

TALLGRASS PRAIRIE ANIMALS



*There are some who can live
without wild things,
and some
who cannot..."*

Aldo Leopold

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|-------------------|---------------|------------------|------------|------------------|----------------|---------------|--------------------------------|------------|
| bison | burrowing owl | bobolink | dickcissel | dragonfly | garter snake | pocket gopher | grasshopper | meadowlark |
| monarch butterfly | harvest mouse | northern harrier | red fox | upland sandpiper | soil organisms | harvester ant | thirteen-lined ground squirrel | cricket |

Tallgrass prairies are one of Earth's most amazing and important ecosystems. The colorful tangle of grasses and flowers is alive with animals of all shapes and sizes, from tiny creatures that live in the soil, to vast herds of grazing bison. Prairies once stretched over a million square miles of North America, but now less than one percent remains. Their scarcity makes remaining prairies even more precious.

Prairies are expert in dealing with weather extremes, fires, and even trampling and grazing. They have been called "upside-down forests", because much of prairie life takes place underground. Plants send down massive root systems deep into the soil that can keep them alive for decades, or even centuries. Animals find safety and shelter in networks of underground burrows.