

Phoenix Zoo Scavenger Hunts

Teacher Guide

Looking for something to engage your students when you visit the Phoenix Zoo? Try out these scavenger hunts.

How to Use Scavenger Hunts at the Zoo

Scavenger hunts are designed to help students explore the Zoo like scientists by observing, thinking and making connections. Each scavenger hunt focuses on a specific goal or set of goals. Choose one scavenger hunt as a focus for your class or mix it up and use them all. You do not need to have students complete every item on the scavenger hunt. Focus on meaningful exploration rather than finishing the page.

Choose a Goal

Before starting, decide how you want students to use the hunt. Here are some suggestions.

1. Quick Exploration: Students complete five to eight items.

2. Challenge Mode:

- Bronze: Five items
- Silver: 10 items
- Gold: 15 items, plus explaining two answers

3. Bingo Style: Students get a bingo if they complete:

- Three in a row, up, down or diagonal
- A shape
- Four corners
- The whole board

4. Use Team Roles: Assign roles to keep all students engaged:

- Observer: Finds animals
- Recorder: Writes or sketches
- Navigator: Chooses where to go
- Reporter: Shares answers

5. Focus on Observation, Not Speed:

Encourage students to:

- Observe before writing for three to five minutes
- Sketch what they see
- Talk with their group

You can use prompts such as: "Take your time; scientists don't rush," or "Let's have a moment of science."

6. Add Thinking: For at least a few items, ask students to explain: "I chose this animal because _____.
This helps students connect what they see to what they know.

7. Use Sketching to Slow Down Thinking: Before writing an answer, students can:

- Draw the animal
- Label what they notice

8. Pacing Tips:

- 20 to 30 minutes for one hunt (partial completion is okay)
- Take short "stop and share" breaks:
 - o "What surprised you?"
 - o "What was hard to find?"

9. Give Students Choice:

Instead of doing everything on the page, choice increases engagement. Let students choose:

- Which squares to complete
- Which animals to focus on

Important Reminder

The goal is NOT to fill in every box. The goal is to:

- Observe
- Think
- Make connections

Reflection:

Each scavenger hunt includes optional reflection questions. These can be used during the visit, on the bus ride back or as a post-visit classroom activity.

Before you visit:

Prior to your field trip to the zoo, visit the Phoenix Zoo's website Daily Activities page at phoenixzoo.org/visit/animal-presentations and select the day of the week of your field trip to see what activities are offered that day. Encourage students to attend some of the activities with their chaperones while at the Zoo.

Zoomanji: A Phoenix Zoo Scavenger Hunt

Name: _____ Date: _____

As you tour the Zoo, look for animals that fit the descriptions in the chart. Fill in the name of the animal you find.

Find an animal that lays eggs.	Find a reptile.	Find a mammal.	Find a bird.
Find a fish.	Find an amphibian.	Find an animal who is a herbivore.	Find an animal who is a carnivore.
Find an animal that is nocturnal.	Find an animal with stripes.	Find an animal that has spots.	Find an animal with bright colors.
Find an animal with dull colors.	Find an animal with feathers.	Find an animal that has scales.	Find an animal with fur.
Find an animal that climbs.	Find an animal that swims.	Find an animal that naturally lives in Arizona.	Find an animal that lives in the desert.

Zoomanji: A Phoenix Zoo Scavenger Hunt

Goal: Grouping animals based on observable traits.

Reflection Questions:

1. What traits did you use most often to identify animals? Why?
2. Which animal was hardest to classify? What made it tricky?
3. What patterns did you notice across different animals?
4. How do traits (like fur, feathers, or scales) help animals survive?
5. If you could create your own animal group, what would it be based on?

Machzoo Picchzoo: A Phoenix Zoo Scavenger Hunt

Name: _____ Date: _____

As you tour the Zoo, look for animals and items that fit the descriptions in the chart. Fill in the information below. You can also use the back of this handout.

Observe an animal using behavioral enrichment.	Find an animal with large ears.	An animal that is not in an enclosure. What is it?	Find an animal in the conservation center?
Find a bird with a big beak.	Find an animal that is of least concern conservation status.	Find an animal with a threatened conservation status.	How many species of primate does the Zoo have? What are they?
Find an animal with a vulnerable conservation status.	How many species of big cat does the Zoo have? What are they?	Ask a zookeeper a question and write down the answer.	How many species of eagle does the Zoo have? What are they?
Find the California condor. What is your wingspan compared to the condor?	Find the jaguar habitat. How big is your paw compared to the cats?	Find a bird with webbed feet.	Find a person riding an animal.
Find an example of behavioral enrichment in a habitat	Find an animal that is endangered.	Find the jaguar habitat. What is the conservation message there?	Find an animal that is critically endangered.

Machzoo Picchzoo: A Phoenix Zoo Scavenger Hunt

Goal: Noticing details, enrichment, conservation and Zoo design.

Reflection Questions:

1. What was the most interesting behavior you observed?
2. Where did you see animals using enrichment? What were they doing?
3. How does the Zoo design habitats to help animals stay active?
4. What surprised you about how animals behave in the Zoo?
5. What is one question you still have about an animal you saw?
6. How did what you observed help you understand the animal better?

Don't Zoo Forget About Me: A Phoenix Zoo Scavenger Hunt

Name: _____ Date: _____

As you tour the Zoo, look for animals and items that fit the descriptions in the chart. Fill in the information below. You can also use the back of this handout.

Do you see an animal that is not in a habitat? What is it?	Locate the Safari Cruiser.	Find an animal that is extinct in wild.	Ask a zookeeper a question and write down the answer.
Find a diurnal animal.	Find an animal that lives in the Savanna.	Find an animal who is a scavenger.	Find an animal that lives in the rainforest.
Find an animal with a long neck.	Find an animal with a good sense of sight.	Visit Critter Corner. What animal did you meet there?	Attend a Keeper Chat. What did you learn?
How many primate species are at the Zoo?	How many flamingo species at the Zoo?	Find the orangutan habitat. What is the conservation message there?	Find an animal with a good sense of smell.
Ask a guide a question and write down the answer.	How many animals are covered in stripes?	How many native Arizona species are at the Zoo?	Attend a Feed or Behavioral Enrichment demonstration. What did you learn there?

Don't Zoo Forget About Me: A Phoenix Zoo Scavenger Hunt

Goal: Connecting behavior, habitat and Zoo experience.

Reflection Questions:

1. What did you learn from a Keeper Chat or guide?
2. How do different habitats (savanna, rainforest, desert) affect animals?
3. What behaviors did you see that helped animals survive?
4. Which animal seemed best adapted to its environment? Why?
5. What was something you noticed the second time you looked more closely?
6. How does where an animal lives affect how it behaves?

What Do You Do at the Zoo?: A Phoenix Zoo Scavenger Hunt

Name: _____ Date: _____

As you tour the Zoo, look for people that fit the descriptions in the chart. Ask them, "What do you do at the Zoo?". Record your questions and their answers in the chart. You can also use the back of this handout. Look for people in a Phoenix Zoo uniform or name tag, or visit the Phoenix Zoo's Careers page at phoenixzoo.org/careers for a list of the kinds of jobs available at the Zoo.

Operations and Maintenance	Horticulture	Guide	Zookeeper
Grounds Quality	Marketing	Guest Services	Donor Relations
Human Resources	Accounting	CEO	Volunteer
Conservation Center Technicians or Field Researchers	What are some ways to gain animal experience?	Does it help to work in another capacity at the Phoenix Zoo, such as an entry level position?	If I am interested in more than one job, do I need to submit more than one application or resume?
Education	Does the Phoenix Zoo offer internship or volunteer opportunities?	Veterinarian	Park Ranger

What Do You Do at the Zoo?: A Phoenix Zoo Scavenger Hunt

Job	Your Question	Their Answer

Goal: Understanding Zoo careers and pathways.

Reflection Questions:

1. Which Zoo job interests you the most? Why?
2. What skills do people need to work at a zoo?
3. What surprised you about working at a zoo?
4. How do different jobs work together to care for animals?
5. What is one step you could take if you wanted to work with animals?
6. Did any job seem harder than you expected? Why?

Con-zoo-vation: A Phoenix Zoo Scavenger Hunt

Name: _____ Date: _____

As you tour the Zoo, look for animals and items that fit the descriptions in the chart. Keep an eye out for the conservation status of animals and how the Zoo is helping to conserve animals both in Arizona and throughout the world. Write the information in the chart that fits each description. You can also use the back of this handout.

Find an animal that the Phoenix Zoo helps through conservation efforts.	Find an animal that is critically endangered.	What are some species being supported in the Conservation Center?	Find animal from Asia the Zoo helps to conserve.
Find an animal with a vulnerable conservation status.	Find an animal from Africa the Zoo is helping conserve.	Identify the first animal the Zoo helped conserve	Find the jaguar habitat. What is the conservation message there?
Find an animal from Arizona the Zoo helps to conserve.	Find a bird the Zoo helps to conserve.	Find an animal that is endangered.	Find a fish the Zoo helps to conserve
Find a reptile the Zoo helps to conserve.	Find an animal with a threatened conservation status.	Find a big cat species the Zoo helps to conserve.	Find the orangutan habitat. What is the conservation message there?
Find an animal from Brazil the Zoo helps to conserve.	Find the vulture habitat in Predator Passage. What is the conservation message there?	Find an arthropod the Zoo helps to conserve.	Find an animal that is extinct in the wild.

Con-zoo-vation: A Phoenix Zoo Scavenger Hunt

Conservation Status Tiers

Ordered from extinct to least concern

Conservation Status	Description	Animals at the Zoo
Extinct in the Wild (EW)	Survives only in captivity.	
Critically Endangered (CR)	Extremely high risk of extinction in the wild.	
Endangered (EN)	Very high risk of extinction in the wild.	
Vulnerable (VU)	High risk of extinction in the wild.	
Threatened (NT)	Likely to become endangered in the near future.	
Least Concern (LC)	Lowest risk; widespread and abundant species.	

Goal: Understanding conservation and human impact.

Reflection Questions:

1. Why are some animals endangered while others are not?
2. What patterns did you notice about endangered animals?
3. How is the Zoo helping protect animals? Give one example.
4. Why is it important to protect animals even if they don't live near us?
5. What is one step you could take if you wanted to work with animals?
6. At the Phoenix Zoo we HOWL: Help Out Wildlife! What is one action people can take to help wildlife?