



Palm Desert / Indian Wells - 47-900 Portola Avenue - Palm Desert, CA 92260

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## ***Zoo Teen FAQs***

### **What makes volunteering at The Living Desert Zoo & Gardens different from other volunteer or service-learning opportunities?**

- The Living Desert Zoo & Gardens offers high school students a unique opportunity to learn hands-on about animal care, gain valuable job skills, and volunteer in a collaborative and fun learning environment!
- Our Zoo Teen volunteers have the opportunity to experience and hear about special zoo updates before the general public as well as practice skills that will help support their future educational and career paths.

### **What age do you need to be to join the Zoo Teen program?**

- Zoo Teens must be between the ages of 14-18 years old and currently enrolled in grades 9-12 (public, private, or home school)

### **What are the steps to apply to become a Zoo Teen?**

1. Complete and submit the Zoo Teen Application on the Living Desert website.
2. Submit a letter of recommendation
3. Participate in a Zoo Teen group interview
4. Attend a Zoo Teen Orientation session

### **When is the best time to apply?**

- We offer two seasons for new Zoo Teens to apply to the program
- Zoo Teens can apply to program in Early-Fall to volunteer during the school year (October-May) or in Late-Spring to volunteer during the summer (June- August)

### **What are the Requirements of the Zoo Teen program?**

- Complete and submit the ZooTeen Application
- Attend a ZooTeen orientation session
- Complete the required trainings
- Commit to 6 hours/month of volunteer hours with a minimum service commitment of one year

### **Do I need to be a member of The Living Desert?**

- Yes. Membership is required to volunteer at The Living Desert

### **Is there a dress code?**

- Zoo Teens will be required to purchase a volunteer shirt and wear their provided Living Desert name badge while on shift. Closed-toed shoes and non-denim, neutral colored (such as khaki) bottoms are also required.

### **What volunteer opportunities can I participate in as a new Zoo Teen?**

- **Petting Kraal:** *Help make a wonderfully wild time for our guests as they interact with the animals of the Petting Kraal as you help maintain the yard and share their natural history.*
- **Bighorn Railroad Trains:** *Keep the trains running on time by maintaining the train layout, learning how to operate the controls and share with our guests about this engineering marvel.*
- **Discovery Center:** *Inspire the next generation of learners where you will help facilitate educational interactions with fossils, biofacts and other curiosities of the desert.*
- **Zoo Camp:** *Go wild by volunteering in Zoo Camp where you will make the best camp ever through assisting the camp counselor in games, crafts, STEM activities and even special behind-the-scenes experiences.*
- **Special Events:** *From Wild Lights to Howl-O-Ween and more, we love to have our Zoo Teens help with special events to make sure every guest walks away with a WOW moment.*

### **How do I get involved with opportunities that involve more animal interactions?**

- After the fulfillment of one year of service, Zoo Teens who have demonstrated a strong desire to grow and lead will be invited back to continue with the next year of service in an expanded leadership role with more responsibilities.
- These increased responsibilities may include: animal care, animal handling, conservation projects, gardens and trails support, animal interpretation, and more!

**Can I apply to be a Zoo Teen with a friend?**

- You are welcome to apply with a friend or sibling who meets the requirements, but we do not guarantee placement of both applicants
- Depending on availability, ability, and needs, we do not guarantee placement into the same duties on grounds
- As part of the program, we encourage all Zoo Teens to work together collaboratively

**Do I need to commit to the full length of service and/or hours?**

- Zoo Teens are expected to adhere to the service requirements and commitments
- Zoo Teens can satisfy their service requirements through a number of different means including some virtual volunteer opportunities. If you find that you are unable to fulfill your service requirement, speak to an Education Staff member to explore other volunteering options as a Zoo Teen.

**Does The Living Desert sign off on Community Service hours for school or other extra-curricular activities?**

- Yes, the Living Desert is happy to sign off and provide service hour records to schools or scholastic organizations.

**What is The Living Desert Scholarship Fund?**

- The Living Desert Scholarship Fund is our volunteer-organized scholarship program for local graduating high school students and military veterans aspiring to continue their education in natural science and conservation.
- Zoo Teens who have demonstrated outstanding commitment to furthering the Living Desert's mission can be considered for the Living Desert Scholarship Fund.