



Head Gardener & Land Care Educator

Perfect Earth Project
Full Time, Year Round
East Hampton, NY

Founded in 2013, Perfect Earth Project is a nonprofit organization dedicated to educating, engaging, and inspiring individuals, land care professionals, and decision-makers to adopt toxic-free, nature-based, and climate-responsible land care practices necessary for a healthier, more sustainable—and beautiful—environment for all.

About the Role

Perfect Earth Project is seeking an experienced and passionate **Head Gardener & Land Care Educator** to lead the care and development of nature-based demonstration gardens and support our ecological gardening education programs in the Hamptons, on Long Island, NY. The head gardener and land care educator will report to Perfect Earth Project Founder Edwina von Gal and the Director of Living Lands.

All Perfect Earth practices and educational outreach are based on PRFCT's Three Promises:

- No chemicals
- 2/3 for the birds
- Close the loop

The primary location for this position is Perfect Earth's Marshouse garden in East Hampton, NY, a three-acre native plant garden in a spectacular location on Accabonac Harbor, which includes a number of habitats: meadows, shade and sun borders, mosses and ferns, shrubs, trees, fruits and vegetables. In addition, there is a smaller "demonstration back yard garden" at the popular destination Amber Waves Farm in Amagansett, NY. Together, these gardens serve as living laboratories and educational spaces where homeowners, gardeners, landscape professionals, students, and the broader community can experience practical and beautiful approaches to environmentally responsible land care.

The Head Gardener & Land Care Educator will bring expert horticultural knowledge to complement the strong ecological and educational expertise of PRFCT's staff and help develop creative concepts for education and engagement.

This is an opportunity for a highly skilled gardener who wants to do more than maintain beautiful gardens—to help demonstrate and advance a different way of caring for the land.

Responsibilities

GARDEN, SUPERVISION, PLANNING, & HORTICULTURAL CARE

- Supervise, work alongside, and train an outside, part-time landscape crew.
- Take primary responsibility for the planning, planting, maintenance, health, and ongoing development of the demonstration gardens.
- Develop and maintain healthy soils through appropriate composting, mulching, and other regenerative practices.
- Create creative biomass management and habitat approaches.
- In collaboration with Perfect Earth staff, develop seasonal and long-term garden plans that complement educational goals.
- Maintain accurate records of plantings, maintenance activities, seasonal observations, and garden performance.
- Coordinate with outside vendors, contractors, arborists, and other specialists when necessary.

EDUCATION PROGRAM PLANNING & IMPLEMENTATION

- Help PRFCT Staff develop and present nature-based land care educational programming at the demonstration gardens and other sites in the community.
- Lead or assist with demonstrations, tours, workshops, classes, and other educational events.
- Help evaluate and implement alternatives to conventional lawn and landscape maintenance to inform outreach and educational offerings for local professionals and decision makers.

INNOVATION & COLLABORATION

- Stay informed about emerging practices and research in native plants, soil health, ecological horticulture, plant health care, watershed protection, and sustainable landscape management.
- Help test and demonstrate innovative land care practices that can be replicated by homeowners and professionals.
- Contribute ideas for improving the visitor experience and making the gardens effective teaching tools.

Qualifications & Skills

Candidates should have a combination of formal horticultural education and extensive practical experience, including:

- Excellent knowledge of native plants and nature-based gardening, particularly in the Northeast.

- Strong working knowledge of whole-site landscape care, including:
 - » Ecological woody and herbaceous plant care
 - » Lawn care and alternatives to conventional lawns
 - » Nature-based approaches to tree and shrub care
 - » Soil health and soil management
 - » Composting, mulching, biomass management
 - » Irrigation and water conservation
 - » Seasonal landscape management.
- Knowledge of and interest in current trends and developments in plant health care and sustainable horticulture.
- Strong observational skills.
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills.
- Comfortable teaching and speaking with homeowners, gardeners, professionals, students, and the general public.
- Strong administrative and organizational abilities.
- Demonstrated ability to plan, prioritize, delegate, and supervise.
- Exceptional attention to detail.
- Ability to work independently while also acting as an effective member of a collaborative team.
- Creative, curious, and willing to experiment with new approaches.
- A genuine passion for the environment and commitment to ecological stewardship.

Experience & Education

Candidates should have a combination of formal horticultural education and extensive practical experience, including:

- Minimum two years of formal horticultural training or equivalent education.
- Minimum two years of apprenticeship, mentorship, or intensive practical training under an accomplished gardener or horticultural professional.
- Minimum three years of independent garden supervisory experience, including responsibility for garden planning, maintenance, and/or management of other gardeners.
- Demonstrated experience caring for gardens throughout all four seasons.
- Experience working with native plants and ecological or sustainable gardening practices.
- Experience teaching, leading workshops, consulting with clients, or working in a public garden or educational setting is highly desirable.
- Strong ties to the ecological horticulture community.

Equivalent combinations of education and experience may be considered for an exceptional candidate.

Physical & Practical Considerations

- Ability to work outdoors in all seasons and weather conditions.
- Ability to perform garden work for extended periods.
- Valid driver's license and safe driving record.
- Reliable personal vehicle for transportation between work sites and occasional work-related activities.
- Willingness to relocate to or reside within close proximity of the East Hampton area.

Personal Qualities

The successful candidate will be:

- Passionate about plants, gardens, and the natural world.
- An excellent observer who notices both the small details and the larger ecological picture.
- Curious and committed to continued learning.
- A natural teacher who enjoys sharing knowledge with others.
- A thoughtful and respectful steward of the land.
- Organized, dependable, and self-directed.
- Comfortable taking initiative while knowing when to seek input.
- An effective leader who enjoys mentoring others.
- Comfortable speaking with both experienced horticultural professionals and people who are completely new to ecological gardening.
- Enthusiastic about challenging conventional approaches and demonstrating practical alternatives.
- Someone who understands that a successful garden can be both beautiful and ecologically beneficial.
- A natural teacher who enjoys sharing knowledge with others.
- A thoughtful and respectful steward of the land.

What This Position Offers

This position provides an opportunity to play a central role in demonstrating what nature-based land care can look like in practice. The Head Gardener & Land Care Educator will work at the intersection of horticulture, ecology, education, and community engagement, helping garden visitors and landowners see how thoughtful landscape decisions can improve the health of both gardens and the broader environment.

The successful candidate will have the opportunity to shape the ongoing development of highly visible demonstration gardens, work alongside leaders in ecological landscape design and education, and help develop programs and practices that can influence how gardens and landscapes are cared for throughout the region.

This is a hands-on position for an exceptional gardener who is equally excited about growing plants, growing people's knowledge, and helping grow a better approach to land care.

Compensation

This is a full-time position with medical benefits, life insurance, standard vacation, sick and personal leave, and 401K. Compensation is \$75,000-\$90,000, depending on experience.

Equal Opportunity Employment

Perfect Earth Project encourages applicants from diverse backgrounds to apply.

Perfect Earth Project is an Equal Opportunity Employer, a drug-free workplace, and complies with ADA regulations as applicable.

How to Apply

Send cover letter and resume to jobs@PerfectEarthProject.org. Please include a mention of hobbies and interests outside of work.



For information regarding our organization, please visit our website:

PerfectEarthProject.org.