# Prairie

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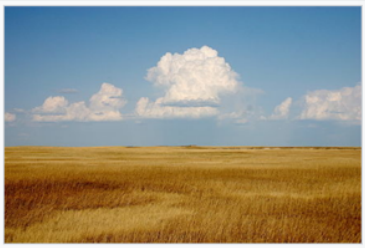
*For other uses, see Prairie (disambiguation).*



Prairie, Badlands National Park, South Dakota, US, is in the mixed grasslands region containing some species of tall grass, and some of short grass

**Prairies** are ecosystems considered part of the temperate grasslands, savannas, and shrublands biome by ecologists, based on similar temperate climates, moderate rainfall, and a composition of grasses, herbs, and shrubs, rather than trees, as the dominant vegetation type. Temperate grassland regions include the Pampas of Argentina, southern Brazil and Uruguay, as well as the steppes of Eurasia. Lands typically referred to as "prairie" tend to be in North America. The term encompasses the area referred to as the Interior Lowlands of Canada, the United States, and Mexico, which includes all of the Great Plains as well as the wetter, hillier land to the east.

In the U.S., the area is constituted by most or all of the states of North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas, and Oklahoma, and sizable parts of the states of Montana, Wyoming, Colorado, New Mexico, Texas, Missouri, Iowa, Illinois, Indiana, Wisconsin, and western and southern Minnesota. The Central Valley of California is also a prairie. The Canadian Prairies occupy vast areas of Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta.

Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prairie

Prairie cicada - *Megatibicen dorsatus*

While many of us may be familiar with the dog day or annual cicadas found in our yards—prairies also support cicadas. People who've seen this insect in high quality prairies say they "fly up like partridges when disturbed." The adult prairie cicada's body is large, approximately one and half to two inches long and brownish yellow with conspicuous brown and white markings. Prairie cicada nymphs, instead of feeding on the roots of trees like their city and forest cousins, prefer to suck the sap of the long roots of prairie dock and compass plant.

Source: http://inhs-uiuc.blogspot.com/2010/07/summer-cicadas.html

The **red milkweed beetle** (***Tetraopes tetrophthalmus***) is a beetle in the family Cerambycidae. The binomial genus and species names are both derived from the Ancient Greek for "four eyes." As in many longhorn beetles, the antennae are situated very near the eye–in the red milkweed beetle, this adaptation has been carried to an extreme: the antennal base actually bisects the eye. (See Figure 1.)

Figure 1. Antenna bisects eye

The milkweed beetle, a herbivore, is given this name because they are generally host specific to milkweed plants (genus *Asclepias*). It is thought the beetle and its early instars derive a measure of protection from predators by incorporating toxins from the plant into their bodies, thereby becoming distasteful, much as the monarch butterfly and its larvae do. The red and black coloring are aposematic, advertising the beetles' inedibility. There are many milkweed-eating species of insect that use the toxins contained in the plant as a chemical defense.

**Red milkweed beetle**

**Scientific classification**

| | |
|---|---|
| Kingdom: | Animalia |
| Phylum: | Arthropoda |
| Class: | Insecta |
| Order: | Coleoptera |
| Family: | Cerambycidae |
| Genus: | *Tetraopes* |
| Species: | ***T. tetrophthalmus*** |

**Binomial name**

***Tetraopes tetrophthalmus***
Forster, 1771

Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tetraopes_tetrophthalmus

***Chrysochus auratus***, the **dogbane beetle**,[1] of eastern North America, is a member of the insect subfamily Eumolpinae. It is primarily found east of the Rocky Mountains. One of the brightest in its family, it is iridescent blue-green with a metallic copper, golden or crimson shine. Its diet consists of dogbane and milkweed. It measures between 8 and 11 mm (less than 0.5 inches) and has a convex, oval shape.[2]

**Dogbane beetle**

Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chrysochus_auratus