

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Registration Open for Brevard Zoo's Nature Preschool

MELBOURNE, Fla., May 24, 2023 — Brevard Zoo's Wildlife Explorers Nature Preschool is where nature meets creativity, imagination and play. Registration for 3 and 4-year-olds is open for the 2023-2024 school year.

This play-based nature preschool program focuses on cognitive, social, emotional, language and physical development.

Children have an inherent need to explore and discover nature, said Jenny Thiem, the Zoo's early child coordinator. This preschool gives them a way to immerse themselves in nature while growing and building their physical bodies. This development is important to prepare children for the academic world.

"Our goal is to nurture the physical, social, emotional, and intellectual growth of each child within a respectful, creative and caring natural atmosphere," Jenny said.

Our teachers follow an emergent curriculum, meaning they create experiences based on the preschoolers' interests. Students are invited to explore subjects by posing, investigating, and answering questions. Children gain a deeper understanding of topics when they are able to discover answers through questioning.

In addition to nature play and experience-based learning, our preschoolers also enjoy activities like playing with Play-doh, playing with blocks, and doing art. This helps them build fine motor skills, creativity and imagination.

"It is important for preschoolers to strengthen their fine motor skills, so they are ready when it is time to learn to write," Jenny said.

A typical day at our preschool includes:

- Morning Circle
- Weekly: Zoo Walk, or Exceptional Nature Space, or Zoo playground Upland Acres
- Snack

- Nature Nook – Outside play with mud kitchens, sand box, sensory bin, loose natural parts, play animals and nature, unstructured free play
- Animal Ambassador visits weekly
- Lunch
- Story Time
- Nature Nook Time again
- Inside for center activities (Play-doh, craft projects, process art, vet play, science experiment, blocks)
- Closing Circle

The Wildlife Explorers Nature Preschool is for children ages 3 and 4. Students must be 3 years old by Sept. 1 to qualify for the 2023-2024 school year, which is from Aug. 14-May 24. All students must be able to use the bathroom independently.

The preschool is open 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Two program options are available: Tuesdays and Thursdays for \$130 per week; or Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays for \$195 per week.

Parents can register at [BrevardZoo.org/education/zoo-preschool](https://www.brevardzoo.org/education/zoo-preschool), or send questions to Jenny Thiem with questions at JThiem@brevardzoo.org

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About Brevard Zoo

Brevard Zoo is home to more than 900 animals representing 195 species from all over the world. As a not-for-profit organization, it is a leader in the fields of animal wellness, education, and conservation. More information is available at www.brevardzoo.org.

Treetop Trek features five aerial obstacle courses that whisk guests above parts of the Zoo and through lush Florida landscapes. More information is available at www.treetoptrek.com.