

ROCKY MOUNTAIN FIELD SEMINARS

LEARN ♦ EXPLORE ♦ ADVENTURE

The Elk Rut: High Country Romance

OCTOBER 4, 2008

COURSE LEVEL: I COURSE #: 08-055

FEE: \$85

INSTRUCTOR: JARED GRICOSKIE



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

TIME: Saturday: 12:30 PM-7:00 PM

COURSE DESCRIPTION: Elk are some of the most commonly observed mammals in Rocky Mountain National Park, but few people understand the social and sexual interactions occurring during the rut. Although elk are the most vocal deer species in North America, a majority of their communication is through body language. In this seminar, explore those obvious and subtle communications and review elk habitat, food sources, evolutionary adaptations, communication, and social interaction.

COURSE LEVEL: I

Slow walk with many stops. Under three miles with slight elevation gains

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

Jared Gricoskie owns and operates Yellow Wood Guiding, specializing in Nature Tours and Photo Safaris in Rocky Mountain National Park. He has worked as a professional naturalist from across the United States. Since graduating from Pennsylvania State University in 2002, he has also worked a season with the National Park Service on the Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River, with a degree in Environmental Interpretation. Jared has spent the last three years exploring and researching the flora and fauna of the Rocky Mountains, always looking for more wonders in the natural world to share with others.

INSTRUCTOR'S WEBPAGE: [WWW.YWGUIDING.COM](http://www.ywguiding.com)

EXPECTATIONS: Professional conduct will be expected from participants at all times. Individual ideas will be respected. 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 Field seminars 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:

- 12:30 PM-3:30 PM Meet at the Rocky Mountain Field Seminar and Conference Center.
- Take a slow walk through lateral moraine and meadow ecotone habitat. Explore the habitats that elk use, how habitats have influenced elk adaptations and look for signs of elk habitats. We will also discuss how other species interact with elk.
- 3:30 PM– 4:00 PM Break for snacks at the Moraine Park Visitor’s Center
- 4:00 PM – 7:00 PM Travel to elk observation area and observe social interactions. Much like watching a high school football game, we will watch the mating dance, posturing, elk beauty techniques, vocalizations, sparring and rare fights on a brisk fall night. Destinations are dependant on elk—either Moraine Park or Horseshoe Park.

WHAT TO BRING:

- Sack lunch, snacks, energy bars and **WATER**
- Binoculars and/or spotting scope
- Camera
- Camp chair
- Warm layers, hats, and gloves

REMEMBER TO BRING THE 10 ESSENTIALS:

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

- Raingear
- Map & compass
- Flashlight or headlamp
- Sunglasses & sunscreen
- Candles
- Matches or other fire starter
- Pocketknife
- First-aid kit
- Extra layers of clothing
- Sack lunch, snacks, & water

Note: Rocky Mountain Field Seminars 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.

RECOMMENDED READING: *ELK OF NORTH AMERICA: ECOLOGY AND MANAGEMENT*, STACKPOLE BOOKS

TEACHER RECERTIFICATION CREDIT

Most seminars are eligible for teacher recertification credit through the Centennial Board of Cooperative Education Services (BOCES). The new fee is \$25.00 per seminar (.5 units) or \$25.00 per series of threaded seminars (1.0 - 3.0 units). A list of threaded seminars can be found in the Field Seminar catalog or online at www.rmna.org. Participants must enroll in all seminars of a threaded series in order to qualify for the \$25.00 multi-unit fee. Please be prepared to pay for this credit with a check, made payable to BOCES, on the first day of a seminar or on the final day of a threaded series of seminars.