



Paleontology in Denali



Dates

June 12 - 14, 2026



Difficulty

Level 5



Elevation Gain

Up to 2000 feet



Hiking Distance

Up to 5 miles per day

Course Description

It's been over 20 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.

Difficulty Level 5

You must be physically prepared for brisk, destination-oriented off-trail hiking up to 5 miles each day, with climbs up to 2000 feet. You should be physically conditioned to do these hikes comfortably. Expect loose rock, uneven footing, dense undergrowth, steep hillside traverses, and stream crossings lower than knee height. Good coordination is required.

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