

## Black tailed prairie dog

*Cynomys ludovicianus*

Live in short and mixed-grass prairies, and prefer ones that have been grazed. Prefer grasses in the summer, and switch to plants with thick underground roots in the fall and winter.

## Prairie rattlesnake

*Crotalus viridis*

Dine mostly on small mammals, and occasionally on frogs and lizards.

## Black-footed ferret

*Mustela nigripes*

Nocturnal and solitary, over 90% of its diet is prairie dogs.

## Deer mouse

*Peromyscus maniculatus*

Nocturnal, reproduce year-round, eat seeds, fruits, arthropods.

## Ferruginous hawk

*Buteo regalis*

Endemic to interior North America. Catches small and medium-sized mammals, also birds and insects.

## Badger

*Taxidea taxus*

Nocturnal and carnivorous. Dines on small, ground-dwelling mammals.

## Mountain plover

*Charadrius montanus*

A shore bird that prefers open, dry areas. Feeds on insects and other small arthropods. Often associates with cattle.

## Western meadowlark

*Sturnella neglecta*

Makes a grassy nest, feeds on seeds and insects.

## Pronghorn

*Antilocapra americana*

Swift herbivores, prefer shrubs, wildflowers and lichen to grass.

## Burrowing owl

*Athene cunicularia*

Feed on large insects and small rodents. Frequently lives in abandoned prairie dog burrows. Puts dung next to its home to attract beetles, which are then eaten.

**Swift fox**  
*Vulpes velox*

An omnivore, it feeds on grasses and fruits as well as carrion and insects. Dens in open sites with sandy soils.

**Darkling beetle**  
*Eleodes sutralis*

Larvae live in soil and eat roots, seeds, and detritus.

**Blue grama grass**  
*Bouteloua gracilis*

Both cold and drought tolerant, this is the most productive grass in short grass prairies.

**Painted lady butterfly**  
*Vanessa virginiensis*

Larvae feed on various wildflowers, especially ones in the Sunflower family. Adults daintily sip nectar.

**Prairie junegrass**  
*Koeleria macrantha*

A prairie bunchgrass that blooms in June and July.

**Coyote**  
*Canis latrans*

Hunts small and medium-sized mammals, birds, reptiles and insects. Also eats fruit, vegetables and carrion.

**Western wheatgrass**  
*Elymus smithii*

An abundant, cool season grass tolerant of alkaline soils.

**Tumbleweed shield lichen**  
*Xanthoparmelia chlorochroa*

Lichen that blows across soils and accumulates in drifts where vegetation is sparse. Eaten by pronghorn, but toxic to elk.

**Plains milkweed**  
*Asclepias pumila*

Milkweeds contain toxins that make them inedible to most herbivores. Butterflies and other insects like the nectar.

**Scarlet globemallow**  
*Sphaeralcea coccinea*

Highly drought tolerant wildflower has thick, fleshy roots.

## Flabellate grasshopper

*Melanoplus occidentalis*

Eggs overwinter in the soil and hatch in the spring. Adults are present July and August. Likes to eat pricklypear cactus and other wildflowers.

## Ground spider

Gnaphoidea

Live under rocks and in burrows, where they capture and devour insects.

## Spotted gayfeather

*Liatris spicata*

Member of the Sunflower family with many small purple flowers and a large taproot.

## Big sagebrush

*Artemisia tridentata*

Shrubby member of the Sunflower family, eaten by pronghorn, deer and insects. provides shelter for many small animals.

## Plains pricklypear

*Opuntia polyacantha*

Spines protect this drought-tolerant plant from many large herbivores, but prairie dogs and insects eat it anyway.

## Harvester ant

*Pogonomyrmex* spp.

Live in large, deep colonies where they store seeds for food. Eaten by horned lizards and wasps.

## Robber fly

*Laphria* spp.

Flies that look like bees, but are really predators that feed on many kinds of insects.

## Short-horned lizard

*Phrynosoma hernandesi*

A predator that stands still until an insect walks by, then snaps it up quickly. Like ants best, but also eat beetles and grasshoppers. Hide under bushes.

## Spider wasp

Pompilidae

Predators that capture spiders to feed to their larvae.

## Meadow mushroom

*Agaricus campestris*

Considered delicious by insects and many herbivores, these mushrooms “eat” detritus. They sometimes grow in rings, where fairies are said to dance.