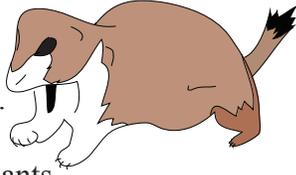


Black tailed prairie dog

Cynomys ludovicianus

Lives in short and mixed-grass prairies, and prefers ones that have been grazed.

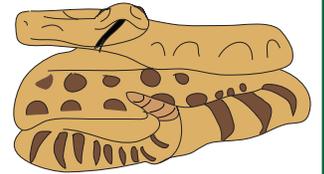
Prefers grasses in the summer, and switches to plants with underground roots in the fall and winter.



Prairie rattlesnake

Crotalus viridis

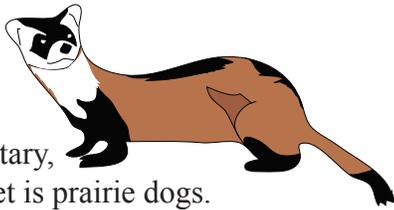
Dines mostly on small mammals, and occasionally on frogs and lizards.



Black-footed ferret

Mustela nigripes

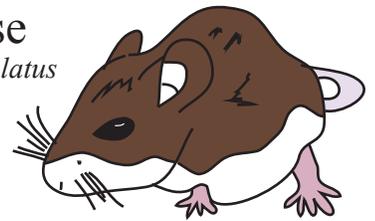
Nocturnal and solitary, over 90% of its diet is prairie dogs.



Deer mouse

Peromyscus maniculatus

Nocturnal, reproduces year-round, and eat seeds, fruits, and arthropods.



Ferruginous hawk

Buteo regalis

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



Badger

Taxidea taxus

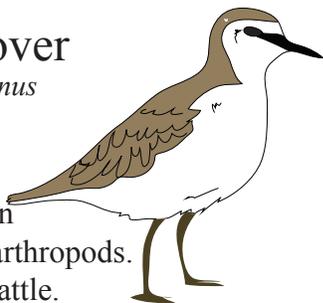
Nocturnal and carnivorous. Dines on small, ground-dwelling mammals.



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.



Western wheatgrass

Elymus smithii

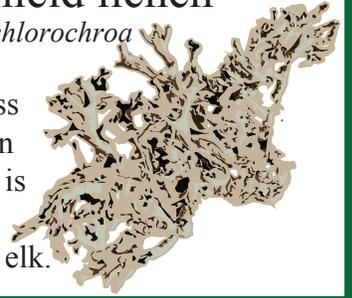
An abundant, cool season grass tolerant of alkaline soils.



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

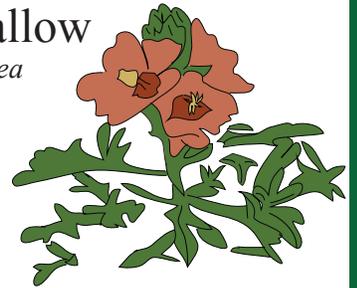
Milkweeds contain toxins that make them inedible to most herbivores. Butterflies and other insects like the nectar.



Scarlet globemallow

Sphaeralcea coccinea

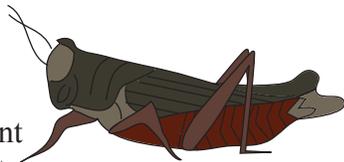
Highly drought tolerant wildflower has thick fleshy roots.



Flabellate grasshopper

Melanoplus occidentalis

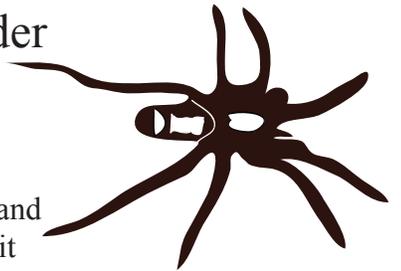
Eggs overwinter in the soil and hatch in the spring. Adults are present July and August. Likes to eat pricklypear cactus and other wildflowers.



Ground spider

Gnaphoidae

Lives under rocks and in burrows, where it captures and devours 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 animals.



Pronghorn

Antilocapra americana

Swift herbivores, they would rather eat shrubs, wildflowers and lichen than grass.



Burrowing owl

Athene cunicularia

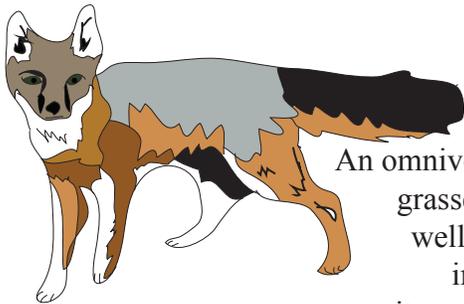
Feed on large insects and small rodents. Frequently lives in abandoned prairie dog burrows. Puts dung next to its home to attract beetles, which are then eaten.



Swift fox

Vulpes velox

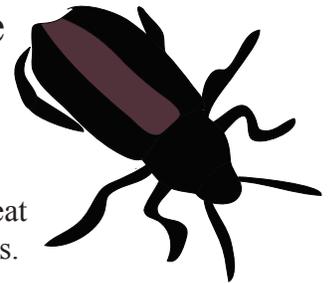
An omnivore, it feeds on grasses and fruits as well as carrion and insects. Dens in open sites with sandy soils.



Darkling beetle

Eleodes sutralis

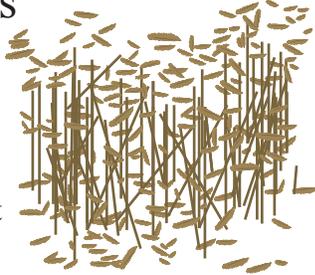
Larvae live in soil and eat roots, seeds, and detritus.



Blue grama grass

Bouteloua gracilis

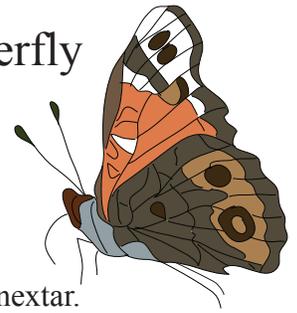
Both cold and drought tolerant, this is the most productive grass in short grass prairies.



Painted lady butterfly

Vanessa virginienses

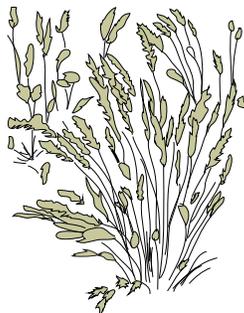
Larvae feed on various wildflowers, especially ones in the Sunflower family. Adults daintily sip nectar.



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.



Plains pricklypear

Opuntia polyacantha

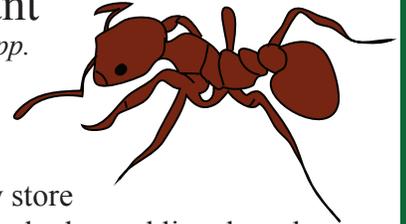
Spines protect this drought-tolerant plant from many large herbivores, but prairie dogs and insects eat it anyway.



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.

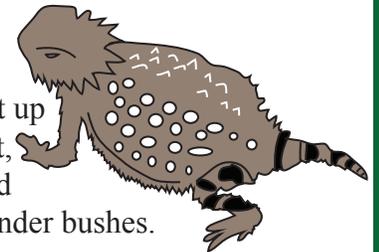
Flies that look like bees, but are really predators that feed on many kinds of insects.



Short-horned lizard

Phrynosoma hernandesi

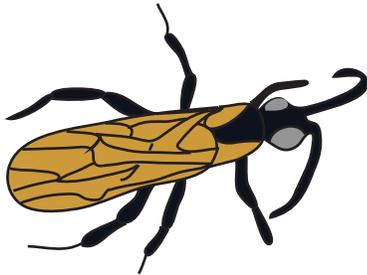
A predator that stands still until an insect walks by, then snaps it up quickly. Like ants best, but also eat beetles and grasshoppers. Hides under bushes.



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.

