2017
Rocky Mountain Conservancy
Field Institute
EDUCATIONAL ADVENTURES
IN ROCKY MOUNTAIN NATIONAL PARK
Rocky Mountain Conservancy
The Rocky Mountain Conservancy was established in 1931 to provide educational literature to Rocky Mountain National Park visitors. Its founders hoped to stimulate interest in the park's natural and cultural history. As a nonprofit organization allied with the National Park Service, and now with Colorado State Parks, the U.S. Forest Service, the Bureau of Land Management and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Conservancy has developed special programs through the Rocky Mountain Conservancy – Field Institute to cultivate enthusiasm for our public lands.

Conservancy – Field Institute Adventures
Welcome to the Rocky Mountain Conservancy – Field Institute adventures! It's our 55th year offering exciting, in-depth and educational field-based learning experiences in Rocky Mountain National Park. Discover and explore a wide range of topics, custom educational adventures, special classes, youth and family programs, and courses on hiking and skill-building, photography, art, natural history and cultural history. For more information about specific classes, view the different course descriptions in the catalog or online at RMConservancy.org. Tell a friend and share this great experience!

Rocky Mountain National Park serves as a premier classroom without walls. This spectacular landscape encompasses montane meadows, subalpine forests and alpine tundra rising from trout-filled streams and glacier-carved valleys to the summit of Longs Peak at 14,259 feet.

The Rocky Mountain Conservancy's Field Institute program is committed to educating the public through the talents of excellent instructors. Most classes include lectures and field trips that enable participants to experience the park in an atmosphere of personal instruction. Most classes require hiking, introducing an element of difficulty because of the high altitude and variable weather. Participants must be in good health and arrive equipped for sudden weather changes.

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Key:
RMNP, Rocky = Rocky Mountain National Park

Call 970-586-3262, or visit RMConservancy.org to register.
Registering for a Field Institute Program

Registrations can be made online at RMConservancy.org or by telephone at 970-586-3262. Members of the Rocky Mountain Conservancy receive a discount on most adult Field Institute programs and tours. To receive this discount immediately, join the Conservancy when you register. Registered participants will receive a syllabus for each class.

Programs are cancelled one week before the scheduled meeting date if minimum enrollment has not been met. Please register early!

Register Online: RMConservancy.org
Register by Phone: 970-586-3262

Refund Policy

Cancellations received at least 14 days prior to the start of a class will qualify for a refund minus a cancellation fee of $25 per participant for a one-day class and $50 for a multi-day class, $5 per kid’s class and $15 per bus tour seat. Cancellations received less than 14 days prior to the start of the program will not generate a refund. If the Field Institute cancels a program, every effort will be made to place the participant in another class; otherwise, a full refund will be given. A $10 fee will be charged for switching classes.

Become a Member and Save!

Conservancy members receive 5% off all classes (except kids’ programs), as well as 15% off items in the Conservancy’s Nature Stores in the park and at our online Nature Store.

Become a member and save — and make a difference to Rocky Mountain National Park! Visit RMConservancy.org to learn more.

The Rocky Mountain Conservancy gives special thanks to the following photographers for contributing their images for this catalog: Rachel Balduzzi, Marlene Borneman, Cynthia McKee Brady, Crystal Brindle, Ann Duncan, Geoff Elliot, Lyn Ferguson, Liza Grant, Phyllis Holst, Lee Kline, Sharon Mitchell, Lisa Thompson, Bella Oleksy, Dick Orleans, Janice Stout, Larry Van Sickle, Randy Traylor, Jim Ward, Madeline Wilson, Jo Wurst and www.jeremiahsr.com.

Cover photos (clockwise, upper left): Marlene Borneman, Marlene Borneman, Jo Wurst, Jim Ward

Thank you!

Visit RMConservancy.org for more information.

How Strenuous Is My Class?

A significant portion of most field classes is spent outdoors, and programs are held rain or shine. Mountain weather can be unpredictable, so be prepared for sudden weather changes. Rainwear, comfortable hiking boots or shoes, layers of clothing, and hat and gloves are standard gear for summer classes. Participants should also carry plenty of drinking water to prevent dehydration, nausea and dizziness, which are common at the park’s elevation.

Participants must honestly evaluate individual levels of physical fitness. Participants assume full responsibility for their safety, provide their own health and accident insurance, and must sign a health/risk and hold-harmless waiver.

Level I: Short-distance walks on maintained trails and/or indoor classroom sessions in accessible buildings 
Level II: Short-distance walks throughout the day primarily on level terrain 
Level III: Moderate hikes of less than five miles per day with elevation gain of less than 1,000 ft. 
Level IV: Hikes of more than five miles per day with elevation gain of more than 1,000 ft. 

Earn Credit with Field Institute Programs!

Teachers can receive teacher recertification units for full-day and multi-day classes, as approved through the Centennial Board of Cooperative Education Services (BOCES). Each full day of class time is equal to 0.5 unit of credit. Credit fees are in addition to class fees and are $25 per semester or threaded series of classes. For more information on threads and additional credit details, visit RMConservancy.org.

University credit is available from Colorado School of Mines (CSM) for some full-day and multi-day classes. A complete listing of classes eligible for teacher recertification credit through CSM can be found on page 28 of this catalog. Additional credit details are available by calling the Field Institute at 970-586-3262.
Custom Educational Adventures

Custom programs designed especially for your group near Estes Park and Grand Lake

On-demand:
Day-trek Adventures with the Rocky Mountain Conservancy

Starting at $20 per person
Various Instructors

Select from a variety of educational opportunities including geocaching, hiking with a naturalist, bus tours and photography. These half- to full-day classes are designed to introduce youth, families and other groups to the wonders of nature through guided discovery. You select the day and the topic, and we will provide the exploration and learning.

On-demand:
Stream Ecology & Fly-fishing

$125 per person
(minimum 2 people)
Instructor: Dr. Tom Adams

Enjoy customized stream ecology and fly-fishing classes designed to match both your level of experience and preferred level of physical activity. Find solitude within a half-mile of popular trailheads, or hike deep into the backcountry to access remote lakes and streams. Discuss aquatic insect life cycles, how to match the natural hatch with artificial fly selection, stream-side stealth, casting techniques and ethics for preserving Rocky’s pristine stream ecology.

( Fly-fishing rods, reels and flies will be provided.) ◆◆◆

On-demand:
Wintertime Wonders Bus Tour

$250 for up to 4 people;
$50 per each additional adult;
$25 per each additional child ages 12 and under
Various Instructors

Rocky is an amazing place to visit during the winter as elk and deer graze along the road, and snow-capped peaks rise majestically in the distance. Join a naturalist guide on a trip through the park in wintertime. From the comfort of a heated 14-passenger bus or 12-passenger van, guests can experience the serenity of areas such as Trail Ridge Road (to Many Parks Curve) and the Bear Lake Road corridor. On-demand options include short walks of the group’s choice and/or a modified schedule to meet the needs of individual participants.

Entrance into Rocky Mountain National Park and complimentary hot beverages are included in the registration fee. Ask for details when you register.

On-demand:
Motor Coach Tour with Step-on Naturalist Guide

Enjoy a custom tour of Rocky Mountain National Park from the comfort of your own vehicle! The Rocky Mountain Conservancy will provide a naturalist guide to meet your vehicle at the Beaver Meadows Visitor Center or the Fall River Visitor Center. Let us tailor a program just for your group.

Prices for vehicles of 7 or more people:
0-4 hours/half day $240
4-8 hours/all day $360

Price does not include entrance fee to Rocky Mountain National Park.

Adventure Awaits!
Contact us to arrange your Custom Adventure this summer.

Call 970-586-3262, or visit RMConservancy.org to register.
Journey to the Top!
A Trail Ridge Road Bus Adventure
Dates: June 7, 8, 14, 15, 21, 22, 28, 29; July 5, 6, 12, 13, 19, 20, 26, 27; August 2, 3, 9, 10, 16, 17, 23, 24, 30, 31; September 6, 7, 13, 14
$75 per adult;
$45 per child ages 12 and under
One of the premier attractions of Rocky Mountain National Park is Trail Ridge Road, the nation’s highest continuous paved highway. Trail Ridge Road meanders through various life zones on its way through the park and over one of the largest, most pristine stretches of alpine tundra in the lower 48 states. Participants receive a unique overview of the park’s history, flora, fauna and the cultural history of Rocky at a number of pullouts, before arriving at Rock Cut to view the sunset over the Never Summer Mountains. Participants will have opportunities to take photos while enjoying the comfort of a 14–passenger mini-bus or 12–passenger van. ◆
Entrance into Rocky Mountain National Park is included in the registration fee. Ask for details when you register.

Sunset Safari:
An Educational Adventure by Bus
Dates: June 9, 16, 23, 30; July 7, 14, 21, 28; August 4, 11, 18, 25;
September 1
$50 per adult;
$25 per child ages 12 and under
Take a sunset safari over Trail Ridge Road to experience the changing light, active wildlife, and the calmness of dusk with an ascent in elevation from 7,522 feet in Estes Park to more than 12,090 feet. Along the way, a professional education guide will lead interpretive walks and talks to discuss geology, flora, fauna and the cultural history of Rocky at a number of pullouts, before arriving at Rock Cut to view the sunset over the Never Summer Mountains. Participants will have opportunities to take photos while enjoying the comfort of a 14–passenger mini-bus or 12–passenger van. ◆◆
Enterance into Rocky Mountain National Park is included in the registration fee. Ask for details when you register.

NEW!
From Meadow to Tree Line:
An Educational Adventure by Bus
Dates: June 11, 18, 25; July 2, 9, 16, 23, 30; August 6, 13, 20, 27; September 3, 10
$50 per adult;
$25 per child ages 12 and under
It’s easy to get swept up by the stunning views of the high country and overlook the interesting things occurring in the meadows and forests below. Join our naturalist guide on a 14–passenger mini-bus or 12–passenger van, and revel in the lower elevations of Rocky Mountain National Park. Spend the morning in the park’s most distinctive and breathtaking locations, including the Alluvial Fan, Many Parks Curve, Moraine Park, and discover the details in the forests and meadows as we discuss the cultural and natural history of Rocky Mountain National Park. ◆◆
Enterance into Rocky Mountain National Park is included in the registration fee. Ask for details when you register.

Grand Lake Safari:
An Educational Adventure by Bus
Dates: June 13, 20, 27; July 4, 11, 18, 25; August 1, 8, 15, 22, 29
$95 per adult;
$55 per child ages 12 and under
Rocky Mountain National Park contains breathtaking scenery, abundant wildlife viewing, and opportunities to connect with the past along Trail Ridge Road, the awe-inspiring byway across the Continental Divide. Participants will receive a unique overview of the park’s history, flora, fauna and geology while viewing landscapes from the comfort of a 14–passenger mini-bus or 12–passenger van. Stops include Rainbow Curve, the Alpine Visitor Center, Milner Pass, Holzwarth Historic Site, and the historic town of Grand Lake. ◆
Both lunch and entrance into Rocky Mountain National Park are included in the registration fee. Ask for details when you register.
Old Fall River Road Trip:
An Educational Adventure by Bus
Dates: July 7, 14, 21, 28; August 4, 11, 18, 25; September 1, 8, 15
$75 per adult; $45 per child ages 12 and under

Travel in Rocky was not always as simple as it is today. Join us from the comfort of a 14–passenger mini-bus or 12–passenger van as we switchback through time to traverse the park’s oldest road up to the Alpine Visitor Center and back down to Estes Park via Trail Ridge Road. Old Fall River Road (built in 1914) will bring us to the hard-to-reach regions of the park to see spectacular waterfalls and historic buildings. View the handiwork of our past that has been intricately paired with engineering feats of today. Enjoy a visit to the Alpine Visitor Center before returning to Estes Park along awe-inspiring Trail Ridge Road.

Elk Expeditions
Dates: September 7, 8, 9, 11, 14, 15, 16, 18, 21, 22, 23, 25, 28, 29, 30; October 2, 5, 6, 7, 9, 12, 13, 14
$50 per adult; $25 per child ages 12 and under

The fall rut is a spectacular display of elk mating behavior featuring bugling, posturing and herding displays. This extraordinary event will be available for viewing from the comfort of a 14–passenger mini-bus or 12–passenger van staffed by a professional educational guide who will discuss elk ecology, interpret activity and answer questions about elk. Elk artifacts such as antlers, skulls and fur will be available for participants to see and touch.

NEW!
From Elk to Aspen:
An Educational Adventure by Bus
Dates: September 14, 15, 16, 21, 22, 23, 28, 29, 30; October 5, 6, 7, 12, 13, 14
$50 per adult; $25 per child ages 12 and under

It’s impossible to ignore the magic of fall in the Rockies, as morning sunlight glows through golden aspen leaves and elk bugles echo in the distance. Experience these autumnal wonders from the comfort of a 14–passenger mini-bus or 12–passenger van on a journey in Rocky Mountain National Park. Join a professional naturalist guide on a morning excursion to discover the plants and animals and wanderers and settlers of the park; learn how Rocky’s inhabitants are shaped by this rugged climate.

Entrance into Rocky Mountain National Park is included in the registration fee. Ask for details when you register.
Youth & Family Classes

Winter Ecology: A Snowshoeing Trek for Kids & Families

Dates: January 21; February 4, 11; March 4, 18
$15 per adult/child; Children 5 and under FREE
Instructor: Olson Fellow

Discover the serene beauty of Rocky Mountain National Park in the winter during this four-hour snowshoe hike. This fun and educational program will lead participants through snow-covered pine, spruce and fir forests to learn how plants and animals survive winter using unique adaptations and keen survival skills. Learn about the properties of snow, and get outside to enjoy it yourself! ◆◆◆

Lions, Coyotes & Bears! Oh, My!

Dates: June 15; July 7 (Grand Lake), 13, 27
$15 per child ages 4-6
Instructor: Bailey/Olson Fellow

What does it take to be a predator in Rocky Mountain National Park? Take a look through the eyes of these mysterious animals. Through adventures in various habitats, the creation of a handmade predator, and other fun activities, kids will learn all about the sneakest animals in Rocky Mountain National Park and what it is like to walk in their paws. ◆◆

Entrance into Rocky Mountain National Park is included in the registration fee. Ask for details when you register.

Upper Beaver Meadows Nature Hunt: A Virtual Geocache Adventure

Dates: June 20; July 4, 18; August 1
$15 per child ages 9-13
Instructor: Bailey/Olson Fellow

Using a GPS unit, discover the natural treasures along the Upper Beaver Meadows trail. Follow the clues left in nature to uncover the hidden mysteries located in this upper montane ecosystem. This class is designed for kids and parents who want to spend time in Rocky Mountain National Park learning about nature while enjoying the adventure and fun of practicing a new skill. (This class is recommended for first-time geocachers.) ◆◆

Entrance into Rocky Mountain National Park is included in the registration fee. Ask for details when you register.

Kids’ Art in the Park

Dates: June 21; July 5, 19; August 2
$15 per child ages 6-10
Instructor: Bailey/Olson Fellow

During this series, students can unleash their creative potentials through various art forms including photojournaling, painting, sketching, and crafting. These artistic activities will allow students to see the world through a new lens and discover that Nature is truly an artist. Each day will focus on a different art medium, offering a new perspective and skill set.

Rocky Mountain National Park is one of our world’s most beautiful places, and this is an opportunity to take home your very own piece of it. ◆◆

Who Pooped in the Woods? A Mammal Mystery

Dates: June 22; July 6, 14 (Grand Lake), 20
$15 per child ages 7-12
Instructor: Bailey/Olson Fellow

Who doesn’t love a good mystery? This program will have kids solving real-life mysteries from start to finish. They will learn to recognize different animal signs like scat (a fancy word for poop) and tracks, and make a cast of an animal track to take home. ◆◆

Visit RMConservancy.org for more information.
Bugs, Beetles & Butterflies: Tiny but Amazing Creatures of Rocky
Dates: June 22; July 20, 21 (Grand Lake); August 3
$15 per child ages 4-6
Instructor: Bailey/Olson Fellow
Bugs often are seen as annoying and gross, but they actually are quite extraordinary! They are able to lift impressive weights, fly great distances, and jump to astonishing heights. Learn the basics of our little bug friends through art and exploration as we capture bugs with nets, study them with magnifying glasses and create our own bugs to take home. Learn what bugs are and what they need to live; it may shock you to discover what our tiniest of neighbors are capable of doing! ◆◆

Kids’ Fly-fishing & Stream Ecology
Dates: June 23; July 7, 21; August 4, 11 (Grand Lake)
$25 per child ages 7-15
Instructor: Rachel Balduzzi
Fly-fishing is a sport that dates back centuries, and it draws beginners and seasoned anglers alike to Rocky Mountain National Park. Kids have a unique opportunity here to learn what fly-fishing is about — what lives in the riparian ecosystem, the aquatic food web, fly-casting techniques — and, finally, to dip their lines. (All fly-fishing gear will be provided.) ◆◆

Entrance into Rocky Mountain National Park is included in the registration fee. Ask for details when you register.

Family Astronomy: More than Just the Big Dipper
Date: June 24
$40 per adult;
$20 per child ages 12 and under
Instructors: Deborah & Paul Price
While astronomy can seem intimidating, this introductory course is geared to families who would like to explore the constellations, the size of the universe, moon phases, and seasonal sky gazing. Enjoy fun interactive activities, and end the evening with observations of the sky through telescopes (weather permitting). (This class is designed for families with children ages 6 and up.) ◆◆

Entrance into Rocky Mountain National Park is included in the registration fee. Ask for details when you register.

NEW!
Cloudy with a Chance of...Groppel?
Mysterious Weather of the Mountains
Dates: June 27; July 11, 25;
$15 per child ages 7-12
Instructor: Bailey/Olson Fellow
The Rocky Mountains are known to have some unique and extreme weather patterns. Just as boulders direct water in a river through many twists and turns, mountains direct air masses to create some magnificent weather trends. Explore how air movement in the mountains contributes to various weather patterns, and create your own weather models to observe natural phenomena that are normally observed high in the sky. ◆◆

Entrance into Rocky Mountain National Park is included in the registration fee. Ask for details when you register.

What’s Hiding Underwater?
Dates: June 28; July 12, 26, 28 (Grand Lake)
$15 per child ages 8-12
Instructor: Bailey/Olson Fellow
Kids have a natural curiosity about water and want to examine living things up close. Using a microscope and hand lenses, they will explore some of the microscopic organisms along the shallow waters of the Sprague Lake shoreline. Bugs, worms, algae and snails are just a few of the things that may be found in the water along with some very small creatures such as amoeba, euglena and paramecium. They also will discuss the role different organisms play in the food web. ◆◆

Entrance into Rocky Mountain National Park is included in the registration fee. Ask for details when you register.

Call 970-586-3262, or visit RMConservancy.org to register.
NEW!
**Geology Rocks!**
Dates: June 29; July 13; August 3
$15 per child ages 7-12
Instructor: Bailey/Olson Fellow

Discover what puts the “rock” in Rocky Mountain National Park during this geologic adventure. When visiting Rocky, folks routinely drive by, walk on or overlook hundreds of different kinds of rocks scattered throughout the landscape. Take a closer look at these cool rocks, and discover their origins and how to identify specific rocks and minerals in the park. Explore the Alluvial Fan, one of the most recognizable geologic landforms within the park, and create your own pieces of geologic history to take home. 

*Entrance into Rocky Mountain National Park is included in the registration fee. Ask for details when you register.*

NEW!
**Plants for Young Sprouts**
Dates: June 30
July 14, 28; $15 per child ages 4-6
Instructor: Bailey/Olson Fellow

Do plants drink, even if they don’t have mouths? Do they sweat, even though they don’t have foreheads? Do all of Rocky Mountain National Park’s creatures have fur, feathers or scales? In fact, some of the oddest, most-curious creatures have bark and blossoms! Encourage your young sprout to discover what Rocky’s leafy giants and human visitors have in common in this hands-on, exploration-based program. Kids will leave with their own woodland creature handmade from plant materials.

*Entrance into Rocky Mountain National Park is included in the registration fee. Ask for details when you register.*

NEW!
**Rocky Mountain History Hike**
Dates: July 19; August 2
$15 per child ages 9-13
Instructor: Bailey/Olson Fellow

Explore Rocky’s history on a naturalist-guided hike to the once-active Eugenia mine. Discover some colorful characters in Rocky’s past who shaped the landscape, and explore how the first settlers in this area used the land before ultimately working to protect it. Learn about the Colorado gold rush, homesteading and ranching in the Estes Valley, and hear highlights of the life of Enos Mills, the “father” of Rocky Mountain National Park.

*Entrance into Rocky Mountain National Park is included in the registration fee. Ask for details when you register.*

**Campfire Ghost Stories:**
**Living History Tales of the West**

People from the past come to life in these hour-long presentations portraying the colorful history and adventures of past residents and visitors to the Estes Valley. Join these characters as they recount tales of humor, exploration and danger, and discover what life was like for them during their stay in and around Rocky Mountain National Park. Time for questions and roasting marshmallows at the campfire will follow the presentation. *Meet at the Moraine Park Discovery Center Amphitheater.*

**Iron Thumb - June 15**
$15 per adult/child, children 5 and under FREE
Instructor: Jan Manning (Iron Thumb)

Iron Thumb is a fictitious character representation of a 19th century fur trapper of the West. Participants will hear tales of hunting beaver, view the historical clothing of the times, and see the tools that trappers used to get their jobs done.

**Miner Bill & the Blue Mist: An Estes Park Legend - June 22**
$15 per adult/child, children 5 and under FREE
Instructor: Kurtis Kelly (Miner Bill)

Thousands of visitors have been intrigued and entertained by the Blue Mist legend since it was first told in the 1940s at places like the Fall River Lodge, Sted’s Ranch and the livery of the YMCA of the Rockies. A fictional tale about a real-life figure from this area’s past, the story holds references to local history as well as allusions to the natural, yet strangely sudden, weather phenomena that occur near mountain valleys and ridges.

**Enos Mills - July 6**
$15 per adult/child, children 5 and under FREE
Instructor: Kurtis Kelly (Enos Mills)

Enos Mills’ 1884 arrival in Colorado at age 14 was the start of a lifelong reverence for the mountains and nature. Five years later, a chance encounter with John Muir inspired him to wonder: could he do for the Rocky Mountains what Muir did for Yosemite? Hear the dramatic story of Enos Mills in this first-person narrative evoking a time when grizzlies and wolves still roamed Colorado and a national park was an elusive dream.

**Rocky Mountain Tales of Survival - July 13**
$15 per adult/child, children 5 and under FREE
Instructor: Kurtis Kelly (various characters)

Hear thrilling tales of adventure from pioneers facing perilous encounters and daring escapes. Abner Sprague recounts the 1896 camping trip that left his party lost in a blizzard above timberline. The Earl of Dunraven comes face-to-face with a mountain lion. Joe Mills describes a midnight rescue on wind-whipped Longs Peak, and a snow-blinded Enos Mills makes a dangerous descent from the Continental Divide.

Visit RMConservancy.org for more information.
Avalanche Awareness & Outdoor Safety in Winter
Dates: January 13; February 10
$40 per adult
Instructor: Russell Hunter
Discover and explore how, when, where and why avalanches are likely to occur in Rocky Mountain National Park. Following a classroom overview of avalanche phenomena, participants will travel to Hidden Valley for a two-hour hike to study the snowpack and terrain aspects of avalanches and review the basics of avalanche rescue techniques.◆◆

Winter Survival Skills
Date: February 4
$80 per adult
Instructor: Doug Hill
From the original inhabitants of the Americas to mountain men to modern-day recreationists, people have passed through these mountains (or called them home) for thousands of years. Examine contemporary, historic and prehistoric strategies for surviving in the Rockies — even in winter. Explore basic survival needs for short- and long-term survival situations; then, put skills to the test outdoors by building a shelter and making fire in the snow.◆◆

Technology of Your Ancestors:
Primitive Survival Skills
Date: May 6
$80 per adult
Instructor: Doug Hill
Every person alive on the planet today descended from ancestors who survived — and thrived — in the Stone Age. In fact, more than 99% of our time as a species was spent in the Stone Age. In this class, students will explore how the three innovations of creating fire, a sharp edge and cordage from plant fibers changed the face of the world forever. Following an overview of the peopling of the Earth and what these innovations look like in the archaeological record of Colorado, we’ll create fire, stone tools and cordage for ourselves. The day will wind down with a look at how these primitive technologies can be used to provide for many other survival needs.◆◆

Life Signs: Tracking the Invisible
Date: May 12
$80 per adult
Instructor: Kevin J. Cook
A swelling on a twig or a hole in a stem, a stray feather or a piece of eggshell, an abandoned nest or a mound of soil: so many different things tattle the comings and goings of secretive creatures that otherwise remain invisible. Discover the process of acquiring, then developing, the observation skills necessary to read wild life signs as if they were a newspaper.◆◆◆
(CSM credit available)

Orienteering for Beginners: Map & Compass Basics in RMNP
Date: May 20
$40 per adult
Instructor: Peggy Ellis
This course is intended for the recreational hiker who has little or no experience reading a topographic map or working with a compass. Learn about map sources, map vintage, next generation U.S. topo maps by U.S.G.S. and map symbology. Learn to read contour lines, recognize landforms, calculate percent and angle of slope and become familiar with compass components, compass bearings and correcting for magnetic declination. More topics include overland navigation via map and compass and triangulation. The class will combine indoor instruction with outdoor practice at a nearby location. (All materials provided, with compasses available for loan)◆◆

Call 970-586-3262, or visit RMConservancy.org to register.
NEW!
Hike with a Naturalist:
Tundra Ute Trail
A Grand Lake-area Class
Date: July 29
$50 per adult
Instructor: TBA
Enjoy breathtaking views as you hike across the alpine tundra from Milner Pass to the Alpine Visitor Center and back on a Native American foot trail. On the return, learn about alpine ecology, geologic formations and the science of weather as the trail winds downward toward Poudre Lake and the Continental Divide. Explore how tundra inhabitants prepare for winter and enjoy the changing landscape while spending most of the day above tree line. ◆◆◆◆

NEW!
Find Your Way There — & Back!
GPS Basics
Date: August 6
$80 per adult
Instructor: Peter Price
Recreational travelers with little or no experience using a GPS and/or GPS owners who would like to gain a greater understanding of your receiver: learn how to use the GPS with hard copy topographic maps and with digital maps from the web. Topics include: GPS functions and limitations; GPSs in your hand and in your car; demystifying datums, projections and grids; plotting waypoints at home and in the field. An understanding of topographic maps is helpful but is not required. Learn to navigate the backcountry with greater confidence. (All materials provided with a few GPS receivers available for loan) ◆◆◆◆
(CSM credit available)

NEW!
Hike with a Naturalist:
Ouzel Lake
Date: August 12
$50 per adult
Instructor: TBA
Enjoy a leisurely hike through Wild Basin to Ouzel Lake. Walk along the beautiful North St. Vrain Creek; learn about the many plants that grow along the water’s edge, and visit the lovely Calypso Cascades and the stunning Ouzel Falls. Observe and learn how the land recovers from fire as the trail climbs through the 1978 burn; then, savor the splendor and wildness of Ouzel Lake. ◆◆◆◆

NEW!
Hike with a Naturalist:
Boulder Brook Loop
Date: August 26
$50 per adult
Instructor: TBA
Traverse the Glacier Gorge, North Longs Peak, Boulder Brook and Glacier Creek Trails in Rocky Mountain National Park. This spectacular loop features views of the Continental Divide, rushing waterfalls, lush aspen and pine forests as participants wind their way through a lush subalpine ecosystem. Autumn foliage may just be evident as participants enjoy this memorable journey in a beautiful, less-traveled area in Rocky Mountain National Park. ◆◆◆◆

NEW!
Hike with a Naturalist:
Bridal Veil Falls
Date: September 9
$50 per adult
Instructor: TBA
The Cow Creek Trail provides a lovely walk through meadows flanked on either side by rock outcroppings and pine forests. Stroll through these meadows, past an historic homestead and along a babbling creek to Bridal Veil Falls, and learn about the cultural history of the area. Early ranching and tourism operations by the McGraw family will be discussed, along with some natural history lessons about the plants and wildlife activity in the area. ◆◆◆◆

Visit RMConservancy.org for more information.
Photography, Art & Writing Classes

Photographing Winter Landscapes
Date: February 24-26
$300 per adult
Instructor: Eli Vega

Photography should be fun, not just scientific! In this interactive, inspirational and fun course, learn both the technical and the fun sides of photography – with an emphasis on fun. On the technical side, learn about depth of field techniques, focusing, exposure range challenges and filters. On the fun side, learn about composition, creative in-camera techniques, use of lenses, and discover the unique beauty found in winter scenes. In-the-field photography will include Sprague Lake, Bear Lake, Nymph Lake and, depending on conditions, Dream Lake. This workshop is suitable for beginning, intermediate and advanced photographers who want to explore the nonlinear side of photography. ◆ ◆ ◆

NEW!
Beginning Watercolor for the Nature Enthusiast
Date: May 13
$80 per adult
Instructor: Karen Ramsay

Start your watercolor journey through learning the fundamentals of the watercolor medium and an exciting method of applying paint in a fresh and vibrant way. The day will be spent learning varied techniques, setting up a palette of colors, and studying the importance of shapes and values. This information will be the jump-start you need to become a watercolor artist in nature, both indoors and out. ◆

Sketchbook Journaling: Wilderness, Wildlife & Wonder in Watercolor
Date: June 8-9
$160 per adult
Instructor: Karen Ramsay

Toss your sketchbook and some simple tools into your daypack, and explore Rocky Mountain National Park! Through guided exercises and free exploration, create a record of personal, authentic interaction. Learn (or sharpen) some basic sketching and observation skills; then go to various locations in the park to put these skills to work. Approaches will include simple sketching with pencil, ink, and colored pencil or watercolor. Guided activities for observing, sketching, and some (brief) writing will help participants discover the many ways they interact with their environments. (Beginners are welcome and encouraged.) ◆ ◆

This Is for the Birds! When, Where & How to Photograph Wild Birds
Date: June 16-18
$300 per adult
Instructor: Lee Kline

Wild birds fascinate most of us with their colors, behavior and beauty. Equally, capturing great images of birds in the wild can be maddeningly frustrating! This course will introduce photographers of all experience levels to methods and acceptable behavior for photographing wild birds. The photographic equipment and techniques to further understanding, development and enjoyment of making great images of birds will also be studied. ◆ ◆

Painting the Kawuneeche: A Beginners’ Watercolor Class
A Grand Lake-area Class
Date: June 24-25
$160 per adult
Instructor: Donna Lyons

This two-day class is for beginner painters and those who have little experience with painting in watercolor. The beauty of the Kawuneeche Valley with its meadows and wildflowers, streams, river and wild life will be our inspiration. Learn how to handle brushes and how to make strokes that express your ideas; learn to mix color and use the color wheel; learn how to incorporate very basic composition, design, value patterns and structure into your work. ◆ ◆

Call 970-586-3262, or visit RMConservancy.org to register.
Watercolor Brushstrokes: Painting the Landscapes of RMNP
Date: June 29-30
$160 per adult
Instructor: Karen Ramsay
Learn the techniques to capture the park’s landscapes in watercolor. Open your eyes to the surrounding beauty, and learn ways to paint skies, mountains, water, trees and much more. Basic drawing skills and familiarity with watercolor skills are required. This class will consist of part classroom and part field location.

Day-tripping Photography: A Day in the Field
Photographing Wildlife
Dates: July 2; August 20
$140 per adult
Instructor: Lee Kline
Spend a day in Rocky Mountain National Park with your camera, photographing whatever wild creatures may be encountered. This course will allow photographers of all experience levels to become more familiar with their equipment and photographic techniques for outdoor situations, and it will further their understanding, development and enjoyment of making great images in the outdoors.

Painting the Kawuneeche: An Intermediate Watercolor Class
A Grand Lake-area Class
Date: July 22-23
$160 per adult
Instructor: Donna Lyons
This class will move beyond the basics to a deeper understanding of aerial and linear perspectives, simplifying shapes, linking values and more exciting compositional choices to challenge and take paintings to the next level. The Never Summer Mountains will be the backdrop to developing the art of seeing abstractly for more dynamic and stronger compositions. Work with analogous, complementary and discordant colors as a way of thinking about value and intensity and as a step towards more expressive use of color.

Photographing the “Small Wonders” of RMNP
Date: August 3-5
$300 per adult
Instructor: Eli Vega
For the past 100 years, Rocky Mountain National Park has provided us with majestic mountain vistas, stunning reflective lakes, iconic elk, moose, bear and other wildlife in their natural habitats. The park also offers a variety of “small wonders” for its millions of annual visitors. Learn to look for, find and photograph the many, often-overlooked small wonders in Rocky Mountain National Park.

NEW! Night Sky Landscape Photography
Date: August 25-27
$300 per adult
Instructor: Stan Honda
Don’t put your camera away over the sun sets! There’s a whole different park to photograph when the stars come out, and you don’t need a telescope. Learn various techniques and camera settings useful to photograph the Milky Way, the moon, the stars and other objects in the night sky using digital cameras and standard lenses. We’ll discuss how to plan shots using star charts, software, and apps to determine what will be seen in the night sky. (This course is best for photographers of intermediate level and above.)

Participants should have a digital SLR or mirrorless camera with interchangeable lenses that allows manual adjustments to the settings.

Visit RMConservancy.org for more information.
Call 970-586-3262, or visit RMConservancy.org to register.
Coyotes: Song Dogs of the West
Date: March 25
$80 per adult
Instructor: Jared Gricoskie

Coyotes are among this country’s most successful and resourceful predators. Often misunderstood and maligned, the coyote has profound impact on our everyday life. Explore the natural history of North America’s second largest canine, Native American stories, coyote discovery by Lewis and Clark, and the animal’s expansion to the East. Examine the coyote’s anatomy and biology; then, head into Rocky Mountain National Park to explore coyote habitat, social structure and interactions. Learn how the coyote interacts with the ecosystem, its prey and humankind, and how wolves could impact coyotes in the future. ◆◆◆

North with the Spring: Bird Migration
Date: April 29
$80 per adult
Instructor: Jeff Maugans

April in the high country is when we welcome back birds that have wintered in warmer climates. Ducks, shorebirds, warblers, swallows, flycatchers, sparrows, sapsuckers, bluebirds and many others return for the nesting season or stop to refuel before heading farther north. Explore several locations in and around Estes Park and Rocky Mountain National Park to identify as many species as possible by sight and sound while learning about each bird’s unique natural history. ◆◆◆

(CSM credit available)

There’s More to This Place than Meets the Eye: 100 Years of Environmental Change in RMNP
Date: May 5
$80 per adult
Instructor: Dr. Ellen Wohl

This course provides an overview of the history of environmental change in the park with an emphasis on human-caused change. Discuss the history of mining, water engineering, recreational development and tourism, atmospheric inputs of dust and nitrates, wildlife management, and climate change in the context of protecting and restoring natural environments within the park. Understand how past human activities influence contemporary ecosystems and options for management of natural resources within the park. ◆◆◆

(CSM credit available)

Life Signs: Tracking the Invisible
Date: May 12
$80 per adult
Instructor: Kevin J. Cook

A swelling on a twig or a hole in a stem, a stray feather or a piece of eggshell, an abandoned nest or a mound of soil: so many different things tattle the comings and goings of secretive creatures that otherwise remain invisible. Discover the process of acquiring, then developing, the observation skills necessary to read wild life signs as if they were a newspaper. ◆◆◆

(CSM credit available)

Hawks in Flight: Birds of Prey
Date: May 13
$40 per adult
Instructor: Jeff Maugans

The diversity of birds of prey in Estes Park and Rocky Mountain National Park during spring is impressive. In a few hours of field time, it’s possible to locate turkey vulture, osprey, golden eagle, bald eagle, Cooper’s hawk, sharp-shinned hawk, northern goshawk, red-tailed hawk, prairie falcon, peregrine falcon and more. Our focus will be on this group of diurnal hunters, but we’ll not ignore the opportunity to observe other spring migrants and year-round resident species as well. Join the discussion about the birds’ natural history as we watch and enjoy these magnificent predators. ◆◆◆

(CSM credit available)

Visit RMConservancy.org for more information.
NEW!

Night Creatures & Evening Adaptations

Date: May 19
$80 per adult
Instructor: Kevin J. Cook

Wild life so familiar by day can seem so different when experienced by night, and wild life unknown in the light of day can suddenly become familiar in night’s darkness. Enrich your wild life experiences by listening to voles shuffling through leaf litter, to insects that seem extraordinarily loud in twilight’s golden hush; smell wildflowers that time their fragrance to attract nocturnal pollinators. The naturalist who would experience the full richness of wild life must learn to perceive the world by scent and by sound as well as by sight. Discover the skills needed to engage life after dark. ◆◆

Nature’s Engineers: Beavers

Date: May 20
$60 per adult
Instructor: Jared Gricoskie

Beavers play an extremely important part in the Rocky Mountain ecosystem. Delve into their daily lives, social structure, and construction of dams and lodges. Follow in the footsteps of Enos Mills around Estes Park as we visit beaver colonies described in his book, In Beaver World. Explore the interplay of the beaver with other species like aspen, willow, elk, trout, birds and even wolves. Each species is in some way connected to the survival and health of the beaver in Rocky Mountain National Park. As the day wanes, we will observe these fascinating creatures as they begin their evening activities. ◆◆

Birds at Twilight

Date: May 25
$40 per adult
Instructor: Jeff Maugans

Twilight marks the transition time when nocturnal birds become active. While many daytime species still can be located, Wilson’s snipes, owls, common nighthawks and common poorwills start their nightshift hunting at dusk. Explore the haunts of these elusive birds, and discuss their natural history and ecology as we visit, search and listen. ◆◆

North American Eagles

Date: June 3
$80 per adult
Instructor: W. Perry Conway

Colorado has both North American eagle species, as does Rocky Mountain National Park. Explore the evolution, ecology, behavior, anatomy and population status of both the bald and the golden eagles through a professional illustrated lecture. A beautiful live female golden eagle, with a 7’ wing span, will be present to provide a rare look at this magnificent bird up close. A short trip to nearby nests to see what kind of habitat is needed for reproduction will be included. Though we will drive as close as possible to nest sites, participants should come prepared for short hikes to the best viewing areas. ◆◆
(CSM credit available)

Summer Birding with a Naturalist

Dates: June 8, 15, 29; July 6, 20
$40 per adult
Instructor: Jeff Maugans

Spend the morning discussing the migration, nesting, habitats, conservation, natural history and ecology of mountain birds. Have fun in the field while learning to identify, enjoy and appreciate these feathered beings. Learn to identify as many species as possible by sight and songs/calls to develop a good sense of what birds are nearby. ◆◆

Call 970-586-3262, or visit RMConservancy.org to register.
Plant & Wildflower Identification with a Naturalist

New Flower Families!

Dates: June 14, 21, 28; July 12, 26; August 9
$40 per adult
Instructor: Kevin J. Cook

Join a professional naturalist to explore the diversity of Rocky Mountain National Park's wildflowers. Each week we’ll focus on a different family, learning identification skills, unique characteristics, life cycles and interesting facts about common and not-so-common species found in the area.

NEW!
Predator/Prey: A Dynamic Relationship in the Web of Life

Date: June 16
$80 per adult
Instructor: Jeff Connor

Animals are always around us but often go unnoticed since much of their activity occurs off trails, at night, or early or late in the day. Do you know how to read the signs they leave behind? Study predator/prey dynamics, and learn to read signs left behind by predators and prey. Get a better understanding of community ecology and wildlife dynamics in Rocky Mountain National Park. Participate as a citizen scientist in Rocky, and collect information that will be added to a park dataset gathered by other citizen scientists.

Edible & Medicinal Plants of the Rockies:
Plants for Hunger & Health

Dates: June 23; July 7; August 18
$80 per adult
Instructor: Abby Schreiber

Explore the flora of the park with a former RMNP interpretive ranger and Master Herbalist. Focus on plants that have been used historically as food and medicine and those in current use by Native American tribes. Herbal remedies based on popular traditions, herbal lore and cultural customs will be complemented with knowledge of therapeutic value discovered by scientists for a holistic portrayal of medicinal plants found in the Rocky Mountains. Discover the edible plants, their pharmacology, identification, conservation and ethics surrounding their harvest and use. Seeds and berries will be discussed at the August class.

Unexpected Beauty: Orchids of RMNP

Date: June 10
$80 per adult
Instructor: Kevin J. Cook

The orchids comprise the world's second most diverse family of wildflowers; yet, perceived as plants of tropical rainforests, they can seem out of place in the Rocky Mountains. Learning that perhaps as many as 30 orchid species grow wild in Colorado seems remarkable enough, but finding orchids growing wild in RMNP makes the place seem all the more magical. In some places, certain orchids may be among the park's most abundant wildflowers. Learn what botanical traits make a wildflower an orchid; then, take that information afield to find them; once we find them, we'll discuss their connectedness to other wild life.

Birds of the Kawuneeche Valley
A Grand Lake-area Class

Date: June 17
$80 per adult
Instructor: Jeff Maugans

This all-day birding excursion will begin with a brief indoor session followed by a day spent in the field within Rocky Mountain National Park. We will identify birds by sight and voice and learn about their natural history. This is prime time to find birds nesting, and we expect to locate woodpeckers, bluebirds, swallows and wrens at their cavity nests. We will break for lunch at a restaurant in Grand Lake and then resume our field explorations in the Kawuneeche Valley.

(CSM credit available)

(CSM credit available)

(CSM credit available)

(CSM credit available)

(CSM credit available)

Visit RMConservancy.org for more information.
Secret Places in Rocky Mountain National Park
New Locations!
One Grand Lake-area Class
Dates: June 23 (Grand Lake); July 14; August 11
$40 per adult
Instructor: Kevin J. Cook
A prudent sense of safety keeps us looking at the ground as we walk, and trails trick us into looking straight ahead to see what’s coming. The consequence of these habits is that we miss what’s around. Marvelous old trees, spectacular wildflower assemblages, hard-to-find animals, and other wild life surprises can remain hidden in secret places near the trails that allow us to pass through unaware. Explore just off familiar beaten paths with a mind for discovering the natural richness that bestows character on place. ◆◆

NEW!
For Wildflower Enthusiasts: Using a Dichotomous Key
Date: June 24;
$80 per adult
Instructor: Marlene Borneman
Confused and overwhelmed by the plant terminology and keys in field guides? Both beginning and intermediate wildflower enthusiasts will appreciate this opportunity to learn to decode dichotomous keys with a seasoned naturalist. Gain an understanding and ease with using the keys, first in the classroom and then in the field. Stretch your skills and build confidence to key plants and wildflowers in Rocky! ◆◆ (CSM credit available)

Wildflowers of RMNP
Date: July 1–2
$160 per adult for both days or $90 for each day
Instructor: Leanne Benton
Explore the wonder and diversity of the park’s wildflowers with a former Rocky Mountain National Park interpretive naturalist. The park’s vertical topography allows for a variety of habitats; this class will search out lush wildflower displays from montane meadows to high alpine ridges. Get up close with the mountain flora to discover their adaptations for survival and interesting stories behind their beautiful faces. Hone identification techniques, and gain confidence using a flower key. Day 1: montane and subalpine wildflowers; Day 2: alpine wildflowers. ◆◆ (CSM credit available)

In Pursuit of Rocky’s Ten Most Interesting Insects
Date: July 1
$80 per adult
Instructor: Kevin J. Cook
Butterflies enthrall people, mosquitoes exasperate people, several thousand insects go unnoticed, and a few nifty insects catch our attention by serendipity. The amazing pine sawyer that lands on your shirt sleeve, the beautiful blue pleasing fungus beetle that crawls across the log where you sit, the sweat-bee that pollinates orchids, the robber-fly that prevents pollination, and ants that squeak — such insects tell the stories of life and living in Rocky Mountain National Park. This field class will concentrate on finding, identifying and understanding a select few insects with interesting ecological connections. ◆◆ (CSM credit available)

Birding the Life Zones
Date: July 8–9
$160 per adult
Instructor: Jeff Maugans
Rocky Mountain National Park is a birder’s paradise during the nesting season. This two-day class will explore the various ecosystems (life zones) of the park to find 50-70 bird species. We will identify hawks, falcons, eagles, ducks, white-tailed ptarmigans, brown-capped rosy-finches, swallows, tanagers, sparrows, warblers, American dippers, wrens, woodpeckers, owls, nuthatches, chickadees, kinglets, jays, common ravens and other corvids, and a number of other members of the area’s avifauna. We will discuss the natural history of both the birds and the montane, subalpine, alpine, and riparian environments they inhabit. ◆◆◆ (CSM credit available)

Call 970-586-3262, or visit RMConservancy.org to register.
Macroinvertebrates: The Underwater World of Insects & Other Small Creatures in RMNP

Date: July 14
$80 per adult
Instructor: Dr. Boris Kondratieff

Learn basic identification and biology of the insects most commonly encountered in freshwater habitats of RMNP. Focus on identification of aquatic insects and other insects often associated with streamside vegetation and important aspects of their biology, such as life cycles, habitat preferences, feeding habits, adaptations to environments and functions in ecosystems. ◆◆◆

(CSM credit available)

North American Bears: Ecology, Behavior & Evolution

Date: July 15
$80 per adult
Instructor: W. Perry Conway

Bears are the iconic symbol of the American wilderness, and North America has three of the world’s eight species. Historically, the park had two of the three – now only one. Learn the natural history of all three North American species – their evolution, behavior and habitat needs. Through illustrated classroom sessions and field trips, learn which areas of the park provide proper black bear habitat, what they eat, their population status and where to view and safely photograph North American bears. ◆◆

(CSM credit available)

NEW!

What’s Going to Happen to Our Park?
Unraveling the Climate Change Knot

Date: July 16
$80 per adult
Instructor: Dr. Tim Kittel

The prospect of rapidly changing climate and landscapes should give us pause. Will our grandchildren see the same birds and wildflowers, play among the magnificent ponderosa, and hear and watch the bugling elk and chirping pika? Spend a day in the field exploring how vulnerable nature is to a shifting climate and explore the management of park resources in the face of such change. This class is for anyone seeking a greater understanding of the big issues facing this national park gem. ◆◆

(CSM credit available)

RMNP Butterflies: East of the Divide

Date: July 16
$80 per adult
Instructors: Dr. Paul Opler & Evi Buckner-Opler

Butterflies are easily observed in every life zone of Rocky Mountain National Park. Learn basic butterfly biology, behavior and identification. In the field, visit several different habitats on the east slope of the park to search for summer species, such as pale swallowtail, blues, several fritillaries, hoary comma and Weidemeyer’s admiral. Learn to identify these species, and also discuss their life histories and ecology, host-plant associations and conservation concerns. Observation will rely on binoculars and digital photography; however, the instructor will have a net-and-release permit to allow participants a close-up look at a variety of species. ◆◆

(CSM credit available)

NEW!

Alpine Superheroes: Survival in a Land of Extremes

Date: July 17
$80 per adult
Instructor: Leanne Benton

“The combination of heavy snowfall, bitter wind, low temperatures, and mountainous topography in alpine areas creates the most severe climate in the world,” writes alpine researcher Joyce Gellhorn in her book Song of the Alpine. In the extreme environment of the alpine tundra where humans are only seasonal visitors, a diversity of plants and animals survive and thrive. Explore the physical factors of climate and topography that challenge life and the survival strategies of alpine plants and animals. ◆◆

(CSM credit available)

Visit RMConservancy.org for more information.
Hummingbirds:
Field Research
East of the Divide
Date: July 17
$60 per adult
Instructors: Tena & Fred Engelman
Marking individual hummingbirds remains essential to assess population size, migration corridors and survival. Genetic and statistical analyses are complementing and expanding understanding of these important migratory pollinators. Learn about Rocky’s hummingbird populations and their habitats while observing field ornithologists as they safely capture and band these remarkable birds. Visit typical habitats, observe and identify types of food sources, and learn about factors influencing hummingbird survival. ��

NEW!
Algal Blooms in the Alpine:
Investigating the Role of Global Change on Mountain Lakes
Date: July 20
$80 per adult
Instructor: Isabella Oleksy
Recent research shows abundant algal growth along the shores and lake bottoms of The Loch and Sky Pond in RMNP. Join a park researcher to learn about her study to determine what environmental factors contribute to the growth of algae in clean, clear waters. Through patterns in response to temperature, light and lake water chemistry, learn how climate warming in alpine ecosystems is predicted to influence ecosystem and nutrient inputs from melting glaciers and rock glaciers. Discover how Bella’s research fits into the larger context of changes in lakes all over the world. ��

Hummingbirds:
Field Research
West of the Divide
A Grand Lake-area Class
Date: July 20
$60 per adult
Instructors: Tena & Fred Engelman
Marking individual hummingbirds remains essential to assess population size, migration corridors and survival. Genetic and statistical analyses are complementing and expanding understanding of these important migratory pollinators. Learn about Rocky’s hummingbird populations and their habitats while observing ornithologists in the field as they safely capture and band these remarkable birds. Visit typical habitat, observe and identify types of food sources, and learn about factors influencing hummingbird survival. ��

NEW!
Geology in the Park:
Reading the Rocks to Discover the Past
Date: July 21
$80 per adult
Instructor: Dr. David Lindsey
Discoveries made during the 18th century still inform how geologists read rocks. They are 1) the present is the key to the past, 2) the Earth is much older than people thought, and 3) rocks can form from cooling magma. Participants will examine common rocks and minerals to see how they form deep in the Earth’s crust, discuss the tectonic forces that brought them to the surface, and observe the weathering processes that recycle them back into the Earth. Learn about mountain formation, and explore and discuss geologic time, radiometric dating, plate tectonics and Earth history. ��

( imaginary)

(CSM credit available)

Bighorn Sheep:
Ecology & Management
Date: July 21
$80 per adult
Instructor: Jeff Connor
The bighorn sheep is the symbol of Rocky Mountain National Park and the state of Colorado. It represents the majestic rugged mountains of the park. Discover the ecology of bighorn sheep, how to distinguish a ram from a ewe, a yearling from a lamb, what they eat and how to age sheep by the rings on their horns. Visit two mineral licks to explore their importance to the sheep’s survival, and discuss important park management issues related to bighorn sheep. ��

( imaginary)

(CSM credit available)
**Rocky's Other Plants**  
Date: July 22  
$80 per adult  
Instructor: Kevin J. Cook

Wonderful as they are, wildflowers are not the only plants out there. Mosses provide nesting material for American dippers and house those amazing little tardigrades. Horsetails descend from plants that decomposed to form the coal we need. Lycopods grow here and there but go largely unnoticed. Ferns exude an innate aesthetic appeal. Conifers define the character of our treelands. From moss gardens to spruce forests, Rocky's other plants enrich the diversity of land and water. This field class will cover the details of diversity, methods for finding, and procedures for identifying the lesser-known plants of Rocky Mountain National Park. ✦✦

(In CSM credit available)

**NEW! Engaging Nature through All the Senses**  
Date: July 29  
$40 per adult  
Instructor: Kevin J. Cook

Wind makes aspen leaves and conifer needles whisper, but they do so in different voices. In flight, some birds' wings whistle, some trill, some buzz, and some are silent. Subalpine fir and balsam poplar both enrich the air after a summer rain. Wood nymph and pipsissewa contend for the most beautiful fragrance of all our wildflowers. A fresh gumweed defines what sticky is, and an old mushroom defines what slimy is. Being truly outdoors involves more than what the eyes can see. Explore how using all our senses can enrich our time engaging nature. ✦✦

(In CSM credit available)

**Mushrooms & Other Fungi**  
A Grand Lake-area Class  
Date: August 12  
$80 per adult  
Instructor: Kevin J. Cook

Long regarded as atypical members of the plant kingdom, the fungi are now classified in a separate kingdom of their own. Mushrooms are so visible and figure so prominently in foods and drugs that we tend to think of mushrooms as the fungi themselves. But they aren’t. Rather, a mushroom is merely the reproductive structure of a much more expansive organism. Learn what fungi are and are not, the attributes that make a creature a fungus, and the challenges to be faced in recognizing one fungus from another. ✦✦

(In CSM credit available)

**Geology of the Western Slope**  
A Grand Lake-area Class  
Date: August 12  
$80 per adult  
Instructor: Keith Graham

The western part of Rocky offers a grand opportunity to see some of the oldest rocks in Colorado and some beautiful examples of very recent (geologically speaking) glacial features. Learn how geologists interpret the nature and history of the rocks and the processes that created and formed them. Look far back in time and deep into the Earth to understand how metamorphism changed sediments into the 1.75-billion-year-old schists and gneisses that dominate western RMNP’s bedrock. Examine the effects of tectonic forces that began more than 60 million years ago and caused these rocks to be heaved more than two miles above sea level. ✦✦

(In CSM credit available)

Visit RMConservancy.org for more information.
NEW! Vanishing Ice: An Ice-Age History of RMNP
Date: August 19
$80 per adult
Instructor: Dr. Jason Janke

Much of today’s magnificent scenery in Rocky is attributable to the erosional effects of glaciers. Beginning at the terminal moraine of an ancient glacier, explore Old Fall River Road through its U-shaped canyon and up into its cirque eight miles away, observing depositional and erosional features along the way. Returning with several stops along Trail Ridge Road, many interesting glacial and periglacial features will be highlighted. Participants also will locate and offload real-time temperature measurements as part of a research project examining permafrost and freeze-thaw patterns. ◆◆◆
(CSM credit available)

NEW! The Life & Times of Moose
A Grand Lake-area Class
Date: August 19
$80 per adult
Instructor: Kevin J. Cook

Moose naturally occurred in Colorado then naturally vanished from the state long before people brought them back. Thus the moose has a prehistory and a history in this region plus a natural history as well. By distinguishing biological realities from cultural perceptions, we will clarify both the taxonomic relatedness and the ecological context of the moose as a species. ◆◆◆
(CSM credit available)

NEW! Mountain Lion: RMNP’s Top Predator
Date: August 19-20
$160 per adult
Instructors: Caroline Krumm & Dr. Don Hunter

Explore mountain lion ecology, ongoing research, human-mountain lion interaction, and community stewardship of wildlife resources during morning lectures followed by hands-on instruction in the field. Demonstrations of research methods, tools and data collection will be included with practical instruction on how to “read” the signs left by mountain lions. Mountain lion safety, current research techniques, key management issues, and how communities across the West are becoming involved also will be discussed. ◆◆◆
(CSM credit available)

NEW! The Hidden Forest: Exploring an RMNP Ecosystem
Date: September 2
$80 per adult
Instructor: Jeff Maugans

A forest is much more than a collection of trees. Forests hold secrets that provide food, medicine, clean air and oxygen and help combat climate change through their carbon-storing capabilities. Explore and discover the interactions that take place every moment between insects, fungi, birds, mammals and other inhabitants of this dynamic community. ◆◆
(CSM credit available)

NEW! The Persevering Pika: Secrets of Alpine Survival
Date: September 2
$80 per adult
Instructor: Chris Ray

Watch the American pika demonstrate its alpine survival strategy. Pikas and their hibernating neighbors — yellow-bellied marmots, chipmunks and squirrels — are easy to watch in the summer and fall as they forage among the alpine wildflowers. Learn to spot different animal behaviors that provide clues to surviving the long, cold winter. Pikas don’t hibernate, so you’re sure to learn a few survival tips from these resourceful little beasts. ◆◆◆
(CSM credit available)

Call 970-586-3262, or visit RMConservancy.org to register.
There’s More to This Place than Meets the Eye: 100 Years of Environmental Change in RMNP
Date: May 5
Instructor: Dr. Ellen Wohl
(See description under Natural History Classes, p. 16.)

Hidden History: A Billion Years of Rocky Mountain National Park
Date: June 24-25
$160 per adult
Instructor: Mary Taylor Young
Cover a billion years of park history — in a weekend! Discover traces of park history that lie beneath the surface and off the beaten path. See billion-year-old rocks, and examine a game drive wall used by prehistoric hunters. Tour the Apache Fort site of an early Indian battle, and visit the 1915 RMNP dedication ceremony site. Discover the “phantom” Big Thompson River park entrance and old entrance road, and explore early ranches, the last remnant of a guest lodge and the site of the park’s ski area. Witness the changes floods in two different centuries have left on the park, and wander inside an elk enclosure to see 21st century wildlife management in action.

NEW!
Rocky’s West Side Stories: Kawuneeche Valley History
A Grand Lake-area Class
Date: July 8; August 4
$80 per adult
Instructor: David Lively
This all-day tour will provide an overview of the region’s past through a brief lecture-and-discussion format and visits to historical sites of significance. Sites will range from an ancient Indian battlefield to an Indian racetrack, mining towns to early homesteads, road construction camps to CCC-built restrooms. Explore numerous historical locations in the Kawuneeche Valley area to discover the outlines of settlement and change over the past 11,000 years.

Campfire Ghost Stories: Living History Tales of the West
Iron Thumb June 15
Legend of the “Blue Mist” June 22
Enos Mills July 6
Rocky Mountain Tales of Survival July 13
$15 per adult/child children 5 and under FREE
(See description under Youth & Family Classes, p. 10.)

Visit RMConservancy.org for more information.
NEW!
Historic People & Places
Centennial Tour:
Estes Park, the Estes Valley & RMNP

Date: July 8
$80 per adult
Instructor: Dr. James Pickering

Study the history of the Town of Estes Park, the Estes Valley, and Rocky Mountain National Park, all of which share an interrelated history. Travel to downtown Estes Park to learn about the platting and early development of “the Village.” Visit multiple sites in the valley, including the site of the Joel Estes-Griff Evans ranch, the Earl of Dunraven’s Estes Park Hotel and the Highlands Hotel. Visit other sites, including that of the 1915 Dedication, the Fall River Lodge, and the cabins where convicts spent the winter of 1913 while beginning construction of Old Fall River Road. Additional park sites at lower elevations will conclude the day. ◆ ◆

NEW!
The Civilian Conservation Corps: Shaping Rocky through Service

Date: July 15
$60 per adult
Instructor: Dr. James Pickering

Learn about the era of the Civilian Conservation Corps and its years in RMNP in this half-day session in the park. Following an historical overview discussion of the CCC, visit three campsites in Little Horseshoe Park and Hollowell Park. Those who wish to do so can bring a sack lunch and continue the discussions of the morning into the afternoon. ◆ ◆

NEW!
Rocky Mountain History Hike

Dates: July 19; August 2
$15 per child ages 9-13
(See description under Youth and Family Classes, p. 10.)

NEW!
The Ghost of Old Fall River Road

Date: August 13
$80 per adult
Instructor: Mary Taylor Young

Did you know the west side of the old route of Fall River Road still lies like a phantom between Trail Ridge and Grand Lake? Fall River Road opened in 1920, Rocky’s first through-highway across the Continental Divide. Eclipsed by Trail Ridge Road, it was closed and partly obliterated in the 1930s. After 50 years, Old Fall River Road was reopened to traffic, but only on the east side. Learn the secret history of Old Fall River Road, and discover its ghosts. Retrace the road, from Horseshoe Park to Milner Pass. Learn about the convict cabins, compare historical photos with the landscape today, and discover what happened to this landmark road on the west side. ◆ ◆ ◆

(HSM credit available)

Historic Structures & People of the Kawuneeche Valley
A Grand Lake-area Class

Date: August 20
$80 per adult
Instructor: Thomas Andrews

Using built environments — buildings, fences and roads — explore the human and environmental history of the Kawuneeche Valley: the transformation of RMNP’s west side from a Native American homeland to American settlement and inclusion in the national park system. Afield, participants will encounter and interpret the material vestiges of Ute inhabitation, mining, homesteading, water diversion, dude ranching and federal preservation. Discussion will revolve around the ways in which people and the valley environment have shaped each other over the centuries. ◆ ◆

(CSM credit available)

Call 970-586-3262, or visit RMConservancy.org to register.
Dr. Tom Adams – Tom has prowled RMNP since 1959, exploring backcountry lakes and streams in all seasons of the year. Formerly an elementary school teacher, he now spends his days astring and well skiing. Tom guides fly-fishers for Scot’s Sporting Goods in Estes Park (20 years), writes an outdoors column for The Greeley Tribune, and recently spent over 25 years as a teacher in Denver public schools.

Thomas G. Andrews – Thomas is an associate professor of history at the University of Colorado-Boulder and specializes in the social and environmental history of the American West. His book, Killing for Coal: America’s Deadliest Labor War (2008), won six awards, including the Bancroft Prize. His book, America’s Deadliest Labor War, has been translated into Dutch.

Kevin J. Cook – Since 1974, Kevin has explored Colorado to experience its wild life firsthand. He writes nature columns for newspapers and magazines, edits technical articles for scientific publications, leads wildlife observation tours into the Colorado’s various wild life classes, and presents monthly lectures at several Colorado venues.

Geoff Elliot – Geoff manages the Conservation Corps program for the Rocky Mountain Conservancy. He graduated from the University of Montana with a degree in philosophy focused in environmental ethics and philosophy.

Margaret (Peggy) Ellis – Peggy spent 25 years with the U.S. Geological Survey. During past years, she assisted with and taught map-and-compass and GPS classes. She also teaches classes at the Bass Pro Shop in Denver and in several parks around Denver.

Tena and Fred Engelman – Tena and Fred are volunteer field researchers and recently concluded RMNP’s first survey of hummingbird species and habitats, providing new insight into hummingbird behavior, courtship, courtship, and nesting area fidelity, migration routes and timing, and populations. Their work and research is useful for ornithologists, resource managers and park interpretive personnel.

Suzie Garner – Suzie is an art department head and professor of art at Colorado Mesa University. She also is a designer, oil painter and avid sketchbook artist. She is the executive director of Rocky Mountain Wildflowers, and, as a member of the Colorado Native Plant Society, won the photo award for Native Plant Landscapes in 2013. Marlene is working toward her Native Plant Master Colorado Colora Certificate.

Dr. Jeff Connor – Jeff retired after 25 years as a natural resources specialist in Rocky Mountain National Park where he was involved with bighorn sheep research and management. He also worked in Canyonlands National Park in Utah and was responsible for the reestablishment of desert bighorn sheep in Arches National Park.

W. Perry Conway – Perry has been a professional nature photographer for more than 30 years. His work has been published in every major wildlife and nature magazine published in North America. He is a former biology teacher with an M.S. degree in curriculum development in outdoor education.

Dr. Doug Hill – Doug is the founder and director of Gone Feral School of Primitive and Traditional Skills, which uses experiential workshops in the “old ways” to connect people with the natural world. A former high school industrial arts teacher, he is an environmental educator, naturalist, writer and nature photographer. He also is an adjunct instructor with Red Rocks Community College’s Outdoor Studies program, a consulting member of the Colorado’s Arbor for Environmental Education and a certified Wilderness First Responder.

Stan Honda – Stan has 34 years of photojournalism experience in New York City and southern California. He has been a National Park Service artist-in-residence in five national parks, including Rocky Mountain, and has presented talks and workshops at Rocky’s Night Sky Festival. Stan was also the stereoimagery manager on NASA’s Astronomy Picture of the Day, CBS Morning News, Sky and Telescope magazine and Yahoo News.

Dr. Don Hunter – Don helped to establish and run the Rocky Mountain Cat Conservancy (RMCC), a nonprofit, nongovernment organization dedicated to wild cat conservation, research and community stewardship. Currently, he is the science director for the RMCC. His study of RMNP mountain lion ecology that complemented his research on snow leopards in central Asia.

Dr. Russell Hunter – Russell has been teaching avalanche education since 1996. His experiences have included leading two-week winter expeditions for NOLS and guiding hikers on Denali. He recently became the owner of the Colorado Mountain School, the official avalanche training for the AIARE avalanche education curriculum.

Jeff Graham – With B.A. and M.A.T. degrees in geology, Keith has taught geography for over 35 years. He volunteers on the west side of the park, leads a yearly RMNP tundra geology hike during the summer months, conducts geology field trips and has coauthored several papers pertaining to park geology.

Dr. Jason Janke – Jason is a professor and chair in the Department of Earth and Atmospheric Sciences at Rocky Mountain University of Denver. He holds a Ph.D. degree from the University of Colorado-Boulder where he researched the geochemistry of subarctic and subalpine soil in the Front Range of Colorado. He currently is researching glacial and periglacial topics in RMNP and has written several papers for scientific journals.

Kurtis Kelly – A well-known performer, actor and storyteller in Estes Park, Kurtis portrays Abner Sprague and gives living history reenactments of local figures like F.O. Stanley and Lord Dunraven. He has led ghost story tours of the Stanley Hotel and has appeared on National Public Radio and performed in many theatrical productions. Kurtis recently celebrated 25 years as the reference and programs librarian at the Estes Valley Library.

Dr. Timothy Kittel – With a Ph.D. degree in ecology, Tim is a research ecologist at the Institute of Arctic and Alpine Research, University of Colorado. He is currently investigating climatic and ecological change across western North America. He teaches winter field ecology for CU’s Mountain Research Station and presents monthly lectures at several outdoor education courses for non-science majors for Colorado College.

Lee Kline – A native Coloradan, outdoorsman and amateur naturalist, Lee is an accomplished photographer and writer. His articles and images have appeared in magazines, books, calendars, interpretive displays, and maps. His winning entry on NASA’s Astronomy Picture of the Day, CBS Morning News, Sky and Telescope magazine and Yahoo News.

Dr. Boris Kondratieff – Boris is a professor of entomology at Colorado State University and director of the C. P. Gillette Museum of Arthropod Diversity at CSU. His interests include insect biodiversity surveys, aquatic insect ecology, taxonomic revisions and descriptions of new or poorly known species of flies, forensics and insect management. He has published nearly 200 peer-reviewed scientific papers and is coauthor of four books.

Caroline Krumm – Caroline helped establish and operate the Rocky Mountain BioScience Foundation (RMBF), a nonprofit, nongovernment organization dedicated to wild cat conservation, research and community stewardship. Currently, she is the science director for the RMBF. Caroline recently completed a master’s degree studying the issue of climate change and nitrogen deposition on alpine lakes, particularly with respect to algae.

Dr. David Lindsey – With a Ph.D. degree in geology from Johns Hopkins University, David served as research geologist/administrator at the U.S. Geological Survey for more than 30 years. He is scientist emeritus at the U.S.G.S. in Lakewood, Colorado, and has written three geology pamphlets published by the U.S. Geological Survey.

Dave Lively – Certified Interpretive Guide and Certified Tour Guide, Dave shines light on hidden narratives of history on the trails of Rocky Mountain National Park. He appears in the PBS documentary The Living Dream, 100 Years of Rocky Mountain National Park.

Dave is past-president of Grand Lake Area Historical Society and past-president of Historic Fraser. As a volunteer, he has presented the C. P. Gillette Museum of Arthropod Diversity at Rocky Mountain National Park for many years. Dave is related to a family who homesteaded in the Kawuneeche Valley in 1896.

Donna Lyons – Donna is a practicing watercolor painter with degrees in painting and art education. A retired elementary art and kindergarten teacher, she now teaches painting workshops throughout the West. Donna is the author of the book My Kawuneeche – An Artist’s Journal in Rocky Mountain National Park.

Jan Manning – With a degree in wildlife biology, Jan’s passion for American history led him to begin researching and providing living history presentations at sites in the western United States, including the Denver Art Museum, Museum of Western Art, National Wildlife Federation and Los Angeles Museum of Natural History.

Jeff Maugans – Jeff worked as a naturalist for Colorado Parks and Wildlife for 20 years with a special interest in birds. With his degree in outdoor education and natural science, Jeff has worked at Mammoth Cave National Park, Cape Hatteras National Seashore, Edison National Historic Site, Gateway National Park, Redwood National Park and Cayuahoga Valley National Park. He came to RMNP in 1990.

Isabella Oleksy – Bella has a B.S. degree in environmental science from Western New Hampshire and she began work on a Ph.D. degree at Colorado State University in the fall of 2014. She currently is studying the role of climate change and nitrogen deposition on alpine lakes, particularly with respect to algae.

Dr. Paul Opler and Evie Buckner-Opler – Paul and Evie have been teaching butterfly natural history classes since 1992, for the RM Conservancy, Teton Science School and San Francisco State University. Paul is a professor at Colorado State University and has written the eastern and western Peterson Butterfly Field Guides. He is
an internationally recognized expert on butterfly conservation, butterfly ecology and classification. Evi is a retired school teacher, nature photographer and artist.

Dr. James Pickering – Jim is historian laureate of the Town of Estes Park and retiree as professor of English at the University of Houston where he also served as dean, provost and president. He has written or edited 30 books on the RMNP-Estes Park region, Colorado and the West, including Joe Mills of Estes Park: A Colorado Life (2013) and his most recent book Rocky Mountain National Park Reader (2015). Jim was recently elected president of the Rocky Mountain Conservancy board of directors.

Deborah Price – Deborah is an environmental educator serving as education liaison for Boulder County Parks and Open Space. For more than a decade, she has taught people of all ages about basic astronomy and helped them gain a better understanding of our solar system and the universe. She has a bachelor of science degree from Colorado State University, with a major in natural resource recreation and tourism.

Paul Price – Paul is an avid amateur astronomer who loves to help people discover the universe with the aid of telescopes. By day, he is a database administrator for the United States Department of Agriculture; by night, he looks up to the skies. He is also an award-winning woodcarver and teaches woodcarving classes.

Peter Price – Peter has 45 years of experience in the resource industries and education and has used GPS since the launch of the system. He has taught GPS as part of a GIS curriculum for many years and is currently GIS faculty at Front Range Community College-Boulder County campus. He continues to consult as a geologist and certified GIS professional.

Karen Ramsay – A graduate of Colorado Institute of Art in Denver, Karen has studied under talented artists including Charles Reid, Burton Silverman, Frank Wrobleski and Wini Weingardt. She was recognized in Big Sky Journal as an Artist of the West in 2001.

Chris Ray – Chris is a research associate with the University of Colorado’s Institute for Arctic and Alpine Research and has been the outreach coordinator for the Niwot Ridge Long Term Ecological Research program. She has studied the American pika throughout the western U.S. and has coauthored many publications about this species. Her background is in theoretical/mathematical ecology.

Abby Schreiber – Abby holds a master’s degree and has been an environmental educator, a national park ranger, a Native Plant Master Trainer for Colorado State University and a Clinical Herbalist. She attended the Southwest School for Botanical Medicine and then opened a holistic healthcare private practice. Ethnobotany and ecopsychology are her current passions. She is a affiliate faculty at Metro State University in Denver.

Eli Vega – Eli is an award-winning published photo artist with more than 20 years of experience. He is a presenter and art competition judge for many Front Range camera clubs. In addition to freelancing, he is the author of Right Brain Photography (Be an artist first). He also teaches photography for the City of Longmont, the Louisville Art Association, and Arapahoe Community College.

Dr. Ellen Wohl – Ellen is a professor of geology at Colorado State University, holding a Ph.D. degree from the University of Arizona. Her research focuses on river form and function, particularly in mountain streams. She has conducted field research on every continent except Antarctica and published nearly 200 scientific papers, two textbooks, and eight nonfiction books about rivers. She has been conducting research in Rocky Mountain National Park for more than ten years.

Mary Taylor Young – A degree in zoology and a life devoted to nature, wildlife and the environment led Mary to become an award-winning nature writer. She is the author of 13 books, including Rocky Mountain National Park: The First 100 Years, The Guide to Colorado Reptiles and Amphibians and The Guide to Colorado Mammals. She has published hundreds of newspaper and magazine articles. Her “Words on Birds” column ran in the Rocky Mountain News for 16 years.

2017 Colorado School of Mines Accredited Classes

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Call 970-586-3262, or visit RMConservancy.org to register.

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This beautiful facility was purchased for our Field Institute program in 2001 through donations and grant funds. Located along the Fall River corridor in Estes Park, it’s just two miles east of Rocky Mountain National Park. We have three meeting rooms with seating for 8-25 people, a bookstore, plenty of restrooms, a kitchen facility, free parking for 24 vehicles, and a very pleasant mountain atmosphere.

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**Classes and Events**

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**Rental Facilities at Trail River Ranch**

For education and rental facilities this summer, experience the new Field Institute west side satellite campus along the Colorado River! You will enjoy this rustic meeting place located in the Kawuneeche Valley just a few miles inside the RMNP west entrance.

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