



Chief Botanist

Type: Full-time

Min. Experience: Senior Level

APPLY AT: <https://app.trinethire.com/companies/31463-natureserve/jobs/42764-chief-botanist>

NatureServe seeks a highly collaborative leader with a commitment to conservation to shape and guide NatureServe's plant conservation program and advance the organization's mission. This is an exciting and unique opportunity for a senior level scientist with a high level of expertise and demonstrated success in developing and applying botanical information to support conservation. NatureServe is an established biodiversity conservation science and technology organization with a new strategic plan that prioritizes making the collection, curation, and delivery of our conservation data more efficient and effective. The work of the individual in this role will be critical to the organization's ability to meet its strategic goals and priorities. Location for this role is flexible, but Arlington, Virginia is preferred.

JOB SUMMARY:

The Chief Botanist is a key leadership position at NatureServe and provides strategic direction on the development of scientific methods, data, analyses, and information products designed to promote the lasting conservation of North American plants. The Chief Botanist guides efforts to develop, document, and maintain the most current and robust data on the taxonomy, conservation status, distribution, and conservation requirements of plant species and is responsible for assuring the accuracy, completeness, currency and scientific validity of NatureServe's botanical information. The Chief Botanist promotes high-quality, consistent, and current data by fostering collaboration and communication between NatureServe's botanists and data managers across the NatureServe Network, as well as government agencies, academic institutions, private sector entities, and other conservation organizations. They also collaborate with these partners to provide expert conservation services and produce information products and publications to support the application of our data to meet their conservation goals. The Chief Botanist has responsibility for determining and articulating the long- and short-term goals of NatureServe's botany program, for managing botany projects and budgets and botany staff. They also collaborate with staff throughout the organization to implement NatureServe's strategic plan, including the information managers, software developers, other scientists, and the executive team. This position leads outreach and business development and philanthropic activities related to plant conservation. The Chief Botanist supervises 2-3 staff.



DUTIES:

- Develop and implement strategies to improve the accuracy and completeness of NatureServe's botanical data. Working in collaboration with biologists across the NatureServe Network and partner organizations, advance standards and analytical and data management tools used to document and understand the taxonomy, conservation status, condition, and location of plants in North America.
 - Working with a team of scientists and software developers from NatureServe and partner organizations, re-establish and maintain an up-to-date taxonomic backbone for plants and improve our taxonomic nomenclature and concept alignment services to facilitate data integration from the NatureServe Network and other sources.
 - Engage Network scientists and additional experts and improve processes to enhance our capacity to assess the conservation status of plants using the NatureServe and IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature) Red List Assessments methodologies.
 - Support NatureServe Network program botanists to collect and manage standardized botanical information.
 - Develop and carry out projects designed to maintain and advance the organization's botanical data holdings including taxonomy, conservation status, threats, distribution, population viability and mapping.
 - Support efforts to harmonize and share species data across the network and beyond, identify key data gaps and emerging issues and develop strategies to address them, and contribute to training courses designed to promote consistent application of methods and approaches across the network.
- Collaborate with key national and international organizations, federal agencies, professional societies, academic institutions, and other global conservation initiatives such as the IUCN Red List and the Key Biodiversity Areas Partnerships. Provide expert conservation services and develop information products and publications that help partners and clients advance their conservation and stewardship objectives.
- Provide scientific support in the design and implementation of software development initiatives being carried out by NatureServe. Collaborate with NatureServe's ecological science staff to develop approaches to integrate botanical and ecological data in the design and implementation of biodiversity databases, habitat mapping efforts, and conservation assessment and planning projects.
- Raise public and private funds to support NatureServe's botanical activities.
- Manage the botany department. Oversee and manage projects and contracts; recruit, hire, train, and supervise staff botanists; work with the VP of Data and Methods to set annual goals and coordinate work assignments; and promote communication and coordination with staff of other departments and divisions.

ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS:

- An advanced degree (Ph.D. preferred) in botany, ecology, or conservation biology with knowledge of plant taxonomy and nomenclature and North American plant biogeography. At least 10 years work experience related to botanical data development, management, and analysis, plant conservation, and/or natural resources management.



- Demonstrated knowledge of current and emerging directions in the field of plant conservation and knowledge of how biodiversity data are used in federal policy making, planning, and management [e.g., US Endangered Species Act, US Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, COSEWIC, SARA].
- Experience developing, quality controlling, and analyzing large complex databases. Experience in biodiversity informatics highly desirable and experience with NatureServe's Biotics data systems is a plus. Experience with Natural Heritage Methodology and familiarity with IUCN Red List criteria also desirable.
- Demonstrated experience and success in business cultivation and proposal writing.
- Experience in supervising and managing staff and workloads. Skilled in motivating and working alongside project team members in a highly collaborative environment.
- Excellent skills in public/private partnership building and ability to deal perceptively and communicate effectively (verbal and written) with a diverse array of people and institutions – from technical to non-technical. Proven ability to negotiate contracts and cooperative agreements.
- Demonstrated flexibility, self-awareness, professional integrity, and cultural competence - including commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- Willingness to work from NatureServe's Arlington, VA office preferred. Remote locations may be considered for the most highly qualified candidates.
- Willingness to travel and to visit field sites in remote locations occasionally.
- Commitment to the conservation of biodiversity and a genuine desire to make a lasting impact.

ESSENTIAL PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS:

- Ability to travel independently to attend meetings.
- Ability to converse verbally and in writing with staff and partners.
- Ability to maintain a full-time position with some extended hours required to travel
- Specific vision abilities required by the job include close vision, distance vision, peripheral vision, depth perception, and the ability to adjust focus such as: preparing and analyzing data and figures; viewing a computer terminal; extensive reading.

ABOUT NATURESERVE:

For nearly 50 years, NatureServe has been the authoritative source for biodiversity data throughout the Western Hemisphere. With an international network of nearly 100 natural heritage programs across the United States, Canada, and Latin America, NatureServe is the leading source of information on rare and endangered species and threatened ecosystems. To protect threatened biodiversity, NatureServe works with over 1,000 conservation scientists to collect, aggregate, and standardize biodiversity statistics, providing comprehensive data to the public for strategic conservation efforts. NatureServe and NatureServe network programs develop and manage the most comprehensive data for over 100,000 species and ecosystems, answering fundamental questions about what exists, where it is found, and how it is doing. NatureServe has an expansive botanical library in its Arlington, VA office and access to online botanical literature to support our work.



NatureServe offers full-time employees a comprehensive benefits package that includes:

- 401K savings and retirement plan with matching contributions
- Health and dental insurance
- Short and long-term disability
- Annual and sick leave
- Life insurance
- Telework/Flex work
- The Chief Botanist with a Ph.D. has an option for adjunct faculty status at George Mason University

NATURESERVE IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

m/f/vet/disability

An equal opportunity, reasonable accommodations employer, NatureServe complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. If you need accommodation in the employment process or this document in an alternative format, please contact our office at 703-908-1840 or info@natureserve.org. We stand in support of equality for and advancement of all people based on their qualifications and actions alone without regard to color, gender, age, religion, national origin, or disability.