

Wildlife Tracks and Signs

Denali National Park and Preserve
July 11 - 13, 2025

Course Description

Learn how to read stories on the landscape using the science and art of wildlife tracking. With expert tracker Mike Taras, we will explore Denali to find the tracks and signs of all animals, large and small. We'll learn how to look for tracks and signs and then learn key factors in their identification. We'll study the gaits of different animals and the track patterns they leave on the ground. We'll also learn about aging tracks, animal behavior, observation skills, and more! As we sharpen our senses and observational skills, the landscape will come alive with the evidence of our wild neighbors. After learning about the natural history of Denali throughout the weekend, you'll take home the knowledge and skills that will help your study of wildlife tracks and signs into the future.

Hiking Distances and Physical Fitness

Field courses are active learning experiences and take place off trail in Denali's wilderness. Hiking will be moderately strenuous over uneven tundra, forest, and river bar terrain, covering distances of up to 3 - 5 miles round trip with as much as 1,500 feet of elevation gain. We will likely encounter wet tundra / forest conditions and minor stream crossings. **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 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) 683-9632.