

**THE PERSEVERING PIKA:
SECRETS OF ALPINE SURVIVAL**

AUGUST 1, 2020

**COURSE LEVEL: II COURSE #: S3034
FEE: \$80 PER ADULT AGES 16 AND OLDER**

INSTRUCTOR: CHRIS RAY



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**LOCATION: Rocky Mountain Conservancy – Field Institute & Conference Center
1895 Fall River Road, Estes Park, Colorado**

TIME: 8:30 AM - 5:00 PM

COURSE DESCRIPTION: Have you ever wondered how a non-hibernating animal like yourself might fare trying to survive in the alpine year-round? Watch the American pika demonstrate its 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 how to spot different animal behaviors that provide clues to how each survives the long, cold winter. Pikas don't hibernate. So, you're sure to learn a few survival tips from these resourceful little beasts.

COURSE LEVEL: II

Slow walk with many stops.

Note: This class involves two or fewer miles of walking above 11,500 ft.

BRIEF INSTRUCTOR BIOGRAPHY (additional information available at www.RMConservancy.org):

Chris is a research associate with the University of Colorado's Institute for Arctic and Alpine Research and has served as 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 on this species. Having spent a large portion of her life living in the alpine, she has many stories to share about these amazing environments and their denizens. Her perspective is broadened by a background in theoretical/mathematical ecology, and her teaching skills are honed by more than 25 years of advising students and engaging with public audiences of all ages.

EXPECTATIONS: Professional conduct will be expected from participants at all times. Respect for individual ideas will be observed. Except during course breaks, cellular phones, pagers, and personal entertainment devices are strictly prohibited in the classroom and during field sessions.

CAR-POOLING: Rocky Mountain Conservancy - Field Institute courses utilize car-pooling to limit vehicles traveling into the park. Car-pooling makes it easier to keep the group together, reduces transit time, and allows courses greater access because fewer parking spaces are required at destinations. In addition, it provides an opportunity for participants to discuss course material in small groups during transit. Typically, a few participants from each course volunteer the use of their vehicles for car-pooling to course locations.

TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE:

8:30 – 9:00 AM Meet at RMC - Field Institute Center. Depart for the tundra and observe wildlife.
9:00 – 2:00 PM Visit different habitats on the tundra along Trail Ridge Road for new species encounters, stopping for a **picnic lunch** along the way.
2:00 – 5:00 PM Return to the RMC - Field Institute Center for a slide show and stories from the field.

WHAT TO BRING:

- Layered clothing including **windproof and rainproof layers**, gloves, hats, and ear covering to protect you while on the tundra for two or more hours at a time. **Temperatures can drop to 40 degrees plus wind-chill.**
- See 10 essentials (below)
- Daypack
- Sack lunch
- Comfortable boots with ankle support, warm socks
- Trekking pole(s) may help stabilize you on rocky taluses where pikas live.
- Binoculars (highly recommended)
- Clipboard, pencil
- Camera (Also consider a tripod.)

REMEMBER TO BRING THE 10 ESSENTIALS:

Rocky Mountain National Park recommends that hikers always carry the 10 essentials in their daypacks.

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| ▪ Raingear | ▪ Map and compass | ▪ Flashlight or headlamp |
| ▪ Sunglasses and sunscreen | ▪ Candles | ▪ Matches or other fire starter |
| ▪ Extra food and WATER | ▪ First-aid kit | ▪ Pocketknife |
| ▪ Extra layers of clothing | | |

Note: Rocky Mountain Conservancy - Field Institute recommends that participants for all courses dress in layers and wear comfortable, sturdy hiking boots/shoes. Participants should be prepared for sudden changes in temperature and weather conditions.

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, \$50 for a multi-day class, \$5 per kid's class and \$15 per half-day class or bus tour seat. Registration money transferred to another class will be subject to a \$10 switch fee.

Cancellations received less than 14 days prior to the start of a class or bus tour will not generate a refund. If the Field Institute cancels a class, every effort will be made to place the participant in another class; otherwise, a full refund will be given.

TEACHER RECERTIFICATION CREDIT:

Most courses are eligible for teacher recertification credit through the Centennial Board of Cooperative Education Services (BOCES). The fee is \$25 per class (.5 unit) or \$25 per series of threaded classes (1.0 - 3.0 units). A list of threaded courses can be found online at www.RMConservancy.org. Participants must enroll in all courses of a threaded series in order to qualify for the \$25 multi-unit fee. Please be prepared to pay for this credit with a check, made payable to BOCES, on the first day of a class or on the final day of a threaded series of courses.