

VOLUNTEER INFORMATION

Thank you for enquiring about becoming a volunteer at Taronga Zoo. If you would like to apply to join the group, please fill in the attached form and return it to us. You will receive an acknowledgement of your application and will be contacted prior to the commencement of a new course.

Training courses for Public Education and Animal Watch volunteers are held on an “as needs” basis, usually once a year, therefore it is not always possible to take advantage of your willingness immediately.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Volunteers provide a number of very important functions at the zoo including public education, public relations and animal watch.

To work as a volunteer you must be a Zoo Friend and be at least 18 years of age. A reasonable level of fitness is needed for most jobs. As a volunteer at Taronga you are covered by the zoo’s insurance policy in case of an accident.

PUBLIC EDUCATION VOLUNTEERS

These volunteers work throughout the zoo providing general zoo and animal information to the public. Their tasks are many and varied and include taking tours of the Australian section, advising the public at the information centres, running touch tables and spot guiding.

You need to enjoy working with the public, be prepared to be part of a team and want to learn more about animals.

An orientation day will be run prior to the course and, if accepted, trainees will be required to attend a course. This will be run over a period of 8 to 10 weeks (one day a week) and will consist of lectures, workshops, practical work and evaluations. There is an administrative charge for lecture notes.

Once training has been completed there is a three month probationary period. You must be prepared to work one day a fortnight on a regular basis for a period of two years.

OFFICE WORKERS

The office is open 7 days a week. Office volunteers answer the phone and handle the many visitor enquiries about Zoo Friends membership. They also process new applications, sell merchandise and handle a myriad of other inquiries. You will be required to handle money, credit cards and a computer. Training is given in all aspects of the job.

Office volunteers need to have plenty of patience, like dealing with the public and enjoy administrative work.

ANIMAL WATCH

An orientation day will be run and, if accepted, trainees will be required to attend a suitable course.

1. *Animal Watchers*

- Monitor zoo animal behavior at the request of zoo staff by collecting quantitative data, and also contribute to zoo behavioral research projects and enrichment evaluation.
- Monitor video footage to extract activity and interaction data
- Check numbers and identity of birds in mixed species aviaries (Bird Team)
- Collate and analyse data and write reports on results of observation projects;
- Use questionnaires and observations to provide information on visitor attitudes and reaction to exhibits or graphics.

Animal Watchers need to be able to work on their own, have patience, good concentration, and a methodical mind. They should not be fazed by being outdoors in all weathers and at odd times of the day. A flexible schedule is also useful as many watches are arranged at short notice.

A two-day course is held to test applicants' skill at observation and introduce them to the data collection methods used. There is a probationary period after training and you must be prepared to take part in the program at least one day a fortnight. For supervision reasons the program runs fully only on weekdays (Monday through to Thursday).

2. *Environmental Enrichment Volunteers*

- Creatively fill enrichment feeding devices following keeper schedules and in line with the dietary requirements and restrictions of the animals.
- Construct enrichment devices
- Research enrichment for different species and summarise on-line enrichment information
- Assist with enrichment workshops for children and zoo visitors
- Record animal responses to enrichment devices

Enrichment volunteers should enjoy problem solving and lateral thinking, and preferably should have food preparation, practical craft and carpentry skills. Power tools are used on a regular basis.

A one-day course is held to inform applicants about enrichment and give practical instruction on methods used. There is a probationary period after training and you must be prepared to take part in the program at least one day a fortnight. For supervision reasons the program runs fully only on weekdays (Monday through to Thursday).

If you are interested in being considered for any of the above, please complete the attached application and return it to:

Manager, Education & Volunteers
Zoo Friends
PO Box 20
Mosman NSW 2088
www.zoofriends.org.au

**VOLUNTEER APPLICATION FORM
ASSOCIATION OF ZOO FRIENDS (NSW) INC.**

NAME:

ADDRESS:

.....P/C

PHONE: (H)..... (B) (M).....

EMAIL:

AGE GROUP: 18-25 26-3536-45 46-5556-6566+

Are you of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin? *(optional)*

- No
- Yes - Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander

Are you a Zoo Friend member? Y/N Membership Number

PLEASE NOTE: To take part in the Zoo Friends' Volunteer Program you must be a member of Zoo Friends.

I wish to apply for (if more than one, please number in order of preference):

- Public Education Volunteers
- Animal Watchers
- Enrichment Volunteers
- Office Workers

What is the best time of day to contact you?

Preferred day/days for working:

Please list any special skills which you think might be useful:

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I agree to abide by the Constitution of the Association of Zoo Friends (NSW) Inc. and the volunteer bylaws.

Signature: Date:

Please return to: Manager, Education & Volunteers
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