



SAFARI ZOO CAMP- JOB INFORMATION AND REQUIREMENTS

Each summer, nearly 400 children, teens and adults from around the world take part in the Safari Zoo Camp experience- a residential summer camp at Jungle Cat World Wildlife Park. We offer them the unique privilege to learn about nature through hands-on experiences, helping develop awareness and concern for endangered wildlife and habitats. This fun and interactive approach to environmental education encourages campers to build the necessary confidence, knowledge and skills to live in harmony with nature.

Before pursuing a job at Safari Zoo Camp, please review this document closely. Be sure that this is a job that you are both capable and eager to do. For more information, please visit:

- http://www.junglecatworld.com/zoo_camp.html
- <http://www.zoocamp.com/>

WHY WORK AT SAFARI ZOO CAMP?

This is truly a unique program. It has changed the lives of both campers and staff from around the world. It has become a *home away from home* for many. It's a place for both excitement and serenity, where you can find friendship, understanding and compassion.

You will see the world around you with more clarity and scope. It is a place where you can nurture your love and enthusiasm for nature and develop the confidence to venture out and share it with others.

During your stay, you will laugh and cry, be elated and frustrated, get a better understanding about *who you are....* yet question, *who you are.*

Then there is the opportunity to make a positive and lasting impact on the campers, offering them confidence, strength and direction. And because of this influence, they may grow up to become a great leader, a caring parent or a concerned citizen. Because of you, the world has become a better place. That is the essence of Safari Zoo Camp.

APPLICATION AND HIRING PROCESS

Phase 1: Available jobs are posted in February:

- Cover Letters and Resumes are reviewed.

Phase 2: Beginning March 1:

- Approved applicants receive further information: **Safari Zoo Camp- Job Information and Requirements.**
- Interested applicants arrange for an interview. The interview is informal (casual dress) approximately 1 hour in duration. This is followed by a tour of the zoo and camp facility.
- Employer References are available to applicants upon request.



Phase 3: All applicants are notified by April 1 about the final decision. Successful applicants must then complete the following by June 1:

- Complete the Jungle Cat World *Job Application*
- Submit contact information for three Character References
- Submit a Police Records Check/Vulnerable Sector Screening
- Submit a copy of an up-to-date CPR/First Aid certification
- Submit copies of any other applicable certificates, documents and/or licences
- Study material that is required for reading and viewing listed in the "Staff Preparation Guide"

Phase 4: Hired staff must then:

- Attend a two day training course at Safari Zoo Camp
- Sign a Job Contract
- Review Zoos Policies and Procedures

JOB INFORMATION AND REQUIREMENTS

- **Work Schedule:** This is the 2008 activity schedule. The 2009 curriculum will be similar: http://www.zoocamp.com/SZC08_schedule.pdf. Programs run between 9:00am and 9:00pm, Monday to Friday, with ½ days on Sunday and Saturday. However, staff are expected to be up and available for the campers when they wake up in the morning and when they get ready for bed in the evening. By the end of the summer, you will be exhausted. Ask yourself; can you do this for 8 weeks straight?
- **Standard Time Off:** Staff get 27 hours off each weekend, from Saturday 12:00pm to Sunday 3:00 pm. Additional free time is available during some weeknights, between 9pm - 7:30am, based on a rotation system with other staff. You can expect 2-3 nights off. However, this free time is a privilege and not a right.
- **Special Leave:** Staff may request time-off for emergencies, illnesses and/or for a particular occasion (wedding, funeral, etc), however, special leave is not an entitlement. Requests, as such, will be considered based on the employees work performance and sympathetically in the light of individual circumstances. It is granted at the discretion of the Safari Zoo Camp Director(s).
- **Work Involved:** Zookeeping work is dirty work. There is lots of fecal material that needs to be cleaned and food to be prepared. You may be asked to cut-up a dead deer (a road-kill) so you can feed it to the lions. Most of the animals eat dead, whole chicken. The head, legs and wings have to be removed. Some of the monkeys and reptiles eat live grubs and insects. Staff might be asked to eat one to show the kids that, "Yes, we are primates too!". This is not a job for the squeamish.



- **Responsibility:** Each week, staff work together to manage a group of approximately 45 children. Each cabin will have about 12 campers, which you and another staff member, are *specifically* responsible for. Responsibilities include making sure campers are getting their medication, eating during meals and brushing their teeth, etc. Over the summer, you may be confronted with an array of behavioural disorders and challenges, such as Autism, Tourette's, bed-wetting, fighting, stealing, low self-esteem, wandering, homesickness, etc.
- **Physical Fitness:** There are many athletically challenging activities, including caving, rappelling, rock climbing, mountain biking and hiking. Sports include baseball, soccer and swimming.
- **Experience with Kids and Animals:** Some of the best skills and knowledge are acquired through direct experiences in life. We require staff that have volunteered or worked with both kids and animals in the past. Animal related experiences could include: Riding horses, having a pet dog (or snake!), volunteering at a vet clinic, etc. Experiences with youth can include: Being a Big Brother or Big Sister, teaching music lessons, working as a camp counsellor, etc.
- **Keen Awareness:** Many of the activities at camp can be considered dangerous. Zookeeping is one of the world's most dangerous professions, in particular, when working with large carnivores. Our extra-curricular activities include rappelling, caving, wall & tree climbing (over 60' high!) and hang-gliding. Though special training and protocols are in place to manage these risks, a moment of absent-mindedness, a split-second of distraction, and a child can lose an arm to a Jaguar, or fall down a chasm while hiking at Warsaw Caves. Serious injury and even *death* is possible. This job requires immense amounts of attentiveness and awareness of your surroundings; the ability to see things coming before they happen. There is no room for complacency.
- **Knowledge:** Each summer we are pleasantly challenged by campers that have a plethora of information about the world around us. Some of them are specialized, knowing everything about the one thing they are passionate about, like tigers or reptiles. At camp, you are a teacher, as well as a role model. You should be able to name at least a dozen native plants and animals, such as trees and birds. You should know a few facts about the species in the zoo (<http://www.junglecatworld.com/animals.html>). What causes Global Warming? What shouldn't we drink bottled water? Why do we need worms? You will need to be prepared to answer questions like these.
- **Power of Example:** Our staff are environmentally conscientious and responsible and live accordingly. We require people that don't just teach GREEN, but live GREEN. This includes showing interest, concern and compassion for all living things.
- **Selflessness:** This job is about helping kids grow and learn. It's about making the lives of the animals in the zoo more comfortable and enjoyable. It's about helping another staff member with their workload, though you're busy with your own. When someone is cold, you give him/her your jacket. If someone is thirsty, you give him/her the last of your water. Zoo Camp is about being of service to others- good will and good choices.



- **Confidence:** Zoo Camp takes pride in encouraging individual to face their fears, whether it's heights, spiders or crawling through tight spaces. We do not accept "I can't" or "I won't" by those that have yet to try. We are not looking for fearlessness, but rather, an open mind to tackle, or at least, master that fear. Ignorance is often the root of fear, which can lead to prejudice, a dislike towards other people, animals or our environment. Each novel experience brings new awareness, knowledge and skills.
- **Positive/Optimistic:** When it's raining, you're outside with the kids watching the songbird's bath in the puddles. When it's stifling hot, you retreat to shade beneath a tree to discuss the wonders of this woody plant. When a child gets a small cut, you stop for a moment to examine the wound, commenting on how fascinating the human body is and how it will heal itself. Every instance, regardless how bad or uncomfortable it might seem, is an opportunity for a positive, educational experience. We do not tolerate melodramatic behaviour, gossiping, negativity, foul language, etc.
- **Enthusiasm/Interpersonal Skills:** HOW something is being taught is as important as WHAT is being taught. We're looking for personable and outgoing people that can communicate effectively. This is a job for people that like spending time with others.
- **Worldly Experiences:** Many of our staff have attained many great life skills, knowledge and interesting stories from their travels around the world, exploring and becoming familiar with other societies and natural biomes. Since many campers visit Safari Zoo Camp from around the world, this familiarity and understanding of other cultures and their homeland (geography, ecosystems, etc.) is an asset.
- **Accommodations:** The bunkhouses, bathrooms and dining hall are small and simple. Nothing fancy. We don't have the large and complex infrastructure that some other camps have. If you like camping, this is the place for you!
- **Wages:** Under the Ontario Standards Employment Act, people employed to instruct or supervise children at camp are exempt from the minimum wage standard and overtime pay. Camp wages are thus relatively low, but the knowledge and experience gained is priceless! People come to work at Safari Zoo Camp for the love and enjoyment of the work- the kids, the animals and the environment. This is not the job for money-focused individuals.

Considering the special skills and dynamic personality required to work at such a unique camp, wages at Safari Zoo Camp are equal to or higher than other summer camps in North America. Everything you need during the summer (food & drinks, lodging, laundry facility, etc) is free and available. Room and board is included. (The Ontario Employment Standards Act gives lodging and food a **minimum** value of \$69.40 per week).

Wages are paid in weekly installments. Bonuses are available for those that have successfully completed the summer season. The amount received is based on the results of our weekly job performance assessment. Recognizing the value of experience, veteran staff receive a graduated earning of \$100.00 for each summer season they've worked at Safari Zoo Camp.



JOB POSITIONS AND PAY:

(2) **Director** (25+): Responsible for the management and operation of the camp, including hiring/training staff and program development.

- Working with JCW to promote SZC whenever possible;
- Camp ground preparation prior to camp, including notifying JCW management about any necessary infrastructure repairs, replacements and/or additions;
- Hiring, training and supervising staff (including volunteers), assuring that they adhere to JCW's "Code of Ethics and Conduct" and the "Policies and Procedures";
- Program development, implementation and scheduling that is consistent with the goals and values of SZC and JCW;
- Monitoring camp progress and keeping complete records of any medical and/or health issues, incidents and/or accidents and staff evaluations;
- Ensuring that the physical, mental and social well-being of both staff and campers is maintained;
- Immediately addressing any failings, issues or emergencies during camp;
- Acting as the principal camp contact, including communicating with parents and children, during times of operation;
- Overseeing the preparation of menus and food purchases;
- Off-site (field trip) logistics, including transportation;
- Ensure that all details of closing camp and securing the site are carried out.

Pay (gross): **\$5, 500.00 for 8 weeks**

(6) **Activity Counsellor** (19+): Responsible for general counsellor duties, but also teaching and running scheduled activities. Activity Counsellors often specialize in a specific field, such as sports, arts, the environment, etc.

Pay (gross): **\$2,500.00 for 8 weeks** (\$2,800.00 for 9 weeks)

(1) **Safari Club Activity Counsellor** (19+): Responsible for general counsellor duties for young children between the ages of 6-8 years old, including teaching and running scheduled activities. The Safari Club Activity Counsellor often has experience and/or schooling in early childhood education.

Pay (gross): **\$350.00 for 1 week** (\$2,500.00 for 8 weeks / \$2,800.00 for 9 weeks)

(1) **Special Needs Counsellor** (19+): Responsible for any additional care or supervision of campers that may require it, such as those with physical and/or psychological disabilities, including the management and administration of medication. They also provide guidance and information for staff working with these campers. The Special Needs Counsellor often has experience and/or schooling in nursing, social work and/or psychology.

Pay (gross): **\$2,500.00 for 8 weeks** (\$2,800.00 for 9 weeks)

(2 per week- 10 total) **Assistant Counsellor** (15-17): A one-week volunteer placement to assist the Counsellors with the younger campers. To apply, the applicant must be registered in a teen session.

(2 per week- 6 total) **Assistant Counsellor** (18+): A one-week volunteer placement to assist the Counsellors during the teen sessions. Preference will be given to University or College students that require the work placement experience.



STAFF EVALUATION:

Job performance is evaluated at the end of each week (camp session). The Director(s) examines such things as: Initiative, Enthusiasm, Interaction with Campers, Team Player and Competence. Each characteristic is given a numerical value: 1- Fantastic, 2- Average, 3- Needs Improvement. The results are then added up. If the final number indicates poor and/or negligent job performance, the Director(s) has the right to terminate employment.

The results are discussed with each staff member in private, to promote growth and improvement and as an opportunity for the Director(s) to reward exemplary work. Staff will also have the opportunity to evaluate management on a weekly basis and discuss any issues or concerns.

Last reviewed: December 7, 2009