

# Dallas Zoo Management Careers

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## Lead Zoologist - Children's Zoo/Carnivores

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Animal Care & Conservation • Dallas, Texas

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### Description

#### JOB SUMMARY

This is a team lead, senior-level position in animal care, following established protocols to provide outstanding animal care for species in the section: food preparation, feeding, exhibit maintenance, pest control, and reproductive management. Zoologists participate in operant conditioning and husbandry programs, provide approved environmental enrichment, work collaboratively to improve animal exhibits, and prepare and conduct educational presentations and tours for zoo guests. Lead Zoologists may act as formal representatives of DZM in AZA Animal programs; will act as team leaders on specific projects, as assigned, or in the absence of a Zoological Manager or Assistant Zoological Manager. Additionally, the Lead Zoologist will provide crucial guidance, mentoring, and training to less senior staff, such as entry-level Zoologists.

The Children's Zoo/Carnivores (C2) section includes large and small/medium sized carnivores as well as a variety of children's zoo animals. The Children's Zoo consists of naked mole rats, primates, reptiles as well as farm yard animals. The C2 section consists of routes on both sides of the Dallas Zoo and requires knowing the natural history of many taxa. Zoologists need to understand both natural and individual behaviors of each species and incorporate that information into outstanding animal welfare at all levels including but not limited to training and enrichment.

#### SPECIFIC DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- Provide overall daily care of assigned animals and exhibits to ensure animal health, safety, and welfare, staff and public safety as set forth by AZA, USDA, and DZM to include:
- Observe and monitor animals' general health and behavior, reporting any abnormal behavior to manager and/or veterinary staff;
- Prepare and provide food for assigned animals, following written instructions, provide water and administer medication as instructed to ensure proper nutrition and health;
- Clean animal exhibits, holding pens, food prep areas, and equipment, maintaining a high level of sanitation, conducting pest control activities and reporting any mechanical defects that would endanger the animal, zoo staff, and/or guests;
- Achieve the highest standards of animal welfare and wellness by providing environmental enrichment and training sessions, using operant conditioning, as applicable;
- Participate in or assist with the capture and restraint of a variety of taxa including dangerous species
- Prepare and update animal records, reports and surveys, assisting in research projects as necessary to ensure thorough documentation and enhanced knowledge of animal biology;
- Will act as the liaison for ZIMS-related needs including regular meetings with the Zoo Registrar, communicating relevant ZIMS-related information back to the section, and training new staff in the proper use of and data entry into ZIMS
- Perform general maintenance and repair of exhibits: painting, repairing fences and shelters, abating erosion, planting ground cover and removing weeds;
- Provide assistance with animal transfers and/or procedures as directed;
- Interact positively and professionally with animal care and veterinary staff and volunteers;

- Actively encourage interest in wildlife through positive interaction with zoo guests via educational presentations focused on animals, biology, conservation, and environmental issues;
- Utilize the enrichment item/device proposal form to create new enrichment ideas and items to be added to taxa repertoires and properly record the results of enrichment items after each use;
- Collaborate with other zoo personnel as needed to meet the zoo's mission. This can include, but is not limited to, assisting and participating in media events, special tours, and public relations projects;
- Participate in and support zoo-wide initiatives, committees, and work groups;
- Understand and support Dallas Zoo's Strategic and Master Plans and departmental collection plans;
- Study specific reference materials pertinent to animal care, behavior and natural history as assigned;
- Follow all safety protocols and understand the animal keeper's role in emergency procedures, responding to emergencies as required;
- Be able to supervise and train volunteers and interns within department as needed; eligible to act as an assigned mentor to interns and volunteers responsible for counseling, coaching, and ensuring follow up on assigned intern/volunteer goals
- Assist with the beautification of our park by removing trash and debris whenever you see it;
- Assist with and raise awareness for AZA SAFE programs;
- Eligible to serve in Chair positions on Dallas Zoo Management internal committees as well as rotating on to the intern selection committee
- Act as an assigned Mentor to entry-level Zoologists in a formal mentorship program including regular check-in meetings, tracking goals, and providing feeding back to Zoological Manager's to ensure the entry-level staff is progressing appropriately
- Eligible to formally represent Dallas Zoo Management in AZA Animal Program roles including Institutional Representative, committee member, Studbook Keeper, SSP Coordinator, etc.
- In the absence of Zoological Manager or Assistant Zoological Manager, may be needed to act as the section representative or contact for animal management or veterinary needs. Additionally, will coordinate the safe animal capture, restraint, and veterinary procedures for non-routine procedures.
- Perform other duties as assigned.

## **PREFERRED QUALIFICATIONS**

- An Associate's degree in an animal science, biology, or related science field plus six years of paid animal care experience is required; A Bachelor's degree in an animal science, biology, or related science field plus five years of paid animal care experience is preferred
- Must have knowledge of animal care and basic husbandry skills, and at least five years preferred of exotic animal care experience at an AZA-accredited facility (Carnivore experience is highly desired);
- Must be a flexible, efficient, self-motivated team player, and solution-oriented: finding creative solutions to complex challenges;
- Must be able to fully cross-train throughout entire assigned section
- Must have basic knowledge of research techniques and practices, with solid observation skills;
- Must be capable of practicing, or willing to learn, safe methods of capture and restraint for a variety of taxa (which may include potentially dangerous species);
- Must be able to establish and maintain an effective rapport with all levels of management, employees, interns, volunteers, and zoo guests;
- Must be able to communicate effectively both orally and in writing, following instructions and documenting animal care activities appropriately;
- Ability to represent the Zoo in a professional manner at all times;
- Ability to exercise sound judgment in emergency situations and to respond with appropriate action;
- Ability to establish and maintain effective working relationship with management, other employees & zoo guests;
- Must be able to walk, stand, sit, kneel, stoop, crawl, twist, reach above head, pull bend, climb stairs and ladders and carry up to 50 lbs;
- Must be able to work holidays and weekends, both regular and irregular hours as required;
- Regular, reliable and punctual attendance is an essential function of this position;
- Must be able to actively work outdoors in hot or inclement weather;
- Successful candidates must complete pre-employment drug screening, background check and TB test;
- Must have a valid driver's license to operate zoo vehicles and reliable transportation.

The above statements are intended to describe the general nature and level of work performed by personnel assigned to this job and is not necessarily an exhaustive list of all duties to be assigned.

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