

Sunset Zoo Volunteer Training

Junior Conservation Crew (JCC) Policy



The Junior Conservation Crew program is a structured volunteer program designed for students' ages 10 to 13 that have a special interest in learning about conservation and zoos. After completion of the training program, students are expected to sign-up and work scheduled shifts during the summer.

Volunteers attending training will be expected to take notes, participate in class projects and successfully complete a variety of reviews dealing with the subjects they have been studying.

Summer work schedules will be assigned late-May, and work sessions will start the first week of June. Each participant is expected to work one, four-hour shift each week. This work is outlined below.

Please make sure that your child is willing and wants to participate in this program. JCCs get dirty, sweaty, and come home tired but have a great time. It is one of the best ways for a student to get involved in the wildlife profession as a future career.

Dates to Remember:

- Registration Opens: March 26th at 11:00 AM
- Registration Closes: April 29th at 5:00 PM
- Scholarship Applications due: April 25th by 5:00 PM
- Training materials open on google classroom: May 2nd by 5:00 PM
- Training completed and submission deadline: May 13th at 5:00 PM
- Availability forms sent: May 2nd by 5:00 PM
- Availability forms due: May 13th by 5:00 PM
- Summer volunteer schedules sent: May 23rd by 7:00 PM
- First Day of JCC: May 31st
- Last Day of JCC: August 8th

Training Classes:

- Training for the Junior Conservation Crew will consist of a series of online training components through Sunset Zoo's Google Classroom.
- A link to the Google Classroom will be provided to all registrants by the end of the day on Monday, May 2nd.
- Participants will have until May 13th to complete the training.
- Training will take approximately 3-4 hours to complete.

Work Days:

- Workdays start the Tuesday after Memorial Day, May 31st and continue for 10 weeks to end on August 8th
- JCCs will attend one volunteer day per week.
- JCCs are only allowed to miss 3 shifts throughout the summer, and we request advance notice of absences when possible.
- Due to the scheduling process, JCCs may not come in on non-scheduled days.

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- JCCs will participate in a series of conservation initiatives throughout the summer. During each shift they will always participate in the following three activities:
 1. Bug Safari – a citizen science activity focusing on the importance of arthropods in our environment.
 2. ZooMonitor – an animal behavior research program designed to gather information important to enhancing the welfare and wellness of the animals in our care at Sunset Zoo.
 3. Conservation Education Project – a video project that will be developed over the course of the summer. The focus of the videos will be to create a 60-90 second video that focuses on the conservation initiatives for a certain species and is appropriate for their peers. Sunset Zoo will post the videos in the “just for kids” section of the zoo’s website.
 4. Monarch Larvae Monitoring Project – a citizen science project that collects data on monarch larvae in the environment, selects a random sample of larvae to raise to adulthood and tests for monarch parasites.
- JCCs will have the opportunity to participate in these other conservation focused activities over the course of the summer:
 1. Invasive species removal – The zoo is being overrun by Japanese honeysuckle an invasive species that chokes out native plants in the landscape. It is important to remove invasive species so that local native plants can grow and provide appropriate habitat for native wildlife.
 2. Recycling Audit – participants will help us quantify how much recycling we collect and how well guests recycle the appropriate items. This will help the zoo understand how well this aspect of our green practices initiative is working. Participants will also help us to develop materials to improve recycling compliance and test materials to see what works.
 3. Zooniverse – a citizen science program aimed at helping identify animals caught in camera traps. This helps scientist understand the biodiversity of the animals in different ecosystems.
- All JCCs are also responsible for cleaning up after themselves.
- JCCs are expected to work together as a team. If a supervisor has continuous problems with a JCC not wanting to work as a team, parents will be contacted and a meeting may be set up. The work is not always easy but it is rewarding!
- Each shift has a paid adult supervisor. Supervisors have gone through training and know the zoo and its policies well.
- There are two possible shifts times for JCCs to choose from. Each shift is four hours long. The morning shift runs from 8:15 am - 11:45 am and the afternoon shift runs from 1:15 pm – 4:45 pm.
- Closed-toed shoes are a must! Wear shoes that you don’t mind getting muddy and wet.
- JCCs must also comply with Sunset Zoo’s Uniform and Appearance Policy. This will be discussed during training sessions.

Safety Precautions

- Due to concerns with the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, Sunset zoo staff will follow guidance from the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention, Riley County Health Department, and City Administration.
- There are currently no mask mandates in effect.
- If our mask wearing requirement changes due to updated ordinances or City policies, we will communicate that directly with all registered families.
- Participants and supervisors will attempt to maintain 6ft of social distance, but this will not be possible at all times.
- Frequent handwashing/hand sanitizing will be expected of all participants.
- Supervisors will disinfect all surfaces in the classrooms at the conclusion of each shift.

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Code of Conduct

- No name-calling or abusive behavior to humans and non-human animals will be permitted.
- JCC does not cancel due to inclement weather. Please dress appropriately.
- JCCs are not allowed to borrow money from staff members or other JCCs to purchase food or drinks.
- The Zoo strongly encourages JCCs to leave cell phones at home. The Zoo is not responsible for phones getting damaged while JCCs are at the Zoo, and there is a good chance they may get wet or broken.
- If a JCC brings their cell phone with them to the Zoo, it must be turned off for their entire shift. Phones will be confiscated by staff if they are seen using them while volunteering. JCCs may ask for their phone back at the end of their shift, but it is their responsibility to ask. Parents can reach their JCC by contacting the zoo's main line at 785.587.2737.
- All general zoo rules must be followed.

Failure to follow any of these guidelines could be grounds for termination from the Junior Conservation Crew program