



High School Overnight Zoo Camp Handbook

Updated: February 2026

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Welcome

Thank you for choosing Brevard Zoo Camp! We offer a variety of immersive experiences designed with the goals of fostering a lifelong connection to nature and an appreciation of the many ways that we are connected to the natural world around us in a safe, fun and inclusive environment. Each day, campers will have the opportunity to explore the Zoo, participate in up-close animal encounters and take part in themed games and activities.

Please review the information provided in this handbook prior to the first day of camp so that you and your parent/guardian can prepare for a great camp experience. ***Please note that information is subject to change.***

Camp Overview

When school is out, camp is in session! Brevard Zoo offers the two distinct overnight camp opportunities for students entering 10th through 12th grades.

General Overview:

Both High School Overnight Camps will include a variety of immersive and behind-the-scenes experiences guided by experts and trained professionals throughout our Zoo with the goal of helping students develop skills relevant to their respective fields of interest. Campers will spend the night in our Nyami-Nyami River Lodge, a fully enclosed event space building. In the morning, a light continental breakfast will be provided.

Field Research: Animal Behavior: Discover how we utilize research to provide better care for our animals at the Zoo and become better stewards of our global ecosystem.

Field Skills: Saving Florida: This camp offers a unique opportunity to learn from our experts about the tremendous work being done to care for the environment locally and around the world.

Please visit our camp registration page for additional details about available camp sessions:

<https://brevardzoo.org/education/zoo-camps>

Camp Hours

High School Overnight Summer Camp:

1 p.m. on Thursday - 11 a.m. on Friday

Field Research: Animal Behavior:

Thursday, 6/26 - Friday, 6/26

Field Skills: Saving Florida:

Thursday, 7/9 - Friday, 7/10

Drop-off begins 15 minutes before camp, and pick-up ends 15 minutes after camp. A fee may be applied for late pick-ups. High school campers may also choose to drive themselves or carpool with a fellow camper with parental consent.

Drop-Off and Check-Out

Drop-Off

- Drop-off takes place at the Nyami Nyami River Lodge in the second parking lot (to the left of the main entrance of the zoo). We ask that you park and walk to the registration table in the Lodge to check-in and meet the counselors.

Parent Drop-Off

- Parents will walk their camper to the registration table in the Lodge.
- During check in, parents will sign any necessary paperwork for their camper, including photo and medical treatment waivers, liability waivers, and medication permission forms.
- Additionally, parents will confirm their camper's mode of transportation during check out: parent pick-up, driving themselves, driving a fellow camper, or carpooling with another camper.

Camper Self-Drop-Off

- During check-in, we will collect any necessary paperwork, including photo and medical treatment waivers, liability waivers, and **medication permission** forms. **All forms must be signed by a legal parent or guardian.** These forms can be completed prior to camp. Otherwise, a parent or guardian will

need to check-in with you and sign the forms during check-in.

- We will also confirm your mode of transportation for check-out the following day: parent-pick-up, driving yourself, driving a fellow camper, or carpooling with another camper.

We close our gates 15 minutes after the start of camp. If you are running more than 15 minutes late, please park and walk to the Zoo's Administration Office to the left of the main entrance for check-in. If you need further assistance, please call 321-864-8465 (Camp Cell) or 321-254-9453 ext. 219 (Camp Office).

Check-Out

- Campers will check-out from the Nyami-Nyami River Lodge in the south parking lot.
- During check-out, we will verify your mode of transportation. **It is the responsibility of the camper to use the approved method of transportation.**
- If you need to leave camp early, an email must be sent from the parent/guardian email used to register the camper to brevardzooregistrar@brevardzoo.org. In your email, please include the time of early departure and method of transportation. Campers will check out with the counselors before leaving.

Can I arrive early or leave late?

We do not allow early entrance or late pick-up. Staff will open the Lodge for registration at 12:45 p.m. on Thursday for check-in. We will keep the Lodge open until 11:15 a.m. on Friday for pick-up.

If you are more than 15 minutes late to pick up your camper, a fee may be applied.

Preparing for Camp

Get ready for an adventure! Zoo Camp is an active camp, and campers spend their day in a variety of places throughout the day, including exploring Zoo grounds, indoor classrooms, outdoor areas, and behind-the-scenes.

What to Wear:

We recommend dressing for the weather in comfortable clothes that are okay to get dirty. Sneakers or other closed-toed shoes are required. We do not allow Crocs or sandals, except during water-based activities.

For safety reasons, campers who do not comply with attire requirements may not be able to participate in certain activities. Parents/guardians may be called to bring proper attire. Additionally the camper may be sent home.

What to Bring:

- Reusable water bottle(s) that can be refilled throughout the day.
- Afternoon and evening snacks for Day 1.
- Self-applied sunscreen and insect repellent (no aerosol).
- A sleeping bag and pillow (air mattresses are permitted but cannot remain plugged in all night).
- Personal toiletries. Note: there are no showers. Campers will have access to multiple-occupant restrooms with lockable single-occupant stalls.
- Appropriate sleepwear.

What Not to Bring:

- Personal items such as money, games, trading cards, toys, stuffed animals, etc.
- Electronic devices such as handheld games, iPods, cameras, etc.
- **Although campers will be permitted to bring cell phones, they are to be used for emergency communication only. Excessive use throughout the program, photography, or video recording at any time may result in the confiscation of the cell phone until the end of the program.**

Please note that these items may be confiscated until the end of the camp day if brought. **Brevard Zoo is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged items.**

What Will Be Provided:

- Pizza dinner on Day 1
 - Light continental breakfast on Day 2
- *Campers may bring food to accommodate dietary needs or preferences, but it cannot require heating, cooking or refrigeration.*
- Red lights for navigation throughout the zoo at night

Sleeping Accommodations:

- Campers will set up their sleeping bags inside the Nyami-Nyami River Lodge (a fully enclosed building and event space).
- The Lodge will be divided into a boys' and girls' side.
- 2 Camp Counselors will sleep in the middle of the Lodge between the two sides.
- Campers will have access to the restrooms throughout the night.
- Light out hours will be from 11PM to 7AM.
- Campers are expected to adhere to the lights out policy - late night noise or activity will not be tolerated. Campers who disrupt camp may be asked to leave early.

Camper Wellness and Safety

Medical Policy:

Please indicate on your registration form any medications, allergies, or other medical conditions that your child may be taking or have while at Zoo Camp and complete the Brevard Zoo Medication Administration Policies and Waivers form before or on the first day of camp. Our camps operate without a Nurse or Physician on site. Zoo Camps are equipped with staff who are certified in first aid, CPR and epi-pen assistance. Please see below on medication administration procedures:

- It is the responsibility of the camper's parent/legal guardian to supply any necessary medical equipment that relates to a specific medical condition, including epi-pens and inhalers.
- Brevard Zoo staff MAY NOT administer medications of any kind, with the exception of epi-pen assistance in an emergency. This includes both over-the-counter (OTC) and

prescribed medications.

- Brevard Zoo staff **MAY** witness camper self-administration, but this is not guaranteed.
- Campers must keep medication on their person throughout their time at Zoo Camp, including epi-pens and inhalers.
- Campers are permitted to bring a backpack, purse or lunch bag with them into the Zoo if necessary to keep medications on their person at all times.
- A camper's parent/legal guardian authorizes any medications (OTC, prescription, non-prescription or otherwise) administered during camp are under the direction of a licensed physician.

Inclusion Statement:

Brevard Zoo is dedicated to sharing the joy of nature to help wildlife and people thrive. We value the diverse qualities, perspectives, and experiences of all individuals.

Upon registering, we ask that you include any additional information that will help us ensure your child has a safe and fun camp experience. In addition to any relevant medical information, please include information regarding sensory, learning, mobility or other needs that your child may have to help us prepare for your camper to have a great time at camp

We pride ourselves in creating a welcoming environment for all campers. The more information provided, the better we can prepare for your camper to have an amazing experience.

Restroom Policy:

Brevard Zoo restroom choices include:

- Single-occupancy, gender-neutral (unisex) restrooms; and
- Multiple-occupant restrooms with lockable single occupant stalls.

Brevard Zoo guests, employees and volunteers determine the most appropriate options for themselves. In order to remain in compliance with Florida state education laws, single-occupancy restrooms are available in classrooms.

Campers will have access to both multiple-occupant restrooms while in the Zoo, as well as single-use occupancy restrooms.

Camper Illness:

Brevard Zoo reserves the right to refuse entrance to Zoo Camp if a camper is exhibiting any symptoms listed below. For the wellbeing of all our campers and the safety of others in the program and camp staff, if a camper shows any of the following symptoms below, they will be asked to leave camp immediately. In the event a camper becomes ill, camp staff will notify the parent/guardian listed at the time of registration followed by those listed as emergency contacts. We ask that your camper be fever-free for 24 hours before returning to camp.

Symptoms:

- Fever
- Severe headache
- Severe/persistent coughing
- Pink eye
- Sore throat
- Vomiting
- Open wounds/severe cuts

Camper Injury:

Camp staff trained in first aid may administer treatment for minor cuts scrapes, splinters and bug bites with permission provided during camp registration.

Parents/guardians will be notified immediately of any injury requiring more than basic first aid and/or any injury to the head or face.

Parents/guardians may be asked to pick-up your camper based on symptoms and severity.

By enrolling your child in camp, you acknowledge the risks and benefits of Zoo activities and hold your child responsible for following rules and regulations put in place to help prevent injury.

Camp Absences:

Please notify camp staff if your camper is going to be absent from camp or call 321-254-3453 ext. 219. No refunds will be provided for missed days.

Behavior Expectations

Brevard Zoo's top priority is for all campers to have a safe and enjoyable camp experience. Behavior expectations will be reviewed with campers regularly, and campers may be asked to sign a Camp Code of Conduct:

We expect all of our campers to:

- **Be Safe:** Campers will stay with their group at all times and follow all directions given by Zoo staff.
- **Be Respectful:** Campers will treat staff, volunteers, other campers and animals with respect. Campers will clean up after themselves.
- **Be Kind:** Campers will use respectful language and will not engage in excessive, rough, or unsolicited physical contact. Additionally, campers will not engage in public displays of affection. Campers will treat others the way they wish to be treated.

Discipline Policy:

Our staff understands the importance of creating a fun and pleasant camp environment and strives to reinforce behavior expectations in a positive way. However, in the case that a camper repeatedly does not follow established behavior expectations, the following steps will be taken:

- **Step 1:** Verbal warning and possible break from a camp activity.
- **Step 2:** Restriction from participation in a camp activity with parent/guardian notified.
- **Step 3:** Restriction from participation in camp activities and a meeting with the Camp Manager and parent/guardian. You may be asked to pick-up the child from camp, and camper may be asked to not return for the remainder of camp. *Refunds will not be provided for time missed from camp due to behavior concerns.*

Physical altercations, profanity, use of racist/homophobic/sexist remarks or gestures, destruction or theft of property, animal harassment or harm, and/or bullying may result in immediate elevation to Step 3 of the discipline policy.

Additional Information

Camp Staffing:

All Zoo Camps are staffed with year-round Conservation Learning staff and seasonal camp staff. All camp staff have completed a background check and are trained on child development and best practices in environmental education. Trained Zoo Teen volunteers may also assist with activities.

Camp Weather Policy:

Zoo Camp takes place rain or shine! We do our best to plan our day around weather predictions, with many outdoor activities planned in the morning to avoid heat and thunderstorms. While we make every attempt to make-up any activities due to inclement weather, make-up activities are not guaranteed.

Cancellation, Transfer and Refund Policy:

A \$50 fee will be applied for all cancellation requests for Summer or Winter Camps. All transfer requests are contingent on space available in the requested camp week, and transfers will not be accommodated if the wrong age group was purchased. A \$10 fee will be applied to all cancellations for Mini Camps. **Refunds and transfers will not be issued within two weeks of the program start date.** Payment will not be refunded if a camper does not attend. We reserve the right to cancel due to inclement weather or insufficient enrollment. You will be notified and a full refund will be issued under these circumstances.

Camp Contact Information:

For camp registration questions or notification of absences, please contact the Conservation Learning Operations Coordinator at 321-254-3453 ext. 219.

For all other questions, please contact:
Audrey Walker, Conservation Learning Manager
awalker@brevardzoo.org
321-254-3453 ext. 214

Amy Shea, Conservation Learning Senior Manager
ashea@brevardzoo.org
321-254-3453 ext. 238

Frequently Asked Questions

How do I register for camp?

All camp registration must be completed online. Please visit <https://brevardzoo.org/education/zoo-camps> for registration and information on upcoming camp sessions.

Payment is due in full at the time of registration. If camp registration becomes full, we will add your name to the waitlist, if desired. No guarantees can be made to accommodate those on the waitlist.

What will my child experience while at Zoo Camp?

We strive to provide our campers with a fun and unique experience! During the High School Overnight Camp, campers will be connected with experts in the fields of conservation and ecology, as well as zoology and animal psychology in order to gain knowledge and hands-on experience that will be relevant for students planning to pursue these and similar fields in their future. Experiences will include games, activities, hands-on challenges, and behind-the-scenes tours and chats. Campers may have the opportunity to participate in our Treetop Trek and Kayaking adventure (weather permitting).

Are there accommodations for children with exceptional needs?

Please indicate on your registration form any exceptional needs of which you would like us to be aware. We also encourage you to reach out to our Camp Manager at awalker@brevardzoo.org in advance of your camp session to discuss any accommodation requests. The more information provided, the better we can meet the needs of your camper.

Will my child be able to interact and touch animals?

Campers will be able to interact in settings such as giraffe and aviary feedings, as well as get up close with our animal ambassadors!