

SUMMER CAMP 2025

ZSI: Zoo-Scene Investigation



Dear Parents & Guardians,

Thank you for enrolling your child in the Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden's Summer Camp. We are so excited that your child can join us! Get your detective hats ready for this **1st & 2nd Grade Summer Camp**. Through "critter cases", interactive learning games and activities, animal encounters, and treks to various zoo habitats, we will use our observation skills to determine which animal could be our culprit.

Below, you will find more information on daily camp themes and activities. Feel free to use these to facilitate discussions with your child after each day of camp. Should you have any questions, comments, or suggestions, all camp staff will be happy to assist you. Thank you for your continued support of your Cincinnati Zoo!

Day One: Trespassing

Today, campers will learn how to identify animals based off the clues that they leave behind.

Possible Animal Friends:

- Sand Boa, Screaming Hairy Armadillo, Tenrec, Box Turtle

Possible Zoo Hike Locations:

- Hippo Cove, Giraffe Ridge, Gorilla World, Cat Canyon

Conversation Starters:

- What was your favorite animal that you got to meet today? Why?
- What kind of clues do you leave behind?
- How do different animals mark where they've been or live?





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Day Two: Speeding and Stealing

Today, campers will learn about animals who are fast, what adaptations they possess for that speed, and how an animal's speed may be useful for survival.

Possible Animal Friends:

- Plated Lizard, Pancake Tortoise, Ground Squirrels, Madagascar Hissing Cockroaches

Possible Zoo Hike Locations:

- Cheetah Encounter, Africa, Jungle Trails

Conversation Starters:

- What was your favorite animal that you got to meet today? Why?
- How do you use your speed in your life?
- How do different animals use their speed in order to survive?



Day Three: Vandalism

Today, campers will learn about animals that change their environment through the playful lens of thinking of them as “animal vandals.”

Possible Animal Friends:

- Chickens, Red Footed Tortoise, 3-Banded Armadillo, Millipede

Possible Zoo Hike Locations:

- Night Hunters, Eagle Eyries, and Elephant Trek

Conversation Starters:

- What was your favorite animal that you got to meet today? Why?
- Do you sometimes “vandalize” your environment?
- How do different animals change their habitats for the better?

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Day Four: Identity Theft and Fraud

Today, campers will learn about how animals use mimicry to pretend to be something they are not and camouflage to blend into their surroundings.

Possible Animal Friends:

- Blue Tongued Skink, Corn Snake, Tawny Frogmouth, Skunk

Possible Zoo Hike Locations:

- World of Insect, Bird Show, Veldt

Conversation Starters:

- What was your favorite animal that you got to meet today? Why?
- Do you think you can camouflage as good as the animals you saw?
- How do different animals mimic other species to better survive?

Day Five: Poison and Closing the Case

Today, campers will discover how some animals and plants may use poison or venom to stay safe.

Possible Animal Friends:

- Bearded Dragon, Angolan Python, White's Tree Frog, Dumeril's Ground Boa, Tamandua

Possible Zoo Hike Locations:

- Reptile House, Galapagos Tortoise, Barnyard Bonanza

Conversation Starters:

- What was your favorite animal that you got to meet today? Why?
- How do animals use poison and venom?
- What was your favorite part of camp this week?



Gadgets for Gorillas is our summer camp conservation challenge! We are collecting e-waste to recycle, helping to protect gorilla habitat in the Congo. The bin will be located in our lobby. Click here for a video to learn more!

