

SUMMER CAMP 2026

Choose Your Own Adventure: Expedition Naturalist



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! For this **3rd and 4th Grade Summer Camp**, we will focus on general ecological concepts, such as biotic and abiotic interactions! Through interactive learning games and activities, animal encounters, and treks to various zoo habitats, we will learn all about biodiversity and how different animals and ecosystems interact with each other.

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: Expedition Aquatic

Today, we will learn about aquatic ecosystems and how to be a naturalist.

Possible Animal Encounters:

- Spotted Turtle and Whites Tree Frog

Possible Zoo Hike Locations:

- Manatee Springs and Wolf Woods

Conversation Starters:

- What was your favorite animal that you got to meet today? Why?
- What is a naturalist?
- Why is biodiversity important to animals and ecosystems?





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Day Two: Expedition Grasslands

Today, we will learn about grassland ecosystems, food chains and what adaptations you need to live in a grassland.

Possible Animal Encounters:

- Blue Tongued Skink and Ball Python

Possible Zoo Hike Locations:

- Africa and Giraffe feeding

Conversation Starters:

- What was your favorite animal that you got to meet today? Why?
- What is a primary and secondary consumer?
- What adaptations do animals have that live in grasslands?



Day Three: Expedition Tropical Rainforest I

Today, we will learn about the different layers of a rainforest and how each is a different ecosystem.

Possible Animal Friends:

- Madagascar Hissing Cockroach and Rainbow Boa

Possible Zoo Hike Locations:

- Jungle Trails and Elephant Trek

Conversation Starters:

- What was your favorite animal that you got to meet today? Why?
- Why are plants important?
- What are the layers in a rainforest?

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Day Four: Expedition Tropical Rainforest II

Today, we will continue to learn about the layers of the rainforest, and what adaptations animals have to live there.

Possible Animal Encounters:

- Red Footed Tortoise and Giant African Millipede

Possible Zoo Hike Locations:

- Elephant Trek and Cat Canyon

Conversation Starters:

- What was your favorite animal that you got to meet today? Why?
- What are the understory and emergent layers of a rainforest?
- What adaptations do animals have to live in a rainforest?

Day Five: Expedition Desert

Today, we will learn about biodiversity in deserts and what adaptations animals have to live in them.

Possible Animal Encounters:

- Kenyan Sand Boa and Inland Bearded Dragon

Possible Zoo Hike Locations:

- Reptile House and Roo Valley

Conversation Starters:

- What was your favorite animal that you got to meet today? Why?
- How do animals survive in the desert?
- What makes a desert different from other ecosystems?
- 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 with more details.

