Colchester Zoo Home Education Sessions 2023-2024

Sessions for age 11-16
3:00-4:00

	Topic	Session Description	Key Points Covered
Sept Mon 4th Tues 5th Wed 6th	Endangered Species	In this session, participants will learn about the major threats facing endangered animals: habitat loss, invasive species, poaching, pollution and overuse. Participants will get the chance to see real animal artefacts up close and learn some of the shocking facts about endangered species. These problems are contrasted with positive actions you can take to help endangered animals.	Endangered species; threats to biodiversity; positive actions
Oct Mon 2nd Tues 3rd Wed 4th	Marine Biodiversity	Participants will learn about the variety of life in our oceans, from oysters to eelgrass to whales. We'll discover some ways scientists measure and calculate biodiversity. Using this information, we'll discuss some of the oceans biodiversity hotspots. We'll then learn about the threats these ecosystems (and other marine habitats!) are facing and what can be done to help them.	Biodiversity (including calculations and measurements); biodiversity hotspots; ocean threats.
Nov Mon 6th Tues 7th Wed 8th	Animal Faeces: Diet and Health	Part of being a zoo keeper is dealing with animal faeces – but it's not just cleaning it up! Animal faeces can tell us a lot about an animal's health and diet. Participants will get the chance to get hands-on with some real samples while we investigate what faeces can tell us.	Animal faecal exam; roles and jobs of zookeepers; herbivore, carnivore, omnivore.
Dec Mon 4th Tues 5th Wed 6th	Primates	Learn about the amazing diversity of primates, from lemurs to apes and everything in between. We'll discuss primate classification and distribution around the world as well as each group's key characteristics. Participants will get the change to get test their intelligence and see how it compares to these clever animals.	Prosimians, new world monkeys, old world monkeys, apes; primate communication; animal intelligence.
Jan Mon 8th Tues 9th Wed 10th	Wildlife Art	We'll look at how art has changed from the time of early explorers to famous modern wildlife artists. A demonstration will highlight the importance of paying attention and using real animals or biofacts as a resource to record wildlife accurately. Participants will then have free time to get hands-on and examine animal biofacts (furs, skulls, etc.) themselves as they practice their art techniques.	Classification (bird, mammal, reptile, amphibian, fish); famous British wildlife artists; art skills
Feb Mon 5th Tues 6th Wed 7th	Zoo as a Business	This session provides an introduction to business concepts and terminology while providing an overview of Colchester Zoo as a visitor attraction. This includes customers, products, marketing, costs, income, and job roles. We'll focus more on job roles specifically, as well as getting a chance to evaluate a selection of CVs to determine which candidates match a personnel specification for a job role.	Intro to business/tourism vocabulary; intro to finance terminology; CV analysis and skills/tips to improve CVs.
Mar Mon 4th Tues 5th Wed 6th	Plants, Herbivores, & Ungulates	This session opens with an introduction to plant biology and the major types of plants. We'll discover methods botanists use to identify plants, including: keys, plant biomes, buds, venation, leaf scars, and more. We then relate plants to zoo animals with a specific focus on animal diets, and what we feed our zoo herbivores.	Plant classification; role of zookeeper; herbivore animal characteristics and types
Apr Mon 15th Tues 16th Wed 17th	Zoo Research	Research is one of the major roles of modern zoos. Learn about the wide variety of research conducted on site at Colchester Zoo, as well as how the zoo supports research projects further afield. Participants will then be introduced to the concept of 'ethograms', one of the keystones of captive animal research.	Zoo research; animal behaviour; ethogram.
May Mon 13th Tues 14th Wed 15th	Zoo Collection Planning	Discover how and why zoos keep the animals they do. We'll discuss how zoos collectively work together to manage their animal populations across a regional (or larger!) level. This will include a focused look on genetics and maintaining genetic diversity. We'll then focus on the larger roles of zoo breeding programmes and how it goes beyond species in zoos to direct (and in-direct) conservation links in the wild.	Role of zoos; TAGS & EEPs; BIAZA & EAZA; genetic diversity (including bottle necks and founders effects); in-situ and ex-situ conservation