

Audubon Nature Institute
Holiday Camp
Family Manual

Table of Contents

<u>About Camp</u>	2
• Camp Philosophy	
• 2021/2022 Camp Sessions	
• Inclusion	
• Staff Information	
<u>Preparing for Camp</u>	3
• Sample Daily Schedule	
• What to Wear & Pack	
• Lost & Found	
• Lunch & Snacks	
<u>Carpool Information</u>	5
• Authorized Pickups	
• Drop-Off & Pick-Up Instructions	
• Late Fees	
• Late Arrivals, Early Pickups, & Absences	
<u>Camper Behavioral Expectations</u>	6
• Code of Conduct	
• Behavioral Intervention & “Three Strike” Policy	
<u>General Camp Policies</u>	7
• Independent Bathroom Use	
• Sunscreen & Insect Repellant	
• Family Members on Grounds	
• Cash-Free Camp	
<u>Medical & Behavioral Needs</u>	8
• Allergies & Medications	
• IEPs & Camper Aides	
<u>Vaccinations & Illness</u>	9
• Vaccination Policy	
• COVID-19	
<u>Camper Safety</u>	11
• Camper Supervision & “Rule of Three”	
• Severe Weather	
<u>Refund Policy</u>	11
• COVID-19 Refunds	

About Camp

Audubon Zoo Holiday Camps are dedicated to cultivating curiosity, inspiring hope, and instilling a feeling of positive empowerment in each of our campers. We spark inspiration through animal encounters, hands-on science explorations, animal-themed movement activities, and nature art. Campers will enjoy all that nature has to offer and spend each day learning about our animals and conservation.

Camp Philosophy

Audubon Camp is a fun-filled exploration of nature with hands-on experiences that inspire campers to become stewards of wildlife and wild places.

2021/2022 Camp Sessions

All Holiday Camps are for children ages **4-10 years old**.

Thanksgiving Camp	Winter Camp	Mardi Gras Camp
November 22 - 24 (3-day camp)	December 27 - 31 (5-day camp)	March 2 - 4 (3-day camp)

Inclusion

Audubon Holiday Camps are traditional camps (not specialized for specific exceptionalities) that welcome all children to join in our explorations of nature. Our camp days are very active and engage campers in a variety of activities with quick transitions and sensory changes throughout the day. All campers are expected to follow directions, adhere to safety rules, and behave according to our Code of Conduct.

Please provide us with the information and tools necessary to give your child the best possible camp experience. Although we cannot accommodate all needs nor provide one-on-one care for any individual camper, our team will do everything within our capacity to make each child feel welcome and included in a safe environment. If a camp participant requires an on-site full-time aide, prior notification and approval is required. For more information, see the section titled "[Medical & Behavioral Needs](#)."

Helpful information and tools can include:

- Allergies or medication needs*
- Accessibility concerns
- Behavioral or medical diagnoses
- IEPs*
- Any tips and tricks you'd like us to know

Staff Information

Jamie Orth | Administrative Coordinator | Camp Coordinator

- *Phone:* (504) 913-0254 | *Email:* zooedadmin@auduboninstitute.org
- Contact Jamie with all your questions or concerns about the Audubon Camp experience!

Amanda Fyfe | Zoo Education Manager | Camp Manager

- *Phone:* (504) 212-5472 | *Email:* afyfe@auduboninstitute.org
- Contact Amanda with questions about the Audubon Summer Camp Counselor-in-Training (CIT) program.

Llewellyn Everage | Director of Education | Camp Director

- *Phone:* (504) 212-5286 | *Email:* leverage@auduboninstitute.org
- Contact Llewellyn with questions or concerns that cannot be addressed by the Camp Coordinator.

Preparing for Camp

The Camp Day

Camp Hours	Drop-Off Window	Pick-Up Window
9 a.m.-3 p.m.	8:45-9:15 a.m.	3-3:30 p.m.

Before and after care will not be offered this year.

Sample Daily Schedule

The schedule is only meant to demonstrate the general flow of a typical day at camp as each camp day is different. All activities and schedules are weather- and animal-dependent.

Times	Sample Activity
8:45-9:15 a.m.	Camper Drop-Off
9:15-10 a.m.	Welcome & Icebreaker Games
10-10:45 a.m.	Guided Zoo Exploration
10:45-11 a.m.	Bathroom & H2O Break
11-11:15 a.m.	Animal Encounter
11:15-11:45 a.m.	Lunch
11:45 a.m.-12:30 p.m.	“Get Moving” Games, Quiet Time Activities (art, reading, etc.)
12:30-1 p.m.	Playground Time
1-1:15 p.m.	Snack & H2O Break
1:15-2:15 p.m.	Science or Art Activity #1
1:45-2:15 p.m.	Science or Art Activity #2
2:15-2:30 p.m.	Sing, Dance, Get Moving!
2:30-3 p.m.	Daily recap & clean-up
3-3:30 p.m.	Camper Pick-Up

What to Wear

Campers must wear comfortable, weather-appropriate clothing and closed-toe shoes that do not slip off. Raingear is allowed and encouraged on days with heavy rainfall expected.

For younger campers, please make sure clothing is easy for the child to remove and replace for independent bathroom use. Camp staff cannot assist campers in the restroom. It is especially important that younger campers have a full change of clothes for emergencies.

Please ensure your camper has two masks for every day of camp. All campers must be wearing a mask upon arrival at camp and have a spare mask in their bag.

What to Pack

Every day your child should bring the following items in a **backpack** or **tote bag**:

- Two face masks
- Reusable water bottle
- A complete change of clothing (we sometimes get messy!)
- Lunch (in reusable containers, if possible)
- Sunscreen
- Depending on weather:
 - Rain gear
 - Warm jacket

What *Not* to Pack

Personal items (e.g. toys, card games, electronic devices) are not allowed at camp. If your camper has a “comfort” item that would help them feel better in a new environment, let us know - they may keep it in their personal bag during the camp day. Audubon is not responsible for any lost, stolen, or damaged items.

Do not send money with your camper. Campers are not permitted to purchase any items from concession stands, gift shops, or vending machines during the camp day.

Lost & Found

Please label your camper’s clothing and belongings in case they are lost or left behind. We will contact camp families directly if we know which camper an item belongs to. All items remaining in lost and found two weeks after the last day of camp will be donated if not claimed. If your camper is missing something they brought to camp, let us know, and we will do our best to find it!

Lunch & Snacks

Campers will receive one snack per day and all-day access to water. Lunch will not be provided. Please notify Camp staff if your camper has food allergies or sensitivities and feel free to provide your camper with a snack alternative.

Send your camper with a lunch every day (in environmentally friendly packaging, if possible!). While we are not a nut-free camp, we do ask that campers bring nut-free food options whenever possible. If a high number of participants have severe allergies to one item, families may be asked in advance to refrain from sending the item in question for that week. We appreciate your understanding of these requests.

Carpool Information

Authorized Pickups

Campers will only be released to individuals listed as “Authorized Pickups” during the camper registration process, regardless of the adult’s relationship to the camper. No exceptions will be made.

Please make sure this list is complete and accurate—primary guardians(s) are *not* automatically added. Listed names must match those on the individual’s government-issued ID card (e.g. driver’s license), as we check IDs for every pickup.

Camper primary guardians may add individuals to the Authorized Pickup list by emailing zooadmin@auduboninstitute.org for our “Zoo Camp Authorized Pickup” form.

Drop-Off & Pick-Up Instructions

Drop-Off Window	Pick-Up Window
8:45-9:15 a.m.	3-3:30 p.m.

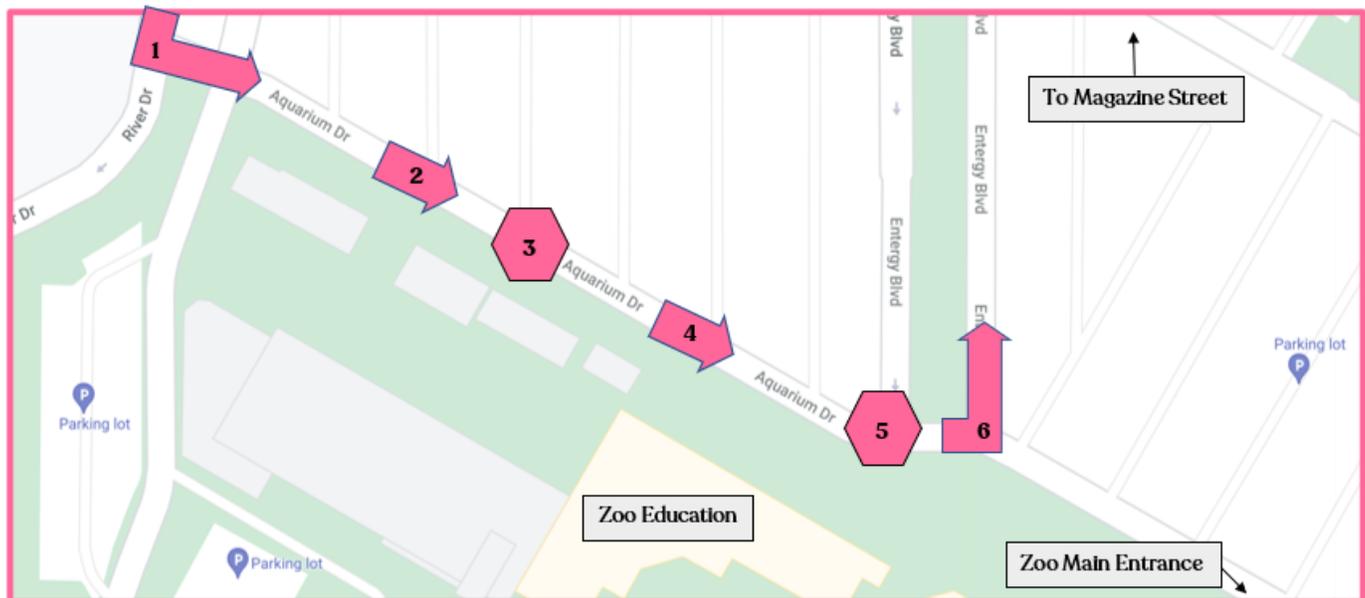
Please use our drive-through carpool line (see map below), which lines up in front of the Zoo between the Audubon Riverview (“The Fly”) entrance and the stop sign by the statue of John J. Audubon near the camp entrance, for camper drop-off and pick-up. Be prepared to confirm your Authorized Pickup list on the first day of camp.

Late Fees

Any pickup after 3:30 p.m. will result in a late fee. There is a \$5.00 fee for the first five (5) minutes, and after 3:35pm it is an additional \$1.00 per minute.

Late Arrivals, Early Pickups & Absences

Please notify us in advance if you know your camper will be arriving late, getting picked up early, or absent from a camp day. If you arrive at camp outside of our carpool window, call us at (504) 913-0254, and we will come out to meet you. *Please do not have your camper walk to the gate by themselves!*



Camper Behavioral Expectations

All children who attend Audubon Camps are provided an atmosphere where they can learn together free of harassment or intimidation. Fun and safety are only possible when there are behavioral guidelines that all campers agree to follow. Every participant is expected to show respect for all animals, counselors, fellow campers, themselves, Audubon staff, guests, and facilities. Disruptive or dangerous behaviors and physical aggression will not be tolerated.

Code of Conduct

All campers must follow our three Camp Rules:

Be Kind • Be Respectful • Stay with the Group

Additionally, we hold all campers accountable for the following behaviors outlined in our “Code of Conduct” below. Please review them and make sure your camper understands what will be expected of them. We will go over our camp rules at the beginning of each camp week, but it helps to hear it from you, too!

I will...	I won't...
Listen to and follow the instructions given to me by Audubon's staff.	Ignore or refuse to follow directions when asked by Audubon's staff.
Stay with my camp group when traveling through the facility.	Run away from or leave my camp group.
Respect myself, other campers, Audubon's staff, and other visitors with my words and actions.	Use profanity, hurtful language, or yell at other campers, visitors, staff, or animals. Fight, rough house, inappropriately touch, or cause physical harm (hitting, kicking, biting, etc.) to self, other campers, staff, visitors, or animals.
Collaborate with camp staff to repair harm when harm is caused.	Repeat harmful behaviors.
Respect all the animals I encounter in the in the camp room, Audubon's exhibits, and outside.	Harass, tease, bother, or inappropriately touch animals.
Leave personal toys at home or in my backpack.	Bring personal toys or trinkets to camp.
Leave my electronic devices at home.	Use personal electronic devices during the camp day.
Play respectfully in indoor and outdoor spaces.	Purposefully damage Audubon property in camp rooms, green spaces, or exhibits. This includes all play and teaching equipment, and landscaping.
Help make camp welcoming by supporting and accepting my peers and counselors.	Use hurtful words, be disrespectful, turn disagreements into fights, or reject or exclude others.
Let camp staff know when someone is being treated unkindly.	Intentionally bully or exclude other campers.

Behavioral Intervention

Our goal is to set each camper up for success and to redirect behavior quickly before it becomes an issue. Camp staff will address minor behavioral issues during the camp day. If a behavior continues or escalates, camp staff will discuss the behavior with the camper and provide an update to their primary contact either by email, phone, or verbally at carpool, depending on the specific circumstances.

For behavior that does not abate, or for more egregious behavioral infractions, camp staff may issue a “Final Warning” after which our “Three Strike” policy will be implemented. The behavior in question will be discussed by phone or in person with the camper’s primary guardian to create a plan of action.

“Three Strike” Policy

Our “three strike” policy is designed to give campers and families a fair chance to correct any repetitive or egregious behavioral infractions. If a strike is issued, the behavior in question will be discussed with the camper as well as the camper’s primary guardian. A written report will be created that includes what happened, what actions were taken, and what behavior we would like to see at camp instead. Campers who accumulate three strikes will be asked to leave camp for the remainder of the Holiday Camp season.

Campers may receive an immediate strike for any behaviors that could be harmful to themselves, other campers, or the animals under our care. These behaviors include, but are not limited to:

- Bodily harm or threats to self and/or others
- Weapons use (i.e. rocks, toys, shoes, etc.)
- Oppositional defiance/excessive insubordination
- Actions that threaten animal welfare

Audubon Nature Institute staff reserves the right to dismiss a camper from Audubon Summer Camp immediately if their actions pose or cause an unsafe situation for themselves, other campers, or Audubon’s staff, animals, or visitors. If a camper receives three written warnings for code of conduct incidents, their caregivers will be contacted, and the camper will be dismissed from camp immediately for the duration of summer camp.

General Camp Policies

Independent Bathroom Use

All campers must be able to use the bathroom independently. Camp staff and CITs are not allowed to assist campers in the bathroom or to help them change in/out of clothing.

Absent Campers

If you know your camper will need to miss a day of camp, please notify us by phone or email as soon as possible—it helps us immensely! While we are not able to offer refunds or make-up camp days, we may be able to set aside any crafts or other activities that your camper was working on.

Sunscreen & Insect Repellant

Sunscreen and insect repellant are important for the protection of each camper, given the outdoor nature of our camp environment. If no sunscreen or insect repellant is provided by the camper family, an Audubon staff

member will administer from our supply as necessary. All families must agree to our sunscreen and insect repellent waiver when registering for camp.

Family Members on Grounds

Camper family members are not allowed to come into the Zoo with their camper. The Zoo will not be open to the public yet, and separating at the gate helps make the camp day transition easier for campers. If you would like to visit the Zoo, you may purchase a ticket and enter through the main admission gate once the Zoo opens.

Outside visitors are not allowed during the camp day. It is important for each camp group to enjoy an uninterrupted day at camp, and a visit from guardians and/or loved ones tends to distract and disrupt the camp curriculum. Don't worry, we do value and encourage family engagement in the camp experience—grown-ups will receive a daily flyer from their camper at dismissal with a summary of the day!

For Audubon Nature Institute Employees: Please limit, and if possible, avoid contact with your camper. This includes lunchtime: please do not bring your camper lunch (especially from Audubon Concessions) or plan to eat lunch with them. This will ensure fair treatment and attention for all campers.

Cash-Free Camp

Audubon Zoo Summer Camp is “cash-free” and will only accept payment for camp add-ons (e.g. merchandise, if offered) by credit card. All major credit cards are accepted. If you are interested in registering for another Audubon camps, please check our website for availability and to register online.

Medical & Behavioral Needs

Audubon Camp Staff provide a fun, safe, predictable, and positive camp experience. If you have any questions or concerns about our camp policies, please let us know! Working together, we can create lifelong memories, inspiration, and empowerment for your camper.

Allergies & Medications

Please notify camp staff if your camper has an allergy, dietary restriction, a potential need for emergency medication (e.g. EpiPens, inhalers, etc.), or any other medical condition that you would like us to be aware of - it helps us make sure that every camper gets the care and attention they need to have a wildly good time at camp!

Food Allergies & Dietary Restrictions

We are not a nut-free camp, but we do ask camp families to send nut-free lunch and snacks whenever possible, and the snacks we provide are nut-free. You are welcome to send an alternative snack with your camper if they have a particular dietary restriction; let us know they have one so we can make sure to have it accessible during our scheduled daily snack time.

Medications

In general, medications are not permitted at camp except for emergency prescriptions (EpiPens, inhalers, etc.). Other medications are only allowed on a case-by-case basis and must be discussed with and approved by Camp staff in advance of the camp week.

Emergency and other approved medications must stay in the camper's possession (e.g. backpack) and must be self-administered by the camper. **Audubon staff members cannot distribute or administer medication.**

IEPs & Camper Aides

Audubon Holiday Camps are traditional camps (not specialized for specific exceptionalities) that welcome all children to join in our explorations of nature. Our camp days are very active and engage campers in a variety of activities with quick transitions and sensory changes throughout the day. All campers are expected to follow directions, adhere to safety rules, and behave according to our Code of Conduct.

If your camper has an IEP or Behavior Plan for school, or requires the use of an aide, let us know! Although we cannot accommodate all needs nor provide one-on-one care for any individual camper, our team will do everything within our capacity to make every child feel welcome and included in a safe environment. If a camp participant requires an on-site full-time aide, prior notification and approval is required.

IEPs

Details of any Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or Behavior Plans used with your child at school can often be very helpful. To best enable our staff to provide your child with a valuable experience, we encourage you to share your camper's IEP with our staff. Relevant information about your camper's needs and supports will be discreetly shared with the appropriate camp staff. Details will not be shared with other campers or camp families.

Camper Aides

If your child requires an aide/shadow/paraprofessional at school, they will also be required to have the support of a professional aide at Audubon Camps. Camp staff are not able to provide one-one-one individualized attention to any camper.

Camper Aides/Shadows must be a paraprofessional, ABA therapist, or other individual who is professionally assigned this role for a camper. Aides/Shadows do not include family members, friends, or other such individuals that want to accompany their camper during the camp day.

All Aides must be approved and successfully pass a background check to participate in our Holiday Camp experience. They can either 1) provide a recently acquired and authorized background check, or 2) complete a background check through Audubon. Email zoedadmin@auduboninstitute.org to request an Aide authorization form and background check.

Other Needs

If there is any other shared information that you feel would help your child have a wild time at camp, please let us know! Working with children is a team sport and we want to do everything we can to support your camper while they're in our care.

Vaccinations & Illness

We encourage guardians to be on alert for signs of illness in their child and to keep them home when they are sick. Audubon Summer Camp reserves the right to refuse entry if a child is exhibiting symptoms listed below or any other signs of a contagious illness:

- Fever of 100.4° or more
- Severe/persistent coughing
- Vomiting
- Sore throat
- Severe headache
- Lice
- Pink eye
- Ringworm
- Staph infection

In the event a camper becomes ill while at camp, staff will notify the registering parent/guardian, followed by those listed as emergency contacts. For the wellbeing of your camper and the safety of other campers in our program, if your child shows any of the above-listed symptoms, you will be asked to pick up your child immediately.

Vaccination Policy

We encourage all camp participants to be up to date on recommended vaccinations. We understand, however, that some minors are unable to be vaccinated or guardians have opted not to have their child vaccinated.

If a medical condition outbreak occurs in the community for which a vaccine is available, Audubon Nature Institute will notify camp families and you will be required to bring proof of immunization of the diseases your camper has been vaccinated against before they will be allowed to return to or attend camp. If an outbreak occurs and your camper is not up to date with their vaccines, they will not be allowed to attend the Audubon Summer Camp Program during the outbreak of the disease they have not been vaccinated against, and no refund will be provided.

At the time of publication this policy does not apply to Covid-19 vaccines. Any changes to this policy will be communicated to camp families.

COVID-19

As we strive to provide the highest quality and safest camp experience possible, Audubon has created a smaller-format, more personalized camp experience. Additionally, we have updated or added safety policies and procedures to reflect current public health mitigation strategies, including:

- Smaller camp groups with higher camper-to-instructor ratios
- Modified drop-off and pick-up procedures
- Routine cleaning and disinfecting practices
- Required face coverings indoors for both campers and staff

Daily Health Checks

All campers are required to have their temperatures checked prior to entering camp each day. No camper with a temperature of 100.4°F or higher will be allowed to attend camp until they have fulfilled our “Return-to-Camp” requirements.

Any camper who arrives to camp with possible COVID-related symptoms, or who becomes symptomatic during the camp day, will be assessed by an Audubon First Responder. Camp staff will reach out to the camper family to discuss the symptoms and coordinate an early pick-up if needed.

These symptoms include:

- Fever (100.4°F +)/feeling feverish
- New loss of taste or smell
- New or worsening cough
- Difficulty breathing
- Nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea
- New or worsening sore throat
- Severe headache, especially if combined with other symptoms

Campers sent home due to possible COVID-related illness will not be allowed to return until they have fulfilled the “Return-to-Camp” requirements.

Reporting COVID-19 Exposures

Please notify us immediately if you become aware of any confirmed COVID-19 cases or exposures in your household occurring within the current CDC exposure window from the last time your camper attended camp on-site. **If a camper has tested positive or been exposed, they will not be allowed to return to camp until they have fulfilled the “Return-to-Camp” requirements.** Pro-rated refunds will be issued for COVID-related missed camp days.

If there is a reported case of COVID at camp, Audubon staff will notify designated guardians and send any affected campers and staff home in accordance with current CDC guidelines. The remainder of that camp week will be cancelled for the affected camp “pods,” and pro-rated refunds for missed days of camp will be issued. Any further closures will be decided on a case-by-case basis by camp leadership.

Return-to-Camp Requirements

If a camper has been sent or kept home due to a potential COVID-related illness, the camper may not return to camp until the following criteria are met:

- Child receives a negative COVID-19 test result
- Child is cleared to return to camp by their doctor

If a camper has tested positive or has had close contact with someone who is COVID-19 positive, regardless of symptoms, the camper may not attend camp until they have fulfilled current CDC quarantine and/or isolation guidelines.

Camper Safety

Audubon staff First Responders are on site from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. each day. Our Security team is on site 24 hours a day at the Zoo.

Audubon camp staff will communicate any emergencies to your camper’s emergency contacts according to the information provided at registration. Please make sure to keep emergency contact information up to date. If you need to update any information at any time, please contact zoedadmin@auduboninstitute.org with those updates.

Camper Supervision & “Rule of Three”

At no time is any camper left unsupervised. To ensure high quality supervision, the camper to staff ratio is 8:1 or better. Staff are screened for excellence in childcare and their ability to provide engaging nature programming. All staff undergo a federal background check and drug test prior to employment and are trained on emergency, fire, animal, and severe weather procedures.

Audubon Camps have a “Rule of Three,” which means that neither staff nor Counselors-in-Training (CITs) are ever allowed to be alone with a camper. As such, campers will always be in a group of at least three individuals, one of which will be either a staff member or a CIT.

Severe Weather

Audubon staff follow all guidelines mandated by Audubon Nature Institute and the City of New Orleans and will take all available precautions to keep campers safe during severe weather events. Severe weather conditions include, but are not limited to, excessive hot or cold temperatures, severe weather, or dangerous driving conditions. In extreme heat situations, defined as a heat index of 100 or above, live animals are prohibited from use in educational programming to ensure their safety.

Refund Policy

Camp registrations are non-refundable, except in the case of an Audubon cancellation or closure. Should you cancel or miss your reserved camp week, please consider your payment a contribution to support Audubon Nature Institute's mission.

- If camp is cancelled by Audubon, we will do our best to accommodate your registration during a different camp week if possible.
- If your child is dismissed from camp due to behavioral issues, you will not be granted a refund and your child will not be allowed to return to camp.
- There are no refunds if your child is sick and misses camp during the program, except for the situations outlined below.

COVID-19 Refunds

If your camp week is fully or partially cancelled by Audubon Nature Institute due to COVID exposure, Audubon will strive to reschedule your camp reservation if possible. If rescheduling is not possible, a pro-rated refund for missed camp days will be issued.

If a child must miss one or more days of camp due to COVID-19 symptoms or exposure, a pro-rated refund will be issued for the missed days of camp.

Refund protocols will be communicated to affected guardians on a case-by-case basis. All cancellation and refund status inquiries must be submitted by email to the Camp Coordinator at zooedadmin@auduboninstitute.org.

Play. Explore. Protect.

We can't wait to explore nature with your wild child at Holiday Camp!