



Denali's Alpine Wildlife



Dates

July 17-19, 2026



Difficulty

Level 4



Elevation Gain

Up to 1500 feet



Hiking Distance

Up to 5 miles per day

Course Description

High above tree line, where life survives on the edge, alpine ecosystems are warming and changing faster than almost anywhere on Earth. In these unique environments, home to specialized wildlife like pikas and marmots, these changes can dramatically alter the lives of the animals living there. Join wildlife biologist Jennifer Wall for a behind-the-scenes look at her research on the interwoven effects of a rapidly warming climate on alpine species. We'll hike into Denali's alpine ecosystem and learn all about the animals that live there while looking and listening for signs of their presence. We'll get hands on experience collecting data used by scientists to document alpine wildlife distributions and explore the innovative ways scientists are studying how alpine species and ecosystems are responding to a changing world.

Difficulty Level 4

You must be physically prepared to hike off-trail up to 5 miles each day, at a comfortable pace, with climbs up to 1500 feet. Expect uneven footing, wet boggy tundra, dense undergrowth, loose rocks, and stream crossings less than knee height. Good coordination is recommended.

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 cabins and outhouses. Meals are simple and healthy.

Professional Development Credit

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? Email courses@akgeo.org or call 907-771-8485