



# Zoo Careers

# ZOO CAREERS

## Toronto Zoo Staffing Numbers

|  |            |
|--|------------|
| Permanent Staff                        | <b>272</b> |
| Seasonal, Part-time, & Temporary Staff | <b>330</b> |
| Volunteers                             | <b>516</b> |

When considering to work at a zoo, most people think ***zoo keeper*** or ***veterinarian***. However, these are only two of the many different positions that are involved in operating a modern zoo, such as the Toronto Zoo. It takes a lot of talented, committed people to look after and display such a large collection of wildlife. The Toronto Zoo employs approximately 272 permanent employees, who distributed amongst the various sectors listed below:

|                                       |    |                                      |    |
|---------------------------------------|----|--------------------------------------|----|
| General Management                    | 3  | Project Management                   | 5  |
| Operations and Administration         | 2  | Facilities & Services                | 2  |
| Human Resources                       | 5  | Horticulture & Materials Collections | 22 |
| Financial Services                    | 10 | General Maintenance                  | 13 |
| Safety & Security                     | 20 | Electrical & Plumbing                | 11 |
| Computer & Telecom Services           | 4  | Utilities                            | 8  |
|                                       |    | Transit & Fleet                      | 6  |
| Conservation, Education, and Wildlife | 3  | Custodial                            | 11 |
| Wildlife Care                         | 82 |                                      |    |
| Wildlife Health                       | 14 | Marketing & Communications           | 2  |
| Wildlife Nutrition                    | 7  | Graphics                             | 3  |
| Curatorial and Administration         | 13 | Public Relations                     | 5  |
| Education                             | 7  |                                      |    |
| Member & Guest Services               | 7  |                                      |    |
| Retail & Rides                        | 4  |                                      |    |
| Development                           | 3  |                                      |    |

In addition to the permanent employees at the Zoo, 516 Year-Round, Panda Ambassador, Summer Information, and Student Ambassador Volunteers donate their time guiding tours for school groups, interacting with visitors at interpretative touch tables, assisting at various events at the Zoo and in the community, and assisting with on-going research by observing animals.

During the summer, approximately 330 seasonal staff are hired, including secondary, university and college students. The work term runs from mid-April to late October with the main work force being employed from mid-June to Labour Day. Most seasonal staff work in positions related to Member & Guest Services, Retail & Rides, Education, Horticulture, Maintenance, and Safety & Security positions.

Very few seasonal staff are assigned to wildlife care areas. However, those who are, tend to be third or fourth year university or college students enrolled in the biological sciences or veterinary-related programs or those who require practical experience working with animals as a prerequisite to further studies. However, once employed by the Zoo, regardless of your position, you can apply to other internal job postings you are qualified for. Several staff who are now employed as full-time keepers began their Zoo careers in other areas.

### How to Become a Zoo Keeper

A high school diploma is the minimum educational requirement for work in a zoo, although most animal-related jobs require college or university education in the fields of zoology or biology, as well as relevant experience. Across Canada, there are likely less than 1,000 people working full time in a zoo setting, with far more applicants than positions available. Dedication and persistence are two important requirements for someone seeking animal-related employment in a zoo.

## Toronto Zoo Job Posting – Keeper Grade One

### Responsibilities

Under close supervision:

1.
  - a. Performs the general day-to-day care of the animals in his/her section.
  - b. Cleans exhibits and holding areas, observes the collection for signs of illness, indifference, and injury and reports same.
  - c. Maintains tools and equipment in good repair and working order.
  - d. Assists in the care and treatment of sick and injured animals.
2. Present educational talks and demonstrations for the public and answer any general queries.
3. Assists in the general tidiness of the Zoo site with particular attention to litter that may be harmful to the animals.
4. Provide regular activities for the enrichment of the animals.
5. Assists with the restraint, crating and uncrating of animals as well as training related to the animals welfare.
6. Other related duties as requested by the Supervisor



### Qualifications:

1. Must possess a certificate or diploma, at the community college level, in an animal related course of study or the equivalent training and experience.
2. Ability to read, write and speak intelligently with the general public, as well as produce brief, but accurate reports.
3. A genuine interest in and desire to work with and learn the proper care of wild animals in captivity, and to make the public aware of conservation.
4. Must be able to meet the physical demands of the job, including the ability to lift 25kg (55lbs).
5. Must possess the ability and willingness to work in a team setting.

Zoos offer many demanding, yet satisfying career opportunities. Zoo employees, whatever their role may be, often develop deep satisfaction from their involvement in the conservation and display of earth's natural treasures. If you have the interest and dedication to pursue a Zoo career, please visit the following links:

#### **Canada's Accredited Zoos and Aquariums**

[www.caza.ca](http://www.caza.ca)

#### **American Association of Zoo Keepers (AAZK)**

[www.aazk.org](http://www.aazk.org)

#### **American Association of Zoo Veterinarians**

[www.aazv.org](http://www.aazv.org)