



Frequently Asked Questions

The Greater Vancouver Zoo understands that your visit must be as educational and stimulating as possible for your students. Please read over these frequently asked questions and contact us if you have any additional inquiries.

When is the Zoo open?

October 1 – April 30 9:00 am - 4:00 pm daily
May 1- September 30 9:00 am - 7:00 pm daily

What is there to do at the Zoo?

The Greater Vancouver Zoo covers 120 acres, including 3kms of pathways and 135 species of animals to observe. We offer five interactive educational programs to choose from as well as the Safari Express narrated miniature train tour. Your admission includes the North American Wilds bus tour, the Lion Feeding (weather permitting), Radical Raptors Birds of Prey presentation (weather permitting), admission to the Vivarium where many of our reptiles live, and seasonal interpretive animal talks. Please visit our website for more detailed information on these activities and special events.

Is the teacher's admission free?

We direct you to the following guidelines:

- For Preschool – Grade 3, you will receive one free adult's admission per five paying students
- For Grade 4 and over, you will receive one free adult's admission per ten paying students

* Special Needs Assistants are also provided with free admission.

Is there a cost for parking?

School buses are free when they park in the lower south lot. The cost for other vehicles is \$5.00 per day.

Is the Zoo accessible for disabled students?

Yes, because the majority of our pathways are paved. In addition, our train and bus are equipped to take 2 wheelchair passengers per tour. Please notify us if you require wheelchair accommodations when completing your registration. Please note that special needs assistants receive free admission.

How do we pay?

Upon registration, you will receive a confirmation and an invoice. The invoice will indicate your required deposit amount. The deposit is approximately 25% of your estimated fieldtrip cost and will be applied to the balance owing which is due upon arrival on your field trip date. We request a minimum of 48 hours cancellation notice. The zoo accepts cash, debit, school cheque or credit card (Visa or MasterCard). We suggest that you collect the money in advance, ensure your numbers are correct, and have one person pay at the admissions booth. During this time please have another teacher or chaperone bring the students into the Zoo.

When can we book the train?

The train runs on 20-minute intervals (or 40 minutes during the winter season), starting on the hour. Train seats must be reserved in advance; please note that your group is limited to the number of seats reserved in advance for your group. Your group will receive train tickets upon arrival.

Where do I meet for the education program?

The admissions staff will direct you where to meet your guide upon arrival.

What/where is the bus tour?

The North American Wilds bus tour is a free tour of our North American Wilds enclosure and runs on demand approximately every 15-20 minutes in the southeast corner of the Zoo by the Grizzly Bear deck. Always check with the admissions staff about availability of the bus upon arrival. This tour may operate at specific times during the winter season so please phone for further details. The tour may provide you with an opportunity to observe our Grizzly Bear, Black Bears, Vancouver Island Wolves, Bison, Elk and Deer up-close and personal.

What happens if it's raining?

Rain or shine we are open! However, we strongly suggest that your students dress appropriately for the weather as the Zoo's covered areas and indoor facilities are limited. Remember the animals may be more active during cloudy or rainy days.

What happens if we miss our train/program?

We will do our best to reschedule your group when possible but please keep in mind that rescheduling may be difficult when there are other groups to accommodate. Please see admissions staff as soon as possible if this occurs.

Can we feed/touch the animals?

No. Feeding and touching of the animals is strictly prohibited. The best way for the keepers to know if an animal is sick is whether or not it is eating. If visitors feed them, we cannot properly monitor their health and may also lead to obesity or disease. Furthermore, the animals must not be touched for safety reasons; bites, scratches and disease transfers are always a possible risk. Lastly, we need to reduce stress on the animals; imagine being petted and poked over 500 times per day. ***Please respect the animals by not touching or feeding them.***

Where can we eat our lunches?

There are 3 covered gazebos near the playground, as well as a picnic area in the middle of the Zoo. In addition, you may reserve an area in the Picnic Area in the middle of the Zoo for your group at an extra charge. There are also picnic tables scattered around the Zoo as well.

Does the Zoo have any worksheets/activities for students?

Yes, worksheets and information sheets are available at www.gvzoo.com. You may also phone us to arrange for a free pre-fieldtrip visit to prepare your own activities, or to familiarize yourself with the Zoo. Talk to other teachers who've organized fieldtrips to the Zoo or call us for assistance with organizing your fieldtrip.