

Denali's Alpine Wildlife

Denali National Park and Preserve

July 19 - 21, 2024

Course Description

We are living in a time of unprecedented change. Alaska is changing rapidly due to a warming climate and organisms that live in Denali's alpine areas are experiencing conditions that they haven't encountered before. Join National Park Service wildlife biologist Carol McIntyre on daily hikes into Denali's alpine ecosystem, home to Dall sheep, collared pikas and more. We'll learn about the many ways that scientists are studying how alpine species and ecosystems are responding to a rapidly warming climate. In the evening, we'll talk about our observations and learn more about the cascading effects of climate change.

Hiking Distances and Physical Fitness

Field courses are active learning experiences and take place off trail in Denali's wilderness. Hiking will be strenuous over extremely rugged, steep, unstable, and uneven terrain, covering distances of 3 - 5 miles round trip with as much as 2,000 feet of elevation gain. Because this course will explore Denali's alpine ecosystem, participants should be prepared to traverse extremely steep and exposed talus slopes along narrow sheep trails, and potentially across snow fields and cold glacially fed rivers and streams. Participants should be prepared to hike up and down steep slopes and scramble across narrow ridges at higher elevations. **Participants must be in very good physical condition and should not have a fear of heights.** If you are uncertain about your physical ability for this course, please contact us for more information.

Times and Location

Participants meet at the Murie Science and Learning Center, located at mile 1 of the Denali Park Road. Check-in starts at 6:00pm on Friday. The course begins at 6:30pm and 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.

Accreditation

The University of Alaska Anchorage (UAA) offers one professional development credit (level 500) for an additional \$79 fee. You must register for the credit directly with UAA. Please see our website for registration directions.

Questions?

More detailed information about this course 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@akgeo.org or by calling (907) 683-6432.