



# Discovering Denali's Micro Wilderness



## Dates

July 10-12, 2026



## Difficulty

Level 4



## Elevation Gain

Up to 1500 feet



## Hiking Distance

Up to 5 miles per day

## Course Description

Denali is well known for its large mammals and big mountain, but a closer look reveals a vast micro wilderness waiting to be discovered. Denali's insects, spiders, and other arthropods play a critical role in Denali's ecosystems and have only recently been the subject of more in-depth research. Join Jessica Rykken, former entomologist at Denali and now the Entomology Collections Manager at the Museum of the North, and Adam Haberski, former graduate student at UAF and current Collection Manager at Mississippi Entomological Museum for a behind-the-scenes look at their five-year arthropod study and an exploration of this fascinating world. We'll visit several sites along an elevational transect to learn about the different insects found there and the important roles they play in Denali.

## 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](mailto:courses@akgeo.org) or call 907-771-8485