



Educational Programs - Elementary

Discover an amazing outdoor classroom in the Heart of the Rockies



National Parks preserve our most treasured natural places and provide us with some of the most amazing outdoor classrooms in the world. The environmental education program at Rocky Mountain National Park has been educating and inspiring students for decades. Set against the backdrop of 72 peaks that tower over 12,000 feet, Rocky Mountain is home to four distinct ecosystems, 12,000 years of human history, and over 1.7 billion years of geologic history.

Taking students into the field provides them with real-world examples of what they learn in the classroom. The educational programs at Rocky Mountain National Park provide hands-on field experiences that can support and enhance your learning objectives. Each program is based on the real science, history, and/or geography of the area. The dedicated environmental education staff at Rocky Mountain National Park utilize the resources throughout the park to conduct standards-based education programs. Our lessons and activities encourage students to engage, explore, and experience in the learning process. Come discover the learning opportunities and potential lessons that exist in this unique outdoor classroom!

Programs

Our environmental education program offers three types of learning experiences - field trips, classroom visits, and self-directed park visits. All ranger-led programs are aligned to Colorado State Academic Standards. **The National Park Service does not charge for programs.** A park entrance fee waiver is provided once your trip is confirmed.



Reservations

It is recommended that you call to schedule a program at least six months before the desired date of the program. Reservations are made on a first come, first served basis.

Please contact Mark DeGregorio, Education and Outreach Coordinator, to request a program.

Phone: (970) 586-3777

Email: Mark_De_Gregorio@nps.gov

Self-Guided Visits

Many teachers choose to bring their students to Rocky Mountain to enhance their lessons with their own field experience. If you would like to visit the Moraine Park Discovery Center or Fall River Visitor Center during your visit to the park, please schedule your visit in advance through the education office. The facilities' capacities are limited and your group will not be able to use them without a reservation. To request an educational entrance fee waiver and learn more about the educational resources available the park, please visit the Heart of the Rockies Website at <http://www.nps.gov/romo/learn/education/planafielddtrip.htm>.

Field Trip Programs

Field trip programs are offered for grades K-12 during the months of January through November. Due to changing weather conditions, many programs are offered seasonally. Most programs are limited to a maximum of 60 students per day. The following list of programs is a general selection of programs that are offered in the field. Programs vary in length and time of year that the program is available. If you do not see what you are looking for, we can create a program to fit your curriculum. Pre-site programs at your school can also be scheduled to prepare for your visit.

W - Winter Sp - Spring Su - Summer F - Fall EF - Early Fall YR - Year Round

Grades K-2

Nature Explorers (F, Su, Sp)

Students use their senses to discover what lives in RMNP. The students will look for evidence of what lives by/in the water, in the trees, and on/in the ground.

3.5 hrs. Location: Sprague Lake or Lily Lake Target Grade: K

At Home in the Rocks (F, Sp, Su)

Students explore the rocky habitat that is home to many plants and animals in RMNP. The students will investigate rocks, animal homes, and plants that live among the rocks.

3.5 hrs. Location: Alluvial Fan Target Grade: 1st

Community Components (F, Sp, Su)

Students explore an ecological community to discover the living and non-living members in the ecosystem. The students collect and identify invertebrates, explore a forest, and determine the role that weather plays in the community.

4.5 hrs Location: Lily Lake or Sprague Lake Target Grade: 2nd

Adapted for the Weather (F, Su)

Students will explore the role that weather plays in the lives of plants and animals in RMNP. Students learn about the different types of weather and discover how plants and animals survive in this dynamic climate.

3.5 hrs. Location: Sprague Lake or Lily Lake Target Grade: 2nd

Winter Detectives (W)

Students will become winter detectives and search for clues to discover what animals make their home in the snow. Students look for tracks and other evidence of animals, explore a frozen lake, and discover the subnivean (beneath the snow) world.

2.5 hrs Location: Sprague Lake Target Grades: K-2nd

Showshoes are provided.

Field Trip Programs (Continued)

Grades 3-5

Nature Detectives (F, Sp, Su)

Students conduct a carnivore scene investigation, find signs of life, and look for clues in the adaptive characteristics of plants and animals.

4.5 hrs. Location: Moraine Park VC Target Grades: 3rd – 5th

The Montane Mission (F, Sp, Su)

The students become secret agents whose mission objective is to infiltrate the Montane network (ecosystem). They will discover what members make up the Montane ecosystem and how they support each other.

4.5 hrs Location: Upper Beaver Mdws Target Grades: 3rd -4th

A Trip Back in Time (F, Sp, Su)

Students travel back in time, through the 1700s, 1800s, and 1900s, to meet some of the people that helped make Rocky Mountain National Park the place it is today.

4.5 hrs. Location: Horseshoe Park Target Grades: 3rd - 4th

Mapping Our World (F, Sp, Su)

Students explore how maps can be used to collect, record, and share information about our world. This program incorporates the use of topographical maps, compasses, and GPS technology.

Winter Explorers (W)

Students snowshoe and discover clues of the winter world to solve mysteries. Students follow tracks, search under the snow, and discover how plants and animals survive in the harsh conditions of winter.

4.5 hrs Location: Bear Lake Target Grades: 3rd-5th
Showshoes are provided.

The Story of the Mountains (F, Sp, Su)

Students discover the stories that can be learned from the rocks and landforms found in RMNP. Content covers the rock cycle, mountain building, and glaciation.

3.5-4.5 hrs Location: Moraine Park VC Target Grades: 3rd-4th

The Great Ecosystem Adventure (F, Sp, Su)

Students must navigate through an ecosystem using mapping skills. At each stop, students learn more about the ecosystem trying to discover what type of ecosystem they are in. Each stop has a challenge in order to find the clue to move on.

4.5 hrs Location: Varies Target Grades: 4th – 6th



Classroom Programs

Can't get a bus? Worried about the weather? We can bring a program to your classroom! Choose from one of the many classroom programs that we offer for grades K-12. We request that only one class is scheduled at a time, however we can arrange to visit more than one classroom during a school day. The following list of programs is a general selection of programs that are offered for the classroom. All programs are limited to a maximum of 36 students/session. More than one session can be scheduled in one day.

Grades K-2

At Home in My Habitat

Students discover what makes a good home for an animal in RMNP. They discover that even though habitats can look very different, they all have what the plants and animals need for survival: food, water, shelter/space.

45 min. Target Grade: 1st - 2nd

Getting Ready for Winter

Students explore the three strategies that animals have to survive the winter in Colorado: migrating, hibernating and tolerating.

30 min. Target Grade: K-1st

What Rangers Do

Park rangers have many different jobs. Working together, the rangers of Rocky Mountain National Park help to keep the plants, animals, and visitors safe. Students get to dress up as different rangers and learn about each of their jobs. 45 min.

Grades 3-5

Ecosystems of Rocky Mountain National Park

Students investigate three of the ecosystems found in RMNP. They will use the scientific method to help them determine where animals live in the park and why.

1 hr. Target Grades: 4th - 5th

Story of the Rocks

Students will get up close and personal with their very own rock. They will learn about the journeys that rocks can take through the rock cycle and how rocks reveal stories about how our earth has changed and write their own rock story.

1 hr. Target Grades: 3rd

Our National Parks

Students will learn all about The National Park Service and its significance. They will discover the different types of rangers in the park and the tools that they use to protect and preserve the resources.

1hr. Target Grades: 3rd - 5th

Investigating Invertebrates

Students discover the tiny and amazing world of animals without backbones. Students will learn how to identify an insect, explore the environment around their school, and learn about the important roles of bugs in our world.

1 hr. Target Grade: 2nd

Flaky Formations

Students investigate snow, discover how snowflakes are formed, and learn about the role that snow plays in the winter world of the Rocky Mountains.

1 hr. Target Grade: 2nd

The Mystery of the Stolen Cone

Students play the roles of animals in RMNP and participate in a trial to discover who stole the pine squirrel's cone. They investigate clues and learn about animal adaptations.

1 hr. Target Grades: 4th - 5th

Unlocking the Secrets of Maps

Students will identify landform features on three different maps. They will unlock the secrets of the maps by asking why the landforms exist and using models to discover how they formed.

1 hr. Target Grades: 5th

The Tolerator Challenge (W)

Students will face the tolerator challenge and attempt to conserve enough energy to survive the winter in the Rocky Mountains.

1 hr. Target Grades: 4th-5th