

## Oakland Zoo Browse Donation FAQ's

### What kind of trees do the animals eat?

The animals here eat all kinds of leafy branches, but some species are toxic and so we cannot accept them. Some species are edible but the animals just don't like it! Please see our edibles and toxic list below for details on what we accept or don't accept. If your species is not on the list, we probably don't accept it.

#### PLANTS ACCEPTED

Acacia  
Alder  
Apple  
Baileyana (Feathery Acacia)  
Bamboo – leafy stalks only  
Birch  
Bird of Paradise  
Bradford Pear  
Carob  
Cotoneaster  
Deciduous fruit trees  
Elm (*Ulmus*)  
Eugenia  
Oak  
Olive  
Palm frond (green only)  
Plum  
Poplar  
Maple (Silver, Sugar, Japanese)  
Mulberry  
Sumac  
Sweetgum (*Liquidambar*)  
Willow (*Salix*)

#### PLANTS NOT ACCEPTED (TOXIC)

Bottlebrush  
Conifers  
Eucalyptus  
Elderberry  
California Bay  
Horsechestnut  
Laurel  
Oleander (*Nerium*)  
Maple (Red *Acer rubum*)  
Myrtle  
Pepperwood  
Podocarpus  
Pittosporum  
Privet  
Pyracantha  
Rhododendron  
Walnut  
Juniper  
Guava  
Drosinia  
Pyracantha

### How do I get in contact with a staff member to discuss my donation?

Please call (510) 632-9525 extension 266. Keepers are very busy taking care of the animals, but someone will call you back within 24 hours of your message.

### **I don't know what kind of tree I have, can you help me identify it?**

Maybe. E-mail photos showing the leaves up close and the whole tree to us, and we can try and ID the tree. If it is something we do not recognize then we will not accept it. Unfortunately, we do not have the time or staffing to make house calls to try and identify trees in person.

### **I live 20 miles from the zoo and have a donation. Will you pick it up?**

We can only drive within a ten mile radius of the zoo due to time constraints, but if you have the means to deliver the brush we will always welcome you! We generally do not travel outside of the following cities: Alameda, Berkeley, Castro Valley, Emeryville, Hayward, Oakland, Piedmont, San Leandro, San Lorenzo.

### **What if I'm having a tree company remove or trim tree(s)?**

Consider using our Preferred Tree Companies:

Garcia's Pro Tree (510) 915-0201

Duda Tree Service (510) 531-5261

Jason's Tree Service (510) 717-0609

Green Terra Tree Service (510) 436-5403

Torogoz Landscaping Llc (510) 575-8694

These small, local companies have been working with the Zoo for years and may bring the appropriate edible browse to the Zoo for our animals.

If you are not able to use one of our preferred companies, please let your tree company know in advance that you would like to donate branches to the Zoo. Here is the required criteria:

1. Browse identified as an edible and palatable species
2. No dead/dried brush
3. At least two large pickup truck loads (unless they can deliver)
4. Branches freshly cut within 24 hrs, 5-8 feet in length, no larger than 3-4 inches in diameter, no logs or trunks
5. Browse needs to be staged and neatly stacked in an easy to pick up location. Preferably in a drive way or on the side walk. The keepers are limited in their time for pick-ups since they are busy caring for the animals, so we do not have time to sort through and drag brush from the backyard.

### **Will staff come cut at my house?**

We do not cut at residential households due to time constraints.

### **If I trim my tree, how should I trim the branches?**

Please leave the branches as long as possible, preferably 5-8 feet in length. The animals prefer the branches long and it is also physically easier for the staff to feed out. Choppy, small, branches are difficult to manage.

### **How much do I need to trim?**

In order for us to pick up branches from your household, we will need two large pickup truck loads. Basically the equivalent of our large dump truck, less than that is not worth the time it takes us to do the pickup. However, you can deliver smaller amounts if they meet our browse criteria.

### **Will you clean up the leftovers after you pick up the branches?**

Since the keepers are so limited in time they generally do not have extra time to clean up the leaf litter. However, if it is a tree company cutting the browse and they are willing to leave it overnight for the keepers to pick up the next day, then the keepers will clean up as much as they can. This is leaf litter only, and not any other unusable browse. Please note keepers do not have a leaf blower, so they are only able to rake up left over leaves.

### **I use pesticides/insecticides/herbicides, can you use my tree?**

We only accept trees grown without pesticide/insecticide/herbicide, for the safety of our animals.

### **I cut my tree last week and then saw you were looking for branches...it's available but dry. Do you want it?**

No. We do not accept dead or dried up trimmings. The animals will not eat it. The browse will need to be cut within 24 hours of drop off or pick up.

### **I just cut my trimmings, will you come pick them up today?**

Maybe. Our keepers are very busy caring for the animals, and will call you back within 24 hours of your message being left. We do not guarantee pick up or pick up on the same day. We ask that you call us in advance of trimming your tree. All pick-ups will need to meet the necessary requirements.

### **Will you take the whole tree/everything I trim?**

No, we do not accept branches larger than 3-4 inches in diameter. We are really looking for full, green, long, leafy branches.

### **I'm at the zoo with my trimmings right now, can I drop it off?**

Maybe, if you have arrived between 9am-2:30pm and your browse meets our criteria. A security officer will meet you and call the Animal Care staff on the radio to see if they are available to accept your load. If a keeper is able to meet you at that time an officer will direct you to the proper area and a keeper will meet you to inspect the browse and help you unload if needed. Please be cautioned that the drop off area can be muddy during the winter season and may be difficult to drive a vehicle on. Please wait for staff to arrive before dropping off. It is better if you call in advance so we can plan to be available.

### **What time can I drop off the brush?**

Our Animal Care team are available to accept browse donations between 9am to 2:30pm Monday-Sunday.

### **I just cut my browse but can't drop it off by 2:30pm. What if I can't drop off during the above time frame?**

We ask that you wait until the next day to deliver. All browse needs to be inspected for quality control before it is dropped off.

### **Will I get to see the animals up close if I drop off the brush?**

While we are so happy to accept your delivery, you will not get to see an animal up close or behind the scenes.

### **I contacted you about donating my tree and was told you could not use it, why?**

There are several possible reasons we may not be able to accept a browse donation. If you were in contact with a keeper, they should have explained the requirements. Your tree may have been turned down because it is not on our list, which is usually because it is toxic to our animals. There may also be occasions when we get so many trees donated that we simply cannot accommodate them all and have to turn donations away. We also do not pick up small truckloads.

### **I have excess fruit/vegetables, can I donate those as well?**

Yes, we do accept donations of produce from local residents and farms. However we ask that those are delivered. We will put you in touch with our commissary team to coordinate and get more details.

### **Is my plant donation tax-deductible?**

Yes. Tax deduction receipts are available upon request.

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