaging content about our work for a wide audience (e.g. for our website and publications).
- **Good organisational skills**, able to juggle a range of different tasks and to see projects through to completion, with a good eye for detail.
- **Great team player**, happy to be flexible and able to adjust your style to work with people of different ages, from different backgrounds and spread across the UK.

Working for us

We are advertising this as a full-time role (37.5 hrs plus breaks) but we are open to flexible working options, including part time. This role can be based at our office next to the RHS Wisley Garden (shuttle available from Woking) or you could mainly work from home (we'd expect you to come to the office at least once a month, at your expense).

The full-time salary is £24,500- £25,500, depending on experience. We offer a defined contribution pension and contribute 5% of your gross salary. We offer 23 days holiday a year, plus 8 bank holidays/statutory holidays (adjusted pro rata if you work reduced hours). We occasionally ask staff to take part in events on bank holidays or at the weekend, e.g. to represent us at events. If we do this, staff get time off in lieu to make up for it.

Diversity and Inclusion

We value diversity and inclusion, and we want to ensure equality of opportunity in our work. We particularly welcome applications from under-represented groups. Please let us know if you would like any reasonable adjustments in the application process.

Start Date

As this role is vacant, we are looking for someone to start as soon as possible, but we are willing to wait for the right person.

How to apply

Please submit your application form by email to info@plantheritage.org.uk. Shortlisted applicants will be invited to interviews in late January/early February 2025.

Feel free to email us or call (01483 447540) if you'd like an informal chat before applying.