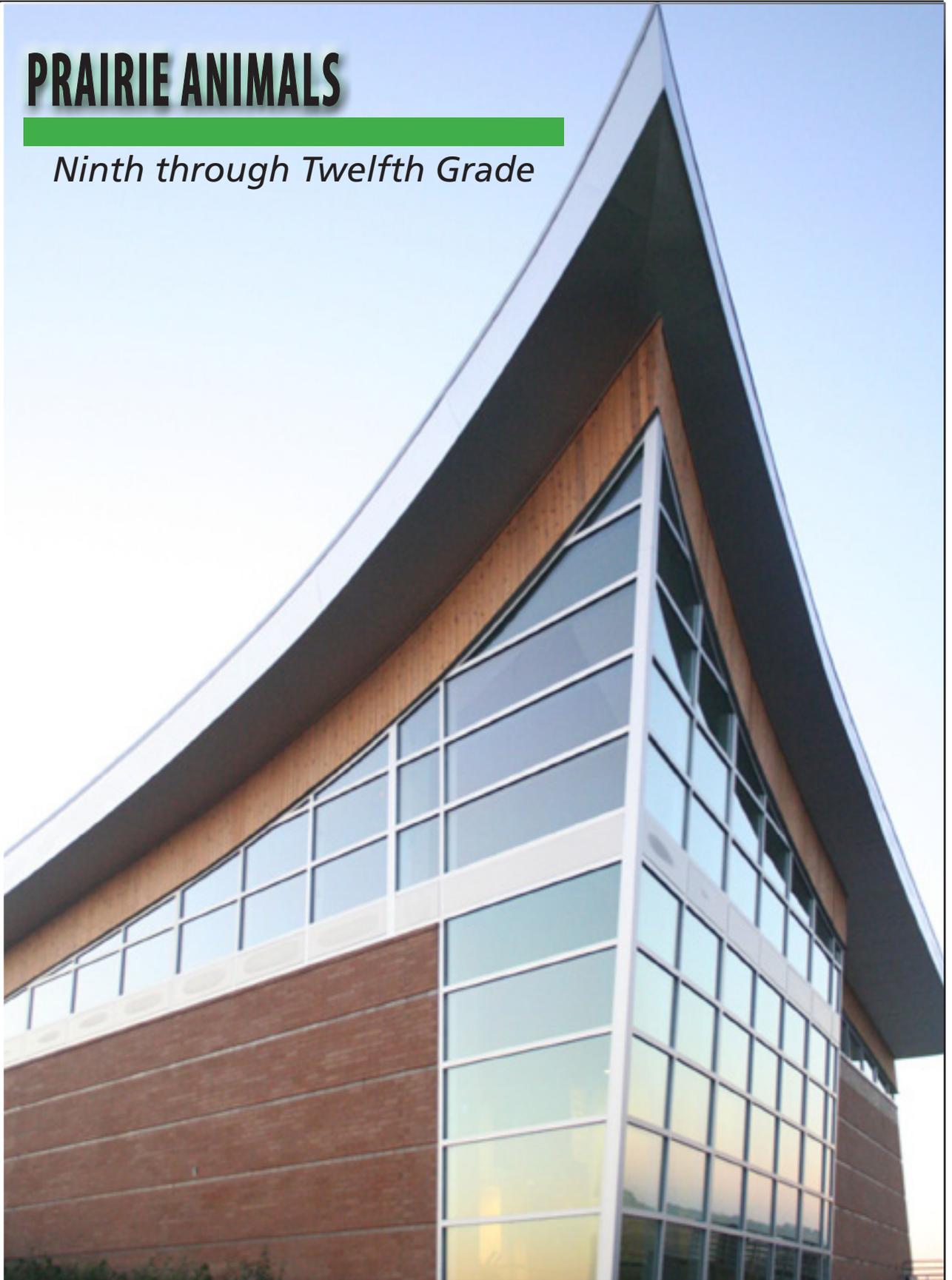


Free Land was the Cry!

PRAIRIE ANIMALS

Ninth through Twelfth Grade



Homestead

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Homestead National Monument
of America, Nebraska



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

This unit has Pre-Visit Activities for teachers to use to prepare students for a visit to Homestead National Monument of America, a Ranger-Led Experience which will occur during your visit, and Post-Visit Activities for teachers to use to expand students' knowledge of the impact the Homestead Act of 1862 had on America.

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Some of the ideas in this lesson may have been adapted from earlier, unacknowledged sources without our knowledge. If the reader believes this to be the case, please let us know, and appropriate corrections will be made. Thank you.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION



‘What is life? It is the flash of a firefly in the night. It is the breath of a buffalo in the wintertime. It is the little shadow which runs across the grass and loses itself in the sunset.’

Crowfoot quote

The original animals of the tallgrass prairie were much more varied than can be seen today. The animals and the native plants created an interconnected ecosystem. Because of the loss of many native prairie habitats and overhunting in the 19th century, the biodiversity of animals viewed by the first settlers no longer exists.

It can still be debated whether some of the species we consider to be native to grasslands are recent adapters to the prairie or long time residents. In the forested areas, animals tend to travel alone except in the mating season. Herds of ani-

mals are really a phenomenon of the expansive prairies of the past as is the quick maneuverability and speed of some prairie dwelling animals. On the prairie, we find not only mammals, but a variety of birds, reptiles, and other species which adapted to life on the Great Plains.

Of all the species, the birds tend to be the most diverse and numerous. Here, in the Great Plains, is where the meadowlark, dickcissel, red-tailed hawk, prairie chicken, bobolink, sandhill crane, upland plover, sparrow hawk, swallow-tailed kit, bobwhite quail, great curlew, mourning dove, and many more make their homes. The mammals and reptiles of the prairie are the animals that we commonly associate with the western United States; bison, coyote, antelope, badger, elk, prairie dog, various skunks, otters, foxes, snakes, lizards, among many others. Some have survived and adapted to the changes on the grassland, but many have decreased in number, dependent on the prairie that started to vanish with the tilling of the land.

CURRICULUM OBJECTIVES

- Students will know the various animal species that can be found at Homestead National Monument of America.
- Students will understand the habitats that need to exist for these animals to survive.
- Students will determine what species are reliant upon one another.
- Students will be able to identify native and non-native animals of the tallgrass prairie.
- Students will be able to identify how animals are reliant on each other and their habitat.
- Students will understand the connected relationship between animals and their ecosystem.
- Students will be able to define adaptations in animals.
- Students will generalize that all animals are adapted to survive.
- Students will demonstrate an understanding of the prairie ecosystem.
- Students will demonstrate an understanding of preservation techniques.

NATIONAL STANDARDS

NS.9-12.1 SCIENCE AS INQUIRY

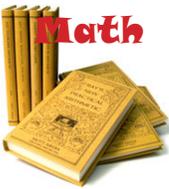
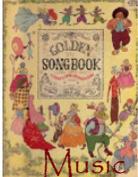
As a result of activities in grades 9-12, all students should develop

- Abilities necessary to do scientific inquiry
- Understandings about scientific inquiry.

NS.9-12.4 EARTH AND SPACE SCIENCE

As a result of their activities in grades 9-12, all students should develop an understanding of

- Energy in the earth system
- Geochemical cycles
- Origin and evolution of the earth system
- Origin and evolution of the universe.

SPECIAL ICONS		<i>Enrichment Activities</i>		Science		<i>Language Arts</i>
	Indicates a reproducible handout is included		Indicates an additional math lesson	Indicates an additional science activity	Indicates an additional music or art activity	Indicates an additional language arts lesson

Pre-Visit Activity #1 (suggested)

ANIMALS OF THE PRAIRIE

Overview

Animals that exist in a tall grass prairie ecosystem exists in relationship to one another and the plants, insects and birds found in the habitat.

Removing various elements or introducing new species to the ecosystem can influence the survival of the existing species within the system. To better understand how to preserve the native and existing species one first needs to identify and understand how the current species are reliant on one another.

Link

<http://www.nps.gov/home/naturescience/mammals.htm>

Time Needed

1-2 50-minute periods.

Introductory Set

Discuss the importance of species interaction. Ask students how they would react if a particular food source no longer existed within their world (example: loss of a popular restaurant/eating place). Would it change how you live? Would you stay in that place or move somewhere that the food source could be found? How might you adapt or change? Students should make the connection between their survival/existence in a region and the types of food found there.

Procedure

Use the list of the animal species found at Homestead National Monument of America in the Additional Resources section or visit www.nps.gov/home/naturescience/mammals.htm. Students will research and identify the food sources of the mammals. Students should record their information on the worksheet found in the Additional Resources section.

Using the information acquired, students can, on their own or as a class activity, make connections between the animals based upon the food sources or the habitats in which the animals are found.

ANIMALS OF THE PRAIRIE

**Pre-Visit
Activity #1
(suggested)**

Homestead National
Monument of America

PRAIRIE ANIMALS ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



Species Name	Food Sources	Habitat Characteristics
Mule Deer		
White Tailed Deer		
Coyote		
Red Fox		
Striped Skunk		
Mink		
Raccoon		
Opossum		
Eastern Mole		
Eastern Cottontail		
Beaver		
Plains Pocket Gopher		
Muskrat		
Norway Rat		
Franklin Ground Squirrel		

**Pre-Visit
Activity #1
(suggested)**

ANIMALS OF THE PRAIRIE

How are the animals connected based on their habitat and food sources?

Common Food Sources	Animals that feed off that source

Habitat Characteristics	Animals found in that habitat

ANIMALS OF THE PRAIRIE

Pre-Visit Activity #1 (suggested)



PARK-SPECIES LIST NPSpecies Report Generated: 2/8/2006

TSN	Std. Scientific Name	Preferred Scientific Name	Std. Common Name(s)	Preferred Common Name(s)
HOME - Homestead				
Animalia - Mammal				
Order: Artiodactyla - Family: Cervidae				
180698	Odocoileus hemionus		mule deer	
180699	Odocoileus virginianus	ODOCOILEUS VIRGINIANUS	white-tailed deer	WHITE-TAILED DEER
Order: Carnivora - Family: Canidae				
180599	Canis latrans	CANIS LATRANS	coyote	COYOTE
180609	Urocyon cinereogargenteus		common gray fox gray fox	
180605	Vulpes fulvus	VULPES FULVUS	red fox	RED FOX
180604	Vulpes vulpes			
Order: Carnivora - Family: Felidae				
203547	Felis rufus		bobcat	
180582	Lynx rufus			
Order: Carnivora - Family: Mephitidae				
180562	Mephitis mephitis	MEPHITIS MEPHITIS	striped skunk	STRIPED SKUNK
180570	Spilogale putorius		eastern spotted skunk spotted skunk	
Order: Carnivora - Family: Mustelidae				
180572	Lutra canadensis		river otter	
180556	Mustela frenata		long-tailed weasel	
180557	Mustela nigripes		black-footed ferret	
180554	Mustela nivalis		least weasel	
180553	Mustela vison	MUSTELA VISON	American mink mink	MINK
180565	Taxidea taxus		American badger badger	
Order: Carnivora - Family: Procyonidae				
180575	Procyon lotor	PROCYON LOTOR	common raccoon northern raccoon raccoon	RACCOON
Order: Chiroptera - Family: Molossidae				
180088	Tadarida brasiliensis		Brazilian free-tailed bat	
Order: Chiroptera - Family: Vespertilionidae				
180008	Eptesicus fuscus		big brown bat	
180014	Lasiurus noctivagans		silver-haired bat	

TSN	Std. Scientific Name	Preferred Scientific Name	Std. Common Name(s)	Preferred Common Name(s)
180016	Lasiurus borealis		eastern red bat	
180017	Lasiurus cinereus		red bat	
179989	Myotis keenii		hoary bat	
179988	Myotis lucifugus		Keen's myotis	
180000	Myotis septentrionalis		little brown bat	
180022	Nycticeius humeratus		little brown myotis	
180025	Pipistrellus subflavus		northern long-eared bat	
Order: Didelphimorphia - Family: Didelphidae				
522536	Didelphis marsupialis	DIDELPHIS MARSUPIALIS	northern myotis	
179921	Didelphis virginiana		evening bat	
180000	Nycticeius humeratus		eastern pipitrelle	OPOSSUM
180022	Pipistrellus subflavus		Virginia opossum	
180025	Pipistrellus subflavus		virginia opossum	
Order: Insectivora - Family: Soricidae				
179965	Blarina		American short-tailed shrew	
179967	Blarina brevicauda		mole shrew	
179968	Blarina carolinensis		northern short-tailed shrew	
179971	Crypotis parva		short-tailed shrew	
179929	Sorex cinereus	SOREX CINEREUS	southern short-tailed shrew	
Order: Insectivora - Family: Talpidae				
179979	Scalopus aquaticus	SCALOPUS AQUATICUS	bee shrew	
180115	Lepus californicus		least shrew	
180118	Lepus townsendii		little short-tailed shrew	MASKED SHREW
180124	Sylvilagus floridanus		chereus shrew	
Order: Rodentia - Family: Castoridae				
180212	Castor canadensis		common shrew	
180386	Zapus hudsonius		masked shrew	
Order: Rodentia - Family: Dipodidae				
180386	Zapus hudsonius		eastern mole	
Order: Rodentia - Family: Geomyidae				
180386	Zapus hudsonius		topos	
180386	Zapus hudsonius		black-tailed jack rabbit	
180386	Zapus hudsonius		black-tailed jackrabbit	
180386	Zapus hudsonius		white-tailed jack rabbit	
180386	Zapus hudsonius		white-tailed jackrabbit	
180386	Zapus hudsonius		eastern cottontail	EASTERN COTTONTAIL
180386	Zapus hudsonius		american beaver	
180386	Zapus hudsonius		beaver	BEAVER
180386	Zapus hudsonius		meadow jumping mouse	

Pre-Visit Activity #2 (suggested)

NATIVE VERSUS NON-NATIVE

Overview

Not all plants and animals found in the tallgrass prairie are original inhabitants of the tallgrass prairie. As species or food sources change, so do the animals that feed off them. The species that move in are non-native. The existence of these species alters the native ecosystem of the tallgrass prairie.

Time Needed

1 50-minute period.

Introductory Set

Discuss with students the impact that new elements in a society have on how they live. An example would be to imagine a favorite eating establishment being torn down and replaced with something new. How would that change the way that you live? Students should demonstrate some understanding of life being altered due to the change.

Procedure

Using the animals students researched in Pre-Visit Activity #1, have students determine whether they are native or non-native to the tallgrass prairie. Once students have completed their research, use a Smart-board or white board to make a graphic organizer of the native and non-native animals. Have students identify how they were able to determine whether the animals were native or non-native.

Enrichment Activities



Students should write about how the ecosystem is interconnected and how animals are reliant on each other and their habitat to survive.

Writing prompt: Why is it important to understand the relationship between plants and animals and their environment?

NATIVE VERSUS NON-NATIVE

Pre-Visit Activity #2 (suggested)

Native Versus Non-Native

Identify the following plants and animals found at Homestead National Monument of America and tell if they are native or non-native. A similar worksheet at the back of this unit has the name of the plant or animal and asks students to only identify if it is native or non-native.



Name of plant or animal

Native or non-native



Name of plant or animal



Native or non-native



Name of plant or animal

Native or non-native



Name of plant or animal

Native or non-native



Name of plant or animal

Native or non-native



Name of plant or animal

Native or non-native



Name of plant or animal

Native or non-native



Name of plant or animal

Native or non-native



Name of plant or animal

Native or non-native

RANGER-LED EXPERIENCE

Carnivore



Herbivore



Omnivore

RANGER-LED EXPERIENCE

Many animals rely on the tallgrass prairie ecosystem to survive. A park ranger will help students explore the adaptations of animals on the tallgrass prairie by examining the hides and skulls of various animals.

Ask students what animals they think they would find on the prairie in the 1860's. Do they think these same animals are alive and on the prairie today? Why or why not?

Break students up into small groups and give each group a hide, skull, track and scat of an animal. In their groups, have students discuss the following items:

- Identify if the animal is a carnivore (meat eating), herbivore (plant eating) or omnivore (meat and plant eating).
- Ask students to identify (using the skull) how they determined what the animal ate and whether the animal was a predator or prey.
- Ask the students to include life spans, diet, habitat, offspring and other characteristics.

Have the group's report out to the rest of the class after their small group discussions.

Adapt to classroom use: Set up similar centers in the classroom for students to discover the animals on the tallgrass prairie. (Some items may be borrowed from local Game and Parks Commissions.)

Enrichment

Activities



Have students research an animal from the tallgrass prairie ecosystem using the same questions as before. Have students report their findings to the class by doing a media presentation of their choosing.



Homestead National Monument of America is proud to be a pioneer in distance learning technology.

Contact the Education Coordinator at (402) 223-3514 to schedule your virtual field trip on Prairie Animals.

Post-Visit Activity #1 (suggested)

PRESERVATION AND CONSERVATION

Overview

The existence of various species in a tallgrass prairie ecosystem is based on the continued existence of that ecosystem. Some species, such as bison and black-footed ferret, have had their existence threatened. To maintain the existence of prairie animals, it is essential that the habitat where they thrive continues to exist. Efforts to preserve the tallgrass prairie ecosystem have been difficult as urbanization and agriculture expand.

Time Needed

2-3 50-minute periods.

Introductory Set

Discuss with students the near extinction of American Bison and how private individuals began the process of protecting their survival. Students may also share their knowledge of animals that have been threatened and have had their numbers increased due to preservation efforts. Students should also explore the impact these animals have on the ecosystem.

Procedure

Students should be divided into two groups for a debate. One group will research and argue in favor of preservation activities while the other group will argue against preservation. To narrow the discussion the teacher may want to select a species/topic. Use one period or more for research and preparation and one for the debate.

Example Topics:

- With the rise in white-tailed deer populations, should more hunting permits be granted to reduce the numbers?
- Should the hunting of Prairie Dogs on private lands be regulated?
- Should animals that prey on native species be eliminated to help the survival of native animals?

Enrichment

Activities



Students will write about their personal position on the debate topic and how their views were changed or unchanged by the debate. Students should refer to specifics from the debate to demonstrate their attentiveness throughout the process.

HOW I CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

Post-Visit Activity #2 (suggested)



Overview

The preservation of the tallgrass prairie ecosystem may seem to be one of grand scale that can only be carried out by large organizations. The reality is that everyone can aid in the continued existence of prairie plants and animals by doing small things. In this lesson students will be able to develop their own plans for preservation.

Time Needed

Can be done as an extension activity from the classroom. Presentations can occur in class and time is determined based on the number of presentations.

Procedure

Students may be placed in small groups or complete the project individually. Students are to create a presentation that describes various preservation techniques that they could implement in their personal environment. Students may use PowerPoint, video documentaries, or posters (teacher may also select) to express their plan to help preserve the tallgrass prairie ecosystem. Students may focus on specific animals that they feel they can help the most.

The length of the presentation can be determined by the teacher.

CHARACTER EDUCATION

Respect

Respectful students treat people and possessions with consideration. They tolerate other's beliefs and accept individual differences. They do not treat people or possessions with violence, meanness or rudeness. They treat others the way they want to be treated.

5 Minute Focus

Every animal has its place in the prairie ecosystem.
Brainstorm about prairie animals and what their purpose is.

- How are they connected to the other animals or plants on the prairies?
- What happens if they disappear?

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Homestead National Monument of America

PRAIRIE ANIMALS ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



Species Name	Food Sources	Habitat Characteristics
Mule Deer		
White Tailed Deer		
Coyote		
Red Fox		
Striped Skunk		
Mink		
Raccoon		
Opossum		
Eastern Mole		
Eastern Cottontail		
Beaver		
Plains Pocket Gopher		
Muskrat		
Norway Rat		
Franklin Ground Squirrel		

PARK-SPECIES LIST

NPSpecies Report

Generated: 2/8/2006

TSN	Std. Scientific Name	Preferred Scientific Name	Std. Common Name(s)	Preferred Common Name(s)
HOME - Homestead				
Animalia - Mammal				
Order: Artiodactyla - Family: Cervidae				
180698	Odocoileus hemionus		mule deer	
180699	Odocoileus virginianus	ODOCOILEUS VIRGINIANUS	white-tailed deer	WHITE-TAILED DEER
Order: Carnivora - Family: Canidae				
180599	Canis latrans	CANIS LATRANS	coyote	COYOTE
180609	Urocyon cinereoargenteus		common gray fox gray fox	
180605	Vulpes fulvus	VULPES FULVUS		RED FOX
180604	Vulpes vulpes		red fox	
Order: Carnivora - Family: Felidae				
203547	Felis rufus			
180582	Lynx rufus		bobcat	
Order: Carnivora - Family: Mephitidae				
180562	Mephitis mephitis	MEPHITIS MEPHITIS	striped skunk	STRIPED SKUNK
180570	Spilogale putorius		eastern spotted skunk spotted skunk	
Order: Carnivora - Family: Mustelidae				
180572	Lutra canadensis		river otter	
180556	Mustela frenata		long-tailed weasel	
180557	Mustela nigripes		black-footed ferret	
180554	Mustela nivalis		least weasel	
180553	Mustela vison	MUSTELA VISON	American mink mink	MINK
180565	Taxidea taxus		American badger badger	
Order: Carnivora - Family: Procyonidae				
180575	Procyon lotor	PROCYON LOTOR	common raccoon northern raccoon raccoon	RACCOON
Order: Chiroptera - Family: Molossidae				
180088	Tadarida brasiliensis		Brazilian free-tailed bat	
Order: Chiroptera - Family: Vespertilionidae				
180008	Eptesicus fuscus		big brown bat	
180014	Lasionycteris noctivagans		silver-haired bat	

TSN	Std. Scientific Name	Preferred Scientific Name	Std. Common Name(s)	Preferred Common Name(s)
180016	Lasiurus borealis		eastern red bat red bat	
180017	Lasiurus cinereus		hoary bat	
179989	Myotis keenii		Keen's myotis	
179988	Myotis lucifugus		little brown bat little brown myotis	
180000	Myotis septentrionalis		northern long-eared bat northern myotis	
180022	Nycticeius humeralis		evening bat	
180025	Pipistrellus subflavus		eastern pipistrelle	
Order: Didelphimorphia - Family: Didelphidae				
552536	Didelphis marsupialis	DIDELPHIS MARSUPIALIS		OPOSSUM
179921	Didelphis virginiana		Virginia opossum virginia opossum	
Order: Insectivora - Family: Soricidae				
179965	Blarina		American short-tailed shrews	
179967	Blarina brevicauda		mole shrew northern short-tailed shrew short-tailed shrew	
179968	Blarina carolinensis		southern short-tailed shrew	
179971	Cryptotis parva		bee shrew least shrew little short-tailed shrew small short-tailed shrew	
179929	Sorex cinereus	SOREX CINEREUS	cinereus shrew common shrew masked shrew	MASKED SHREW
Order: Insectivora - Family: Talpidae				
179979	Scalopus aquaticus	SCALOPUS AQUATICUS	eastern mole topos	EASTERN MOLE
Order: Lagomorpha - Family: Leporidae				
180115	Lepus californicus		black-tailed jack rabbit black-tailed jackrabbit	
180118	Lepus townsendii		white-tailed jack rabbit white-tailed jackrabbit	
180124	Sylvilagus floridanus	SYLVILAGUS FLORIDANUS	eastern cottontail	EASTERN COTTONTAIL
Order: Rodentia - Family: Castoridae				
180212	Castor canadensis	CASTOR CANADENSIS	american beaver beaver	BEAVER
Order: Rodentia - Family: Dipodidae				
180386	Zapus hudsonius		meadow jumping mouse	
Order: Rodentia - Family: Geomyidae				

TSN	Std. Scientific Name	Preferred Scientific Name	Std. Common Name(s)	Preferred Common Name(s)
180216	Geomys bursarius	GEOMYS BURSARIUS	plains pocket gopher	PLAINS POCKET GOPHER
Order: Rodentia - Family: Heteromyidae				
-9746442	Chaetodipus flavescens			
552483	Chaetodipus hispidus		hispid pocket mouse	
180264	Perognathus hispidus		hispid pocket mouse	
Order: Rodentia - Family: Muridae				
180312	Microtus ochrogaster		prairie vole	
180297	Microtus pennsylvanicus		meadow vole	
180366	Mus musculus		house mouse	
180318	Ondatra zibethicus	ONDATRA ZIBETHICUS	muskbeaver muskrat	MUSKRAT
180382	Onychomys leucogaster		northern grasshopper mouse	
180278	Peromyscus leucopus		white-footed mouse	
180276	Peromyscus maniculatus		deer mouse	
180363	Rattus norvegicus	RATTUS NORVEGICUS	Norway rat norway rat	NORWAY RAT
180343	Reithrodontomys megalotis		western harvest mouse	
180344	Reithrodontomys montanus		Plains harvest mouse plains harvest mouse	
180349	Sigmodon hispidus		hispid cotton rat	
180324	Synaptomys cooperi		southern bog lemming	
Order: Rodentia - Family: Sciuridae				
-501611	Citellus franklini	CITELLUS FRANKLINI	Franklin ground squirrel	FRANKLIN GROUND SQUIRREL
180186	Cynomys ludovicianus		Arizona black-tailed prairie dog black-tailed prairie dog	
180170	Glaucomys volans		southern flying squirrel	
180137	Marmota monax	MARMOTA MONAX	woodchuck	WOODCHUCK
180175	Sciurus carolinensis		eastern gray squirrel gray squirrel	
180172	Sciurus niger	SCIURUS NIGER	eastern fox squirrel fox squirrel	EASTERN FOX SQUIRREL
180153	Spermophilus franklinii		Franklin's ground squirrel	
180162	Spermophilus		thirteen-lined ground squirrel	
180207	Tamias striatus		eastern chipmunk	
Order: Xenarthra - Family: Dasypodidae				
180103	Dasypus novemcinctus		long-nosed armadillo nine-banded armadillo	

Native Versus Non-Native

Name _____

Identify the following plants and animals found at Homestead National Monument and indicate if they are native or non-native.



Name of plant or animal

Native or non-native



Name of plant or animal

Native or non-native



Name of plant or animal

Native or non-native



Name of plant or animal

Native or non-native



Name of plant or animal

Native or non-native



Name of plant or animal

Native or non-native



Name of plant or animal

Native or non-native



Name of plant or animal

Native or non-native



Name of plant or animal

Native or non-native



Name of plant or animal

Native or non-native

Native Versus Non-Native **Key**

Name _____

Identify the following plants and animals found at Homestead National Monument and indicate if they are native or non-native.



13-Line Ground Squirrel

Native or non-native

Native



Tall Thistle

Native or non-native

Native



Garlic Mustard

Native or non-native

Non-native



House Mouse

Native or non-native

Non-native



Ring-necked Pheasant

Native or non-native

Non-native



Musk Thistle

Native or non-native

Non-native



Smooth Sumac

Native or non-native

Native



American Badger

Native or non-native

Native



Prairie Coneflower

Native or non-native

Native



Starling

Native or non-native

Non-native

Visit Activity

While visiting Homestead National Monument of America students will be able to see the habitat that allows the prairie animals at the monument to survive.

Students can complete the following chart while on a Prairie walk of their own or with a ranger.

Habitat Characteristics Observed	Animals that may be present