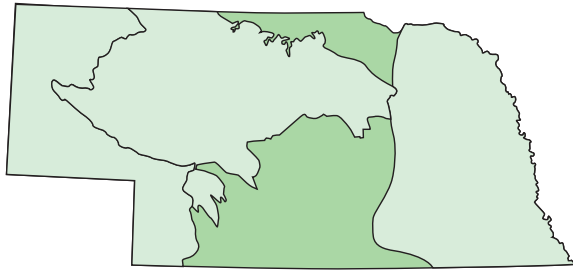


Mixedgrass Prairie Region



The mixedgrass prairie region is a transitional zone between the tallgrass prairie of the east and the shortgrass prairie of the west. As a result, the vegetation of this area varies, with a combination of tallgrass and shortgrass prairie plants. There are many wetlands, rivers, and streams. Wooded zones surround almost every waterway. Precipitation is greater in the east, with about 28 inches annually, compared with 20 inches in the west.

The land is primarily used for agriculture, with around two-thirds converted to cropland and much of the remaining third used for grazing livestock. There is however, a diversity of wildlife found in this region, including the annual spring staging of 500,000 sandhill cranes around the Platte River in central Nebraska. This spectacle draws around 80,000 nature enthusiasts each year, with about half from outside of Nebraska.



Mammal Viewing Tips

Mammals can be difficult to see due to their secretive nature.

1. **Stay quiet and calm.**
2. **Be discreet** — wear muted clothing and limit fragrances.
3. **Look for signs** — tracks and scat can tell you if a mammal is in the area, even when you don't see them.
4. **Use binoculars** to get a closer look. Always keep a respectful distance from wildlife.
5. **Be patient.**
6. **Go to where the habitat is** — visit state parks and other public lands.
7. **Do your homework** — learn what species of mammals live in the area.



Mammals of the Nebraska Mixedgrass Prairie

Tracks

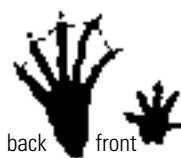


American Badger

Length: 2.5 - 3 in.

Width: 2.3 - 2.8 in.

Stride: 6 - 12 in. (walking)



Beaver

Length: f 2 - 3.2 in., h 5 - 7 in.

Width: f 2 - 3.5 in., h 3.3 - 5 in.

Stride: 3 - 6.5 in. (walking)



Coyote

Length: 2 - 3.2 in.

Width: 1.4 - 2.4 in.

Stride: 8 - 16 in. (walking)



Bobcat

Length: 1.8 - 2.5 in.

Width: 1.8 - 2.5 in.

Stride: 8 - 16 in. (walking)



White-tailed Deer

Length: 2 - 3.4 in.

Width: 1.6 - 2.5 in.

Stride: 10 - 22 in. (walking)

PRINTS NOT TO SCALE



Identification Guide

NEBRASKA
- GAME PARKS -

OutdoorNebraska.org



Eastern Cottontail

Sylvilagus floridanus

Size: L: 15.6 - 18.8 in., W: 1.8 - 3.4 lbs.

Description: Buff-brown fur, some black/gray hair tips, rufous patch on back of neck and white. Large eyes, long ears, powerful hind legs and short puffy brown and white tail.

Diet: Plants

Habitat: Rural to urban

Viewing: Year-round, statewide



River Otter

Lontra canadensis

Size: L: 35 - 52 in., W: 11 - 30 lbs.

Description: Semi-aquatic, brown fur, flat head, long body and tail, short legs.

Diet: Fish, eggs, crayfish, reptiles and small mammals

Habitat: Rivers, ponds, lakes and marshes

Viewing: Year-round, statewide



Red Fox

Vulpus vulpus

Size: L: 18 - 35.4 in., W: 6.5 - 24 lbs.

Description: Fur light to deep red/brown, triangle face and ears, dark nose, eyes, and legs/feet. Bushy tail often with a white tip.

Diet: Small mammals, insects, seeds and fruit

Habitat: Rural to urban

Viewing: Year-round, statewide



Big Brown Bat

Eptesicus fuscus

Size: L: 4.3 - 5.1 in., W: 17 - 23 g.

Description: Tan-brown body, black and hairless face, wings, and tail. Females are larger than males.

Diet: Insects

Habitat: Rural to urban

Viewing: Year-round (hibernating November - April), statewide



American Badger

Taxidea taxus

Size: L: 20 - 35 in., W: 9 - 27 lbs.

Description: Long brown-black fur with white cheeks and white stripe from nose to back of neck.

Diet: Animals, mainly small prey

Habitat: Open areas, prairies

Viewing: Year-round, statewide



Coyote

Canis latrans

Size: L: 48 - 53 in., W: 15 - 46 lbs.

Description: Gray-brown fur above, whiter below. Triangular ears, black nose and bushy tail.

Diet: Various animals and some plants

Habitat: Various, rural to urban

Viewing: Year-round, statewide



American Beaver

Castor canadensis

Size: L: 36 - 52 in., W: 34 - 64 lbs.

Description: Large, semi-aquatic rodent, dark brown fur, short front legs with large claws, webbed hind feet, orange teeth and long, flat scaly tail.

Diet: Bark, leaves, aquatic vegetation

Habitat: Areas with slow-moving fresh water

Viewing: Year-round, statewide



Raccoon

Procyon lotor

Size: L: 24 - 38 in., W: 7.6 - 20.0 lbs.

Description: Stout gray-brown with black mask and rings on bushy tail. Pointed face, dexterous front paws to feel and grasp food.

Diet: Small animals, fruit, garbage

Habitat: Rural to urban

Viewing: Year-round, statewide



Bobcat

Lynx rufus

Size: L: 30 - 48 in., W: 11 - 30 lbs.

Description: Varied brown fur with darker speckle/spotting, tufted ears, large paws, and short, bobbed tail.

Diet: Animals, mainly small prey

Habitat: Various, forest to fields

Viewing: Year-round, statewide



Muskrat

Ondatra zibethicus

Size: L: 16.0 - 25.5 in., W: 2.5 - 3.5 lbs.

Description: Semi-aquatic rodent with dark brown head, coloring gets lighter moving down sides and back. Partly webbed hind toes and long, nearly hairless tail.

Diet: Cattails, aquatic vegetation

Habitat: Shallow water, wetlands

Viewing: Year-round, statewide



Striped Skunk

Mephitis mephitis

Size: L: 18 - 32 in., W: 2 - 13 lbs.

Description: Triangular head, bushy tail, black fur with thin white stripe down center of face, and white V starting at the base of the neck.

Diet: Insects, small mammals, seeds and fruit

Habitat: Rural to urban

Viewing: Year-round, statewide



White-tailed Deer

Sylvilagus floridanus

Size: L: 63 - 86.6 in., W: 115 - 300 lbs.

Description: Red-brown fur, white under throat, body and tail. Long legs, short tail. Males have antlers.

Diet: Plants

Habitat: Fields, woods, farmlands

Viewing: Year-round, statewide