

ZOO

Education Programs

Summer 2026

For more information or
to register for programs
<http://cincinnatizoo.org/education/>

Summer Camp Full Day

DATES: June 1–5 June 29–July 3 July 27–31
June 8–12 July 6–10 Aug 3–7
June 15–19 July 13–17 Aug 10–14
June 22–26 July 20–24

TIMES: 9:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m., Monday–Friday

PRICING: 1st–8th grade: \$315 Members | \$330 Non-members
Before Care 8:00–9:00 a.m. | \$55 per week
After Care 4:00–5:30 p.m. | \$65 per week

Explore the Zoo, experience nature, and discover the excitement and wonder of animals! Hikes in the Zoo, visits from animal ambassadors, crafts, train rides, and so much more make Summer Camp a jam-packed week to remember! Every camper receives a Summer Camp t-shirt.

1st-2nd Grade Zooheroes

A bird that can fly at speeds of 200mph? A cat that can leap 12 feet into the air? Animals can be out of this world when it comes to their super adaptations. Come to Summer Camp and discover these animals and their incredible superpowers. Each day, we will look at a superhero with amazing superpowers, and then see if our Zoo animals can measure up to their spectacular abilities. The camp will include Zoo hikes, games, and up-close live animal encounters.

1st-2nd Grade Where In the World

All aboard! Summer Campers will take a journey from the North to South Pole, visiting every habitat in between! Along the way they'll experience live classroom animal encounters, Zoo hikes to animals from every continent, and games and activities that take them around the globe. It's sure to be an adventure they won't forget!

3rd-4th Grade Expedition Naturalist

Campers will become naturalists as they choose their own adventure with 5 daily expeditions. Each expedition will traverse through the world's different biomes. As campers complete each adventure, they will become equipped with the knowledge and tools it takes to become a real naturalist.

5th-6th Grade Exploring Enrichment

What do boomer balls, spices, braided butcher paper, and fishsicles all have in common? They are different forms of animal enrichment! Enrichment provides stimulation to our Zoo animals keeping their minds and bodies healthy. In this camp, we will learn about the different forms of animal enrichment, who and what they are good for, and the role of the Zoo's enrichment committee through animal encounters, keeper interactions, games, and other activities. We will even create animal enrichment items and brainstorm some new ideas.

7th-8th Grade Working with Wildlife

Animal keepers, field researchers, forensic zoologists, animal trainers...the list goes on and on when it comes to jobs that work with wildlife. We will have hands-on animal encounters, meet a variety of speakers, and go on instructor-led hikes to explore habitats around the Zoo. This is a hands-on class, so be prepared to get knee or elbow-deep in exploration of some of the jobs and tools that come with a wildlife-related career! Participants will get the opportunity to write and record an animal-related video.

Before Care
8:00 a.m.–9:00 a.m.
Pricing: \$55/week

After Care
4:00 p.m.–5:30 p.m.
Pricing: \$65/week



Bowyer Farm Camp

DATES: June 8–12; June 15–19; June 22–26; June 29–July 3

TIMES: 9:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m., Monday–Friday

PRICING: \$310 Members | \$325 Non-members

5th–8th Grade Wild Survival at Bowyer Farm

Become a backyard biologist exploring fields, forests, and wetlands at our 700-acre Bowyer property! Participants will learn to protect wild spaces through activities such as bird watching, butterfly tagging, and animal tracking. Our camp will encourage your child to get back in touch with their wild side and build confidence as they hone their naturalist skills. On Friday, your camper will lead you on a nature hike to show off their new skills.

Note: This camp takes place at a satellite location, the Zoo's Bowyer Property in Mason, OH. Before and After Care is not available for camps hosted at Bowyer Farm. Campers will spend all their time outside and immersed in nature. Please dress accordingly and plan to get dirty or wet!



Summer Camp Half Day

TIMES: 9:30 a.m.–12:00 p.m. **or** 1:00 p.m.–3:30 p.m., Monday–Friday

PRICING: \$175 Members | \$190 Non-members

4 Year Olds-Kindergarteners Bringing Up Baby

Do other animals live in families like humans? Are all babies raised by their moms? During this camp, we'll experience up-close animal encounters, make crafts, and, of course, hike around the Zoo to learn about why it can take a mom, dad, pack, or no one at all to raise a baby animal.

DATES: June 1–5 June 29–July 3 July 27–31
 June 15–19 July 13–17 Aug 10–14

Sensational Senses

Can you talk like an elephant or taste with your feet like a butterfly? Explore what sensory adaptations animals have and how these adaptations help them survive. We'll spend the week looking at our five senses and seeing how they compare to other animals through close encounters with animal friends, interactive games, crafts, and hikes in the Zoo.

DATES: June 8–12 July 6–10 Aug 3–7
 June 22–26 July 20–24

TIMES: 1:00 p.m.–3:30 p.m., Monday–Friday

PRICING: \$175 Members | \$190 Non-members

1st–2nd Grade Animal Chatter

Have you ever wondered what a lion was roaring about or a bird chirping about? This camp will explore animals and how they “talk” to each other. Join us for a fun-filled week, where campers will discover what animals are communicating, through smell, facial expressions, and sound.

DATES: June 1–5 June 22–26 July 13–17 Aug 3–7
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Zoo Troop Overview

What is Zoo Troop?

Learning and growing is fun at the Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden! Zoo Troop is a once-a-week, 4-week series for toddlers through 8th graders designed to spark curiosity, build empathy, and encourage healthy social skills while fostering knowledge and respect for wildlife and wild places.

Each class includes interactive activities in the classroom, Zoo hikes, and close encounters with ambassador animals. Older participants also take on a series-long project or presentation, giving them the chance to dive deeper and share what they've learned. With the same knowledgeable instructor leading each week, children can build positive relationships while exploring new topics that connect them to the wild world around them.

DATES & TIMES:
Attend Saturdays in June and July.
See individual class descriptions for current series topics.





photo by Kathy Newton



photo by Kathy Newton

Toddlers

Bookworms

Can you crawl like a Very Hungry Caterpillar? Do you want to join in on a Barnyard Dance? Have you ever asked, "Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?" This series will explore nature and movement through the eyes of authors such as Eric Carle and Sandra Boynton. Through hands-on activities and animal encounters, our Zoo Troopers move and explore our world like the animals in our featured books.

DATES & TIMES:

Saturdays: June 6, 13, 20 & 27 | 9:30–10:15 a.m. or 11:00–11:45 a.m.

***Note:** Toddler series is for children 18–36 months old. Plan for one adult to stay with your Zoo Trooper during these classes. Only one adult may accompany each child during the classroom portion.

PRICING:

\$90 Members | \$105 Non-members

Senses in Nature

Do you smell the flowers? Can you feel the moss on the tree? Our world is full of sights, sounds, smells, and textures. We will explore our senses in nature, encouraging free play and fun, while creating nature art projects! Each week we will discover animals through live animal encounters, Zoo hikes, and dramatic play.

DATES & TIMES:

Saturdays: July 11, 18, 25 & Aug. 1 | 9:30–10:15 a.m. or 11:00–11:45 a.m.

***Note:** Toddler series is for children 18–36 months old. Plan for one adult to stay with your Zoo Trooper during these classes. Only one adult may accompany each child during the classroom portion.

PRICING:

\$90 Members | \$105 Non-members

Pre-K

Stories in Motion

Have you heard that Giraffes Can't Dance? Could YOU have a tea party while a Bear Snores On? How many animals do you think can fit in The Mitten lost by a little boy? Dramatic play, meeting animals in the classroom, and an exploratory hike through the Zoo will help bring these and other books to life and encourage observation, imagination, and exploration in nature.

DATES & TIMES:

Saturdays: June 6, 13, 20 & 27 | 10:00–11:00 a.m.

***Note:** Pre-K series is for 3, 4, and 5 year olds not in Kindergarten. Plan for one adult to stay with your Zoo Trooper during these classes. Only one adult may accompany each child during the classroom portion.

PRICING:

\$90 Members | \$105 Non-members

Discovering Our Senses

Have you ever created a self-portrait using items from nature? We will be creating nature-themed works of art and exploring the world around us through our senses. The smells of the elephant house, a prickle of a pinecone, the shiny smooth scales of a snake—let's get closer to the world around us and explore! Each week we will meet animals face-to-face in the classroom and out in the Zoo as we learn how to sense the world around us.

DATES & TIMES:

Saturdays: July 11, 18, 25 & Aug. 1 | 10:00–11:00 a.m.

***Note:** Pre-K series is for 3, 4, and 5 year olds not in Kindergarten. Plan for one adult to stay with your Zoo Trooper during these classes. Only one adult may accompany each child during the classroom portion.

PRICING:

\$90 Members | \$105 Non-members

Evening Programs

History and Hijinks

DATES: June 17, June 24, July 8, July 30, Aug. 11, & Aug. 20

TIME: 6:00–8:30 p.m.

PRICING: \$20 Members | \$25 Non-members

Being the second oldest zoo in the nation means there is no shortage of history and wild stories! Step back in time with former zookeeper and bird trainer, Gary Denzler, as he brings the past to life through a fun, informative and story-driven tour of our Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden. With more than 50 years of experience, Gary shares unbelievable tales of the animals, people, and moments that shaped the Zoo into what it is today. Hear stories of alligators accidentally in Swan Lake on opening day, donkeys vs lions, animals arriving on zeppelins and a LOT MORE!

If the weather is nice, be ready to be on foot! This experience includes a short 30-minute indoor introduction to start, then the rest of the time is spent walking through the Zoo, so comfortable walking shoes are encouraged. In the case of rain or inclement weather, the program moves fully indoors, where you'll enjoy a unique and equally incredible experience featuring fascinating historical photos and a captivating presentation that bring the Zoo's past to life.

Whether indoors or out, you're in for an unforgettable journey through our Zoo's history!

Note: This program is geared towards participants 13 years and older.



Zoo Night Hike: Hot Weathered Wildlife

DATES: June 20, July 18, & Aug. 29

TIME: 6:00–7:30 p.m.

PRICING: \$20 Members | \$25 Non-members

Different animals (including humans) have different strategies for staying cool in the summertime. Pigs wallow, goats get rid of heat through their ears and horns, snakes and lizards seek the shade and African penguins swim to keep cool! There are many ways to beat the heat in the summer! Join us as we learn about which animals enjoy the heat, and how they find ways to cool down. During this Zoo Night Hike, we will hike to see our warm-weathered-loving Zoo animals and meet some of our hottest animal ambassadors up-close and personal!

Note: All attendees 3+ years must register. At least one adult must register per group. Children under 3 years are free. Price is per person.



Overnight Adventures®

The gates are shut, the lights are down, and everyone has gone home for the day. It's time to discover the Zoo after dark! Go behind closed doors and get up-close with animal encounters, hikes, and games. After a night of adventure, tuck into your sleeping bag overlooking the animals and then wake up the next morning to breakfast and a special animal experience. The fun doesn't have to stop there as next day admission is included and you can explore the Zoo on your own!

DATES: Pick your date Monday–Saturday, January through November (Twiga Tented Safari April through October only).

TIME: 7:00 p.m.–9:00 a.m. the next morning

PRICING: \$60–\$70 per person depending on the program, Twiga Tented Safari is sold as one tent of 10 people for \$1,000.

WHO: Perfect for any group. Schools, clubs, scouts, 4-H, birthday parties, family celebrations, sororities/fraternities, work outings and more! Anyone can spend the night at the Zoo over the age of 5!

Adventures in Adaptations

Adaptations are the key to life! Join us as we explore how animals find their food, escape predators, find a mate, and overall SURVIVE in all their unique habitats. Throughout the night we'll explore a few places in the Zoo, participate in fun, educational activities, get a behind-the-scenes sneak peek, and meet some of our animal ambassadors up-close and personal! Then, after the fun, curl up in our private education classrooms overlooking our rainforest.

African Predator Prowl

On the African plains, it's survival of the fittest! Discover the adaptations predators have to hunt and how their prey has evolved to give them a fighting chance. We'll observe our incredible African predator and prey species, investigating what it takes for these animals to survive. You'll go behind-the-scenes to our African animal care staff areas to see how we bring expert care and attention to these extraordinary species. Then after the fun, curl up in our private education classrooms overlooking our rainforest.

Sleep with the Manatees

Our local species play vital roles in maintaining healthy ecosystems. They help regulate prey populations, disperse seeds, pollinate plants, cycle nutrients, and enrich the soil. Some even create habitats that provide shelter and breeding grounds for other plants and animals! There's so much to discover, and learn, from the amazing diversity of life in North America! When the night ends, you'll doze off at our Manatee Springs building with manatees floating by your bed.

Note: Program participants will sleep in our Manatee Springs building, which is one large, open room. Please be aware that there is no way to divide or separate the group within the space. Program instructors will sleep in the same room as participants, positioned at the back of the building to provide supervision while maintaining distance from guests.

Elephant Trekking at Night

Join us for a wild new Overnight Adventure where teamwork takes center stage! Discover the incredible ways animals cooperate to survive and thrive. From elephant herds led by wise matriarchs to the organized chaos of ant colonies, you'll discover the power of working together in the animal kingdom. As night falls, we'll trek through the Zoo, meet incredible animal ambassadors, and uncover the secrets of animal communities in action. We'll even go behind-the-scenes in the Elephant Trek Pump Room and explore the fascinating CREW Discovery Station, where conservation comes to life. Then, wind down the night in our private education classrooms overlooking our rainforest.

Note: There is the possibility to sleep in the Elephant Trek event space on Monday nights only. For all other nights, participants will sleep in our Education Rainforest building.

Twiga Tented Safari

Only available April–October. A truly one-of-a-kind experience, our Twiga Tented Safari will take you across the African grasslands. We'll traverse through Africa, listening to tales of innovation for living harmoniously with wildlife, such as how a flashlight can shield you against lions, or why a puppy raised with goats can save cheetahs. On our safari, we will get behind-the-scenes at Hippo Cove and uncover secrets of our world-famous bloat. We'll finish up our night at our Twiga tents, gathered round a roaring campfire roasting s'mores. Then, this unique adventure ends with a relaxing night in our shared safari tents on cozy cots and waking up to breakfast overlooking Giraffe Ridge.





Sleep with the Manatees Overnight Safari

DATES: June 13, July 18, or Aug. 1

TIME: 7:00 p.m.–9:00 a.m. the next day

PRICING: \$70 per person

WHO: Individuals, families, and small groups. Anyone can book this program, and people will be joined into larger groups for the experience.

We have changed things a bit with this program to focus on the incredible animals that share our continent, so if you've done this program before, you might want to do it again! But don't worry, the manatees are still a strong focus and where we will end the night! Our local species play vital roles in maintaining healthy ecosystems. They help regulate prey populations to prevent overgrazing, disperse seeds, pollinate plants, cycle nutrients, and enrich the soil. Some even create habitats that provide shelter and breeding grounds for other plants and animals! There's so much to discover, and learn, from the amazing diversity of life in North America! When the night ends, you'll doze off at our Manatee Springs building with manatees floating by your bed.

Note: Program participants will sleep in our Manatee Springs building, which is one large, open room. Please be aware that there is no way to divide or separate the group within the space. Program instructors will sleep in the same room as participants, positioned at the back of the building to provide supervision while maintaining distance from guests. All attendees must be 5 years and above and registered. At least one adult must register per group.



Zoo After Dark: Adult 21+ Overnight

DATES: July 24, or Aug. 8

TIME: 6:00 p.m.–9:00 a.m. the next day

PRICING: \$190 Members | \$200 Non-members, per person

A truly one-of-a-kind experience, these overnights make a great date night, friend group outing, or (adult) family adventure! An interactive social hour will start the night with two drink tickets, light bites, strange zoo games, and a visit from a unique animal. Then, we will break into small tour groups led by Zoo Educators to traverse through Africa. On our Zoo safari, we will go behind-the-scenes at Hippo Cove and uncover secrets of our world-famous bloat. We'll finish up our night at our Twiga tents, gathered around a roaring campfire roasting s'mores. Then, this unique adventure ends with a relaxing night in our safari tents on cozy cots and waking up to breakfast overlooking Giraffe Ridge. And it doesn't end there! One last special animal guest will join us in the morning to say goodbye.



Internships

The Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden Intern Program provides participants with early career experience in a specific department. Interns gain valuable skills through hands-on training with staff, attending lectures and continuing education courses presented by staff from various departments, and networking opportunities to develop professional contacts throughout the Zoo community.

Fall Internship Session: Mid-September through mid-December. Applications are accepted from **May 1, 2026 through June 15, 2026.**

Decisions: No later than July 15, 2026

Mandatory Orientation: September 14, 2026

End of Internship: December 20, 2026

For more information about the internship program, please visit the **Job Opportunities page** on the Cincinnati Zoo website.



Job Opportunities

AmeriCorps

The Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden and AmeriCorps have partnered together to create the “Cincinnati Zoo Unto Others” program. This program was designed to serve three communities in our region (Human, Wildlife and Ecological Communities) to further our mission and create a world where both people and wildlife thrive. To this end, we have created service positions that bring a variety of fun, impactful, and conservation-based service opportunities that positively impact our local community, youth, zoo visitors, the animals in our care and our local environment.

Service Positions Are Available In: Accessibility, Animal Excellence, Center for Conservation & Research of Endangered Wildlife (CREW), Education, Horticulture, and Sustainability.

Applications: Open **March 1 through June 1, 2026** (or when spots are filled).

Service Year: **October 5, 2026 through September 24, 2027.**

For more information [Click Here!](#)



Advanced Inquiry Program Master's Degree

Ignite Ecological & Social Change While Earning Your Master's Degree

The Advanced Inquiry Program (AIP) is an online master's degree from Miami University that combines web-based coursework with unique experiential learning at the Zoo. Created for working professionals in various career stages, the AIP immerses students in collaborative inquiry and action as they champion change for the environment and their local community. AIP students join a network of local and national leaders, working together to improve their professions, institutions, neighborhoods, and environments.

Applications for the next cohort will open in **September** with a submission deadline of **February 15, 2027**. Courses will begin in **May 2027**. Start planning for next summer now or let us know that you are interested in more information by visiting cincinnati.zoo.org/AIP. Hope to see you soon!



<h3>June</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summer Camp • Zoo Troop Summer Series #1 • Zoo La La • Zoo Night Hike • History and Hijinks • Overnight Safari 	<h3>July</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summer Camp • Zoo Troop Summer Series #2 • Zoo Night Hike • History and Hijinks • Zoo After Dark: 21+ • Overnight Safari 	<h3>August</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summer Camp • Plant Trials Day Symposium • Zoo Night Hike • History and Hijinks • Zoo After Dark: 21+ • Overnight Safari 	<h3>September</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pawpaw Palooza • Grandparents Are Grrreat! • Zoo Night Hike • Overnight Safari
<h3>October</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zoo Troop Fall Series #1 • Zoo Night Hike • Zoo After Dark: 21+ • Haunted Safari Tour • Overnight Safari 	<h3>November</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zoo Troop Fall Series #2 • Native Plant Symposium • Zoo Night Hike • Overnight Safari 	<h3>December</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zoo Troop Celebration • Winter Camp • ZooTeen Apps. Open 	<h3>January</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zoo Troop Winter Series #1 • MLKJ Holiday Camp • Zoo Night Hike • Overnight Safari
<h3>February</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zoo Troop Winter Series #2 • Presidents' Day Camp • Maple Tapping • Summer Camp Sale • Zoo Night Hike • Overnight Safari 	<h3>March</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spring Break Camp • Sustainable Urban Landscapes Symposium • Zoo Night Hike • Overnight Safari 	<h3>April</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zoo Troop Spring Series • Tunes & Blooms • Zoo Night Hike • Overnight Safari 	<h3>May</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zoo Troop Celebration • Hurray for Mom • Zoo Babies • Zoo Night Hike • Overnight Safari

