Youth at Perth Zoo (YAPZ) Information Pack

Our Role

Our role is to inspire and empower young people to become active contributors to wildlife conservation. Through meaningful experiences, learning opportunities, and community engagement, we help participants build the knowledge, skills, and confidence to create positive outcomes for wildlife, people, and the environment. By working together, we support Perth Zoo's vision of conservation leadership, community connection, and collective impact.

YAPZ Mission statement

"To empower young people to connect with wildlife, inspire action for conservation, and create a future where wildlife and humanity thrive together."

Program Overview

Youth at Perth Zoo (YAPZ) is a youth development program that provides young people with a range of engaging learning and hands-on experiences, developed by YAPZ Leaders in collaboration with Perth Zoo's Education Team. The program is designed to build participants' skills in communication, leadership, advocacy, and teamwork, while fostering a lifelong passion for wildlife conservation. It also creates opportunities for young people to connect with like-minded peers who share an interest in wildlife and conservation, building lasting friendships and a strong sense of community.

Through interactive activities and behind-the-scenes learning opportunities, participants gain an understanding of how Perth Zoo works to achieve meaningful visitor engagement, education, species care and management, and conservation outcomes. The program empowers young people to become active wildlife advocates by developing their skills and knowledge so they can contribute to positive conservation outcomes within the Zoo, within their communities and beyond.

Program Structure

Activities will run throughout each school holiday period with a variety of activities available for YAPZ participants to choose from. **The next program will run from the 6th to the 28th of January, 2027.** We encourage YAPZ participants to attend 2-3 (or more) activities to get the most out of the program. Activities may vary throughout the year and are subject to change depending on operational requirements, seasonal events, conservation campaigns, and other opportunities available at Perth Zoo.

Please note, there is no handling/holding of Perth Zoos animals during the program

Application

The Youth at Perth Zoo (YAPZ) program includes an application process designed to ensure participants are genuinely interested in wildlife conservation, personal development, and making the most of the opportunities offered through the program. As part of the application, prospective participants are required to complete a series of questions and submit their responses to the YAPZ Coordinator for review. Applications will be assessed based on demonstrated interest and suitability for the program. As places in the program are limited, not all applicants may be successful. If your application is unsuccessful, we encourage you not to be discouraged and to apply again in the future. Additional intake opportunities are expected to be offered mid-year, subject to participant numbers.

Program Requirements

1. **Perth Zoo Membership**

As this is a Pilot Program, there is no fee associated with the January holiday program. However, a condition of participating in the YAPZ program is that all participants must either:

- Hold a current Perth Zoo membership, or
- Purchase a Perth Zoo membership before commencing the program.

This is required because participants will enter the Zoo independently through the main entrance for activities.

Please note: Once the pilot phase of YAPZ concludes and the program is formally launched, participants will be required to pay a registration fee and hold a valid Perth Zoo membership to participate.

2. **Providing Feedback**

YAPZ is built on the idea that young people can have a genuine voice in programs designed for them. As part of the pilot program, all participants are required to provide feedback after activities they attend and at the end of the January program. Your feedback, ideas, and experiences will help shape the future of YAPZ, ensuring the program continues to reflect the interests, needs, and aspirations of young people while inspiring greater engagement in wildlife conservation.

3. Attending Induction Day

All new YAPZ members are required to attend an Induction Day before commencing program activities. Induction day is **Wednesday 6th January, 2027. 10.00am-2.00pm**. **ONE parent/guardian is required to attend with you from 10am-12pm.** Your parent/guardian can enter the Zoo free of charge for Induction Day and remain at the Zoo after 12pm if they wish, but cannot participate in the afternoon activities.

Induction provides participants with the opportunity to:

- Meet program coordinators, your Youth Leaders and fellow participants.
- Learn about Perth Zoo and the Youth at Perth Zoo program.
- Understand program expectations and responsibilities.
- Become familiar with safety procedures and zoo operations.
- Participate in training for Visitor Engagement

Attendance at the Induction Day is compulsory before participating in any YAPZ activities. If you cannot attend induction day, please notify the YAPZ coordinator ASAP.

Activities Available for YAPZ Members

YAPZED- Workshops

YAPZED (YAPZ Education) workshops are created and facilitated by YAPZ Youth Leaders, and offer participants the chance to learn from their peers while developing knowledge and practical skills related to wildlife, conservation, science, and Perth Zoo's work. These sessions may include presentations, discussions, hands-on activities and tours.

Previous activities designed and delivered by our Youth Leaders have included**:**

- **Zoo Quest** – an early morning team scavenger hunt that challenged participants to explore the Zoo, solve clues, and work together to complete conservation-themed tasks.
- **Wildlife Photography Workshop** – a practical, hands-on session focused on photography skills, including composition, storytelling, and capturing images of our Zoo animals.
- **Enrichment for Animals** – a hands-on creative workshop where participants designed and constructed enrichment items to support the wellbeing and natural behaviours of zoo animals.

Zoo Staff Workshops

Participants will have the opportunity to learn directly from zoo professionals about their areas of expertise. Discover practical skills, explore different career pathways, and gain insight into how the zoo cares for animals, manages its grounds, plan events, educate visitors, design and manage marketing content, and contribute to conservation efforts, locally and globally. Every session is unique and may include presentations, guided tours, hands-on activities, or interactive workshops, giving participants a chance to connect with staff and learn from real-world experiences.

Animal Adventurers & Wildlife Warriors Shifts

YAPZ members can register to assist our staff with the younger children's holiday programs. Animal Adventurers programs are for children aged 4-7 years old. Wildlife Warriors programs are for 8-12 years old.

If you register to assist in these programs, you will:

- Assist staff in setting and packing up.
- Assist with activities and crafts.
- Help create positive visitor experiences for the children.
- Lead games and activities during lunch break with the children.

These opportunities allow participants to develop leadership, communication, and teamwork skills. Training at induction day will help prepare you for these activities

Conservation Campaigns Shifts

Throughout the year Perth Zoo supports local, national, and international conservation campaigns. Throughout the school holidays, participants may help run interactive conservation pop-up stalls, connecting visitors with real wildlife conservation challenges and inspiring them to take action to protect wildlife and the environment

YAPZ members have opportunities to assist with awareness activities by:

- Engaging with visitors.
- Supporting educational displays.
- Promoting conservation actions.
- Sharing Perth Zoo’s wildlife conservation messages.

These experiences help participants build confidence, public speaking skills, and conservation knowledge.

Conservation Action Days- Offsite

A key part of the Youth at Perth Zoo (YAPZ) program is taking conservation beyond the zoo and into the community. We aim to provide young people with meaningful opportunities to contribute to real conservation outcomes and develop a deeper understanding of the challenges facing wildlife and the environment.

During each school holiday period, YAPZ will offer an offsite Conservation Action Day, and we strongly encourage all members to participate. Activities may include:

- community clean-ups,
- tree planting,
- habitat restoration projects,
- wildlife monitoring,
- citizen science initiatives, and other hands-on conservation experiences.

Participants may also have the opportunity to learn from guest speakers, researchers, Traditional Owners, and representatives from other conservation organisations.

These days are engaging, educational, and social while providing participants with the opportunity to make a genuine contribution to wildlife conservation and environmental stewardship.

YAPZ are responsible for organising their own transport to and from offsite days, unless otherwise specified by the YAPZ coordinator. Offsite information packs and consent forms will be sent out 2 weeks prior to the event.

Horticulture and Grounds Projects

YAPZ members may occasionally assist with gardening, mulching, weeding, planting, and other environmental projects under the supervision of Perth Zoo staff on Perth Zoo grounds.

These projects help participants learn how Perth Zoo staff work to maintain the Zoo grounds and manage animal habitats, visitor spaces and the historic botanical gardens onsite.

Keeper Duties

Keeper Duties shifts enable YAPZ members to gain hands on experience in different areas related to zookeeping. You are required to be in the YAPZ program for at least 6 months and undertake required Keeper Duties Training before applying for keeper duty shifts. These

shifts are scheduled depending on Zoo Keeper needs and availabilities during the holidays and places are very limited so members should not expect to be placed on shifts every school holidays. There will be no contact with animals during keeper duties.

Some of the keeper duties you may undertake include:

- Cleaning of habitats
- Re-mulching, weeding or planting in exhibit areas
- Enrichment building
- Behaviour monitoring and recording

Camps and Excursions

Where opportunities arise, YAPZ members may be invited to participate in camps, field trips, or conservation-related excursions.

These activities may involve additional costs to cover accommodation, transport, food, or activity fees.

Camps and excursions provide valuable opportunities to:

- Learn about conservation in real-world settings.
- Develop independence.
- Build friendships.
- Strengthen teamwork and leadership skills.

Social Events

YAPZ offers social events throughout the year to help participants connect with one another.

These may include:

- Scavenger hunts & other team building activities
- Movie nights
- Awards and recognition events.

Leadership Opportunities

The YAPZ program benefits from experienced members who take on leadership responsibilities.

YAPZ leaders undertake the following duties:

- Mentoring new YAPZ members.
- Plan and develop activities and workshops.
- Deliver YAPZED workshops
- Support staff during the program with set up and pack up

Leadership positions will be available after 12 months in the YAPZ program and require an application process and demonstrated commitment to the program.

How to Sign Up for Activities

Participants will be provided with information about upcoming activities and registration processes via email. You will be able to sign up for activities that suit your availabilities and interests.

It is important that participants regularly check their email to avoid missing deadlines and important information. As places in activities are limited, participants may not always receive their preferred activity selections. Every effort will be made to ensure fair participation opportunities for all members.

Other important information

Over 18s- Working with Children's Check

If you are 18 or over, you are required to hold a current Working with Children's Check. If you are applying for one, the YAPZ coordinator can sign the respective organisation representative section of your application. Please get in touch if you have any question.

Attending Activities

Participants are expected to attend the activities they have registered for and arrive on time.

If a participant cannot attend due to illness or unforeseen circumstances, notification should be provided to the YAPZ Coordinator as soon as possible.

Repeated unexplained absences or ongoing reliability concerns may affect a participant's involvement in the program.

Communication

Regular communication is essential to the successful operation of the Youth at Perth Zoo program.

Participants are responsible for:

- Regularly checking their email.
- Reading program updates.
- Responding to requests by deadlines.
- Keeping their contact details current.

Email will be the primary method of communication.

Behaviour Expectations

As representatives of the Youth at Perth Zoo program, participants are expected to conduct themselves appropriately at all times. Before starting in the YAPZ program, you will be required to sign a **Code of Conduct and Uniform Policy** which will be sent to you prior to the start of the program.

All YAPZ participants are expected to:

- Treat visitors, staff, volunteers, and fellow participants with respect.
- Follow all Perth Zoo policies, procedures, and safety requirements.
- Always Follow the direction of Perth Zoo staff
- Act responsibly and professionally.
- Abide by the Uniform Policy

Failure to meet behavioural expectations or breaching the Code of Conduct or Uniform Policy may result in the suspension or cancellation of participation.

If you have any questions, please contact the YAPZ coordinator, Naomi via email: youth@perthzoo.wa.gov.au