



Estes Park Convention & Visitors Bureau
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Estes Park Elk Fest Features Bugling, Seminars, Tours

Every year the weekend before the 3-day Columbus Day celebration, elk in Estes Park are regaled, imitated, watched and otherwise celebrated during the community's annual two-day Elk Fest. This festival celebrates the "wapiti," the American elk that is native here and highlights most of the facets of human interaction with them.

Bond Park in the middle of downtown Estes Park is headquarters for the festival. There is no charge for the festival, but there are fees for Elk Viewing Tours and for contestants in bugling contests.

Activities downtown on both days include entertainment, educational areas, exhibits, seminars by Rocky Mountain National Park and Department of Wildlife experts, and the staging area for elk viewing tours which will occur both days from 1 to 5 p.m. Those attending Elk Fest also will see merchandise related to elk including items made from elk antlers, handmade elk ivory jewelry, knives, archery equipment, clothes featuring elk emblems, as well as tables, lamps and dishes with an elk motif. In addition, domestic elk ranches offer lean elk meat and information about how elk has become a powerful world-wide market.

Festival Events

Bugling Contest

On Sunday a contest to see who can sound most like an elk bugling is held. Amateurs and professionals alike (there are contest classifications for adults and youth classes) are invited to try imitating the haunting call heard during the elk rut. Entrants can use a diaphragm, a horn or just vocal chords.

Mountain Man Encampment

Mountain men from all over the country gather to sell and to demonstrate their skills, such as arrowhead making.

Educational Areas

In this area, individuals see elk antlers up close. Representatives from the Rocky Mountain Raptor Program are on hand with some of their magnificent rescued birds. There also are representatives from the organization of "Wolves Offering Life and Friendship."

Seminars

Speakers from the Colorado Department of Wildlife and Rocky Mountain National Park present seminars over the weekend on Elk Management and Biology, and the Breeding Season – the Rut.

Elk Viewing Tours

This is the easiest way to view elk around the Estes Valley. Afternoon tours from 1 to 5 p.m. each day will depart from Bond Park, taking people to the best places to view and hear the elk. An expert guide accompanies each tour to explain what viewers are looking at, and hearing, and answer questions. Fees are: adults - \$5; children - \$3; family rate for up to five-\$15 and an additional fee of \$2 for each additional person.

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The event schedule for the weekend is:

Saturday, Oct. 4

9 am-5 pm: Educational Area, Exhibits, Vendor Booths open
10 am: Seminar - Rocky Mountain Raptor Program
10:30 am: Elk Management & Biology
11 am: Observing Wildlife Safely
11:30 am: Native American Music & Storytelling
Noon to 5 pm: Elk-viewing Tours departing on the hour
12:30 pm: Live music by Dick Orleans, Jimmy Sferes & Jennifer White
2 pm: Seminar - "The Rut"
3 pm: Seminar - WolfWood Refuge
4 pm: Native American Music & Dancing

Sunday, Oct. 5

9 am-5 pm: Educational Area, Exhibits, Vendor Booths open
9:30 am: Elk Management & Biology
10:30 am: Live music by the Elktones
11:30 am: Native American Music & Storytelling
Noon to 5 pm: Elk-viewing Tours departing on the hour
1 pm: Bugling Contest
2:30 pm: Seminar "The Rut"
3 pm: Seminar - Rocky Mountain Raptor Program
3:30 pm: Seminar - WolfWood Refuge
4 pm: Native American Music & Dancing

For additional information about any of the events visit www.EstesParkCVB.com or call 970-577-9900 or 800-44-ESTES (800-443-7837).

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