

Paleontology in Denali

Denali National Park and Preserve

July 9 - 11, 2021

Course Description

It's been 15 years since the first evidence of dinosaurs was found in Denali National Park. Since then, thousands of tracks and plant fossils have been discovered – and even a few bones – helping to paint a picture of an extinct Cretaceous ecosystem. Join paleontologist Patrick Druckenmiller, Director of the University of Alaska Museum of the North, for an inside look at his current research in Denali to better understand dinosaurs and their environment. In this field-based course, we will learn how to recognize dinosaur tracks and other fossils and test this knowledge by visiting potential new sites. We will also learn some of the paleontological tools-of-the-trade and contribute to real research on Alaskan dinosaurs.

Hiking Distances and Physical Fitness

Field courses are active learning experiences and take place in Denali's wilderness. Hiking will be strenuous, covering distances up to several miles round trip and including as much as 1,500 feet of elevation gain. We will be hiking off trail on steep, rough, uneven, and unstable rocks, tundra, and/or forested terrain and will likely encounter wet tundra / forest conditions and stream crossings with water levels that are above hiking boots. **Participants must be in good physical condition.** If you are uncertain about your physical ability for this course, please contact us for more information.

Times and Location

Participants meet at the long term/RV parking lot near the Denali Visitor Center, located at mile 1 of the Park Road. Check-in starts at 6:30pm on Friday and the group will begin traveling to the field camp by 7:00pm. The group will return to the park entrance area around 4pm on Sunday.

Lodging and Meals

This course is based out of the Murie Science and Learning Center Field Camp, located 29 miles inside Denali National Park along the Teklanika River. The Field Camp includes rustic tent cabins and outhouses. Meals are simple and healthy and will be served take-out style.

Accreditation

The University of Alaska Anchorage offers one professional development credit (level 500) for an additional \$74 fee. The 10% membership discount does not apply to the credit fee.

Questions?

More detailed information about this course, including Covid mitigation, can be found by opening the other documents in the "course details" tab on the website.

If you have other questions, please contact the Murie Science and Learning Center by email courses@alaskageographic.org or by calling (907) 683-6432.