

Dall Sheep and Their Predators
Field Seminar Overview & Arrival Information
June 27 – 29, 2008



Please read the entire information packet carefully. This important information will help you plan and prepare for your time with us. If you have any further questions after you have read this packet, please give us a call at (907) 683-1269. We are here to help.

Activities

This Murie Science and Learning Center (MSLC) course is active and field-based. We will spend the majority of our days outdoors observing wildlife, admiring the spectacular Denali scenery, and having in-depth discussions. Hiking will be moderate to strenuous including as much as 1,500 feet of elevation gain and approximately 3 - 5 miles round trip. We will be hiking off-trail on rough, uneven terrain and will likely encounter steep climbs with some loose rock, as well as stream crossings. **Participants should be in good physical condition.**

Dall Sheep were the catalyst in the formation of Denali National Park and have always played an important role in the park's continued protection as an intact ecosystem. Wildlife biologist Ken Whitten has studied Dall Sheep extensively in Denali and northern Alaska. Join him in the field as we look for sheep while investigating their habitat. We will learn about the life cycle and behavior of Dall Sheep including foraging strategy and the importance of escape terrain to avoid predators. We will discuss the various predators of Dall Sheep and the relationships between these predators and their prey. We will discuss the role Dall Sheep have played in the establishment and management of Denali National Park as we take a look at the lives and works of hunter naturalist Charles Sheldon and wildlife biologist Adolph Murie. We will come away with a greater understanding and appreciation for Dall Sheep and their importance in Denali.

Tentative Daily Schedule

Our group will be staying together at the MSLC Field Camp. Schedules may be modified somewhat according to weather conditions and to fit the needs and interest of the participants and instructor, such as viewing unique wildlife sightings and/or spectacular scenery.

Friday-	6:00 p.m. – 6:30 p.m. 6:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. 8:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.	Greeting and check in at MSLC Introduction, orientation & overview Drive to MSLC Field Camp
Saturday-	9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.	Exploration of Denali Dinner and evening discussions
Sunday-	9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. 3:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.	Continued exploration of Denali Return to MSLC for course conclusion

Weather

The entire course takes place outdoors and activities will continue rain or shine. Weather conditions are unpredictable year round in Denali therefore you must be prepared for a wide range of conditions. Temperatures can vary from freezing at night and to 80 degrees F during the day. Mosquitoes and other biting insects can be numerous anytime during the summer. Be prepared with adequate warm clothing, a hooded rain jacket, rain pants, hiking boots, and insect repellent. Dressing in layers is recommended. **Please review carefully the Clothing & Equipment List provided.**

Directions, Parking Area and Meeting Location

The entrance to Denali National Park is located at Mile 237 of the George Parks Highway. Follow the Park Road for approximately 1.1 miles to a roundabout, and make the first right turn off the roundabout; the MSLC is the first building on the right. Because you will be parking overnight, **we ask that you park in the park concessionaire's employee lot.** To get to this lot, continue to the second right turn, drive up the 'Service Road' towards the bus yard and park in the first large lot on the left. This is a very busy area, so please yield to any buses or pedestrians. To walk to the MSLC, go back down the drive toward the park road and look for the MSLC in the direction of the roundabout. Please leave your overnight bags in your vehicle. We will load all bags directly into the MSLC van in the parking lot after our initial meeting in the MSLC.

Arrival

Beginning a half-hour before course start time, MSLC staff will greet you at the Center for check-in; your course begins at 6:30pm. The first evening will not include dinner, however a small dessert and drinks will be offered during the introduction.

Transportation in the Park

We will be traveling as a group in a 15-passenger van when we go into the park. Due to the Park's backcountry limits we limited the number of participants to ten.

Accommodations in Denali

Your group will stay at the MSLC Field Camp at the Teklanika River Campground at mile 29 of the Park Road. This beautiful location allows us ready access to both east and west ends of the park road. Our field camp was built under the "School To Work" Program by local Anderson, Alaska high school students in 2004 and is made up of five tent cabins and one large Yurt dining tent. Four course participants share space in the tent cabins. Each tent cabin has two sets of bunk beds with foam mattresses and pillows. There is no electricity, plumbing or heated areas and each participant needs to provide their own sleeping bag and pillow case. **Please note:** lodging accommodations before and following the course are your responsibility; however, we are glad to provide you with a list of local lodges and campgrounds upon request.

Meals

Simple hearty meals will be served family-style in the group-dining tent at the field camp. Each morning, along with a breakfast buffet, a lunch spread will be laid out for participants to create their own bag lunches for the day. We have a limited ability to accommodate specific dietary requirements; therefore, please notify the MSLC several weeks before the course of any specific dietary needs or restrictions.

Your Denali Visit & Your Expectations

Course activities and destinations in the park will be devoted to the course outline and materials. For this reason, we encourage first-time (and long-time) Denali visitors to allow for extra time at the start or end of this course for further exploration via the shuttle bus system or on foot. Please contact us for advice or visit www.nps.gov/dena for further information.

Cancellation Policy

If you have to cancel your participation in the course, fees will be refunded for cancellations received in writing 30 days in advance of the course starting date, with a \$25 cancellation fee for each individual cancellation. The entire participant fee will be retained for course cancellations less than 30 calendar days before course starting dates, unless we can fill your individual course spot. If we are forced to cancel a course, we will fully refund your fee.

Insurance and Liability

Participants should have their own health and accident insurance. Also please consider travel insurance in case you have to cancel your trip due to illness or injury. All participants will be asked to read and sign the enclosed Acknowledgment of Risk form and complete the Health and Emergency Contact form. Please bring these forms with you to the first day of the course. Please contact the MSLC if you have any questions or concerns.

Important Phone Numbers

For the entirety of the course we will not have access to phones or cell phone coverage. Emergency and non-emergency messages can be passed through the MSLC office phone number (907)-683-1269. After-hours emergency calls can be directed to the Denali National Park & Preserve Law Enforcement Ranger Division at (907) 683-9555.

Professional Development Credit

Optional professional development credit is available for this course. By choosing this option at the time of registration, you are officially pre-registered with the University of Alaska – Anchorage. A registration form will be sent to you prior to the course, please fill out and bring it with you for the first day of the course.

Suggested Pre-Course Reading List

- 1) Murie, A. (1944). **The Wolves of Mount McKinley**. (Chapter Three: Dall Sheep) Washington, D.C.: U.S. Govt. Print. Office.
- 2) Walker, T. (2005). **Kantishna: Mushers, Miners, Mountaineers**. (Chapter 4: Sheldon on the Toklat) Missoula, MT: Pictorial Histories Publishing Co.