

Animal Diet and Health

What are the considerations for feeding zoo animals?

Animal Care

Learning Outcomes:

At the end of the session:

- ✓ **All students** will understand some of the unique requirements inherent when caring for wild animals.
- ✓ **Most students** will begin to understand the methods used to overcome certain challenges when providing healthcare and diets for certain species.
- ✓ **Some students** will begin to understand how to meet the physiological and psychological requirements for zoo animals to create a balanced husbandry programme.

Session Outline:

The session begins with an introduction to the Secretary of State's Standards for zoo animals, focusing on natural environment and behavior. Feeding animals in captivity is discussed, covering feeding categories, and carnivorous vs. herbivorous diets, with attention to avoiding toxicity and malnourishment. Students learn to evaluate diets and explore animal adaptations for consuming different foods. They then examine faecal samples to identify feeding categories, check consistency, and detect parasites. Veterinary care, behavioral health, and enrichment, including feeding enrichment, are also addressed. The session ends with a zoo tour, where students observe real-world examples and can ask questions to animal keepers.



Curriculum Links

- Balanced nutrition
- Zoo diets vs. wild diets
- Faecal investigation
- Food presentation
- Practicalities of feeding
- Preventative health care