

SEASONAL LIST

Plants of the High School Prairie, Ames, Iowa

GRASSES — Gramineae — All seasons.

Big Bluestem - *Andropogon gerardi*
Little Bluestem - *Andropogon scoparius*
Sideoats Grama - *Bouteloua curtipendula*
Hairy Grama - *Bouteloua hirsuta*
Wild Rye - *Elymus canadensis*
Muhly Grass - *Muhlenbergia cuspidata*
Switch Grass - *Panicum virgatum*
Rosette Panicgrass - *Panicum sp.*
Indian Grass - *Sorghastrum nutans*
Tall Dropseed - *Sporobolus asper*
Prairie Dropseed - *Sporobolus heterolepis*
Porcupine or Needle Grass - *Stipa spartea*

FORBS — Blooming in spring.

Compositae - Daisy family

Pussytoes - *Antennaria plantaginifolia* - white

Cyperaceae - Sedge family

Sedge - *Carex sp.* - greenish

Iridaceae - Iris family

Blue-Eyed Grass - *Sisyrinchium campestre* - blue

Leguminosae - Bean family

Ground Plum - *Astragalus caryocarpus* - purple
Milk Vetch - *Astragalus canadensis* - yellow to white

False Indigo - *Baptisia leucantha* - tall - white

False Indigo - *Baptisia leucophaea* - cream

Vetch - *Vicia americana* - violet blue

Oxalidaceae - Sorrel family

Wood Sorrel - *Oxalis violacea* - pink to purple

Ranunculaceae - Buttercup family

Windflower - *Anemone canadensis* - white

Thimble Windflower - *Anemone cylindrica* - white

Rosaceae - Rose family

Wild Strawberry - *Fragaria virginiana* - white

Cinquefoil (old field) - *Potentilla simplex* - yellow

Santalaceae - Sandalwood family

Bastard Toadflax - *Comandra umbellata* - white

Violaceae - Violet family

Prairie Violet - *Viola pedatifida* - blue to purple

FORBS — Blooming in summer.

Asclepiadaceae - Milkweed family

Whorled Milkweed - *Asclepias verticillata* - white

Compositae - Daisy family

Yarrow - *Achillea lanulosa* - white

Indian Plantain - *Cacalia tuberosa* - white

Tickseed - *Coreopsis palmata* - yellow

Daisy Fleabane - *Erigeron strigosus* - white

Purple Coneflower - *Echinacea pallida* - purple

Black-Eyed Susan - *Rudbeckia hirta* - yellow

Labiatae - Mint family

Wild Bergamot - *Monarda fistulosa* - pink

Dwarf Skullcap - *Scutellaria parvula* - blue

Leguminosae - Bean family

Lead Plant - *Amorpha canescens* - purple

Tick Trefoil - *Desmodium canadense* - purple

Bush Clover - *Lespedeza capitata* - white

Purple Prairie Clover - *Petalostemum purpureum*

White Prairie Clover - *Petalostemum candidum*

Silverleaf Scurfpea - *Psoralea argophylla* - blue

Primulaceae - Primrose family

Loosestrife - *Lysimachia ciliata* - yellow

Ranunculaceae - Buttercup family

Plains Larkspur - *Delphinium virescens* - white

Rosaceae - Rose family

Tall Cinquefoil - *Potentilla arguta* - cream

Cinquefoil - *Potentilla norvegica* - yellow

Prairie rose - *Rosa arkansana* - pink to rose

Saxifragaceae - Saxifrage family

Alumroot - *Heuchera richardsonii* - greenish

Solanaceae - Nightshade family

Groundcherry - *Physalis heterophylla* - cream

Groundcherry - *Physalis virginiana* - cream

Verbenaceae - Verbena family

Vervain - *Verbena stricta* - blue

FORBS — Blooming in fall.

Compositae - Daisy family

Blue Aster - *Aster azureus* - blue

Heath Aster - *Aster ericoides* - white

Fall Aster - *Aster laevis* - blue

Silky Aster - *Aster sericeus* - silvery leaf - purple

Saw Toothed Sunflower - *Helianthus grosseserratus*

Showy Sunflower - *Helianthus laetiflorus* - yellow

Gayfeather or Blazing Star - *Liatris aspera* - purple

Kansas Gayfeather - *Liatris pycnostachya* - purple

Yellow Coneflower - *Ratibida pinnata* - yellow

Compass Plant - *Silphium laciniatum* - yellow

Common Golden Rod - *Solidago altissima* - yellow

Old Field Golden Rod - *Solidago nemoralis* - yellow

Stiff Golden Rod - *Solidago rigida* - yellow

Ironweed - *Vernonia baldwini* - purple

Gentianaceae - Gentian family

Indigo Gentian - *Gentiana puberula* - blue

Leguminosae - Bean family

Hog Peanut - *Amphicarpa bracteata* - pink

TREES

Prairie Crabapple, Downy Hawthorn, and Honey Locust are present in the prairie edge.

The Ames Conservation Council is composed of organizations within Story County, Iowa, who have an expressed interest in and concern for the quality of man's natural environment.

Hypothetical List

BIRDS OF THE HIGH SCHOOL PRAIRIE, AMES, IOWA

Sharp-shinned Hawk

Cooper's Hawk

Red-tailed Hawk

Broad-winged Hawk

Sparrow Hawk

Bobwhite

Ring-necked Pheasant

Killdeer

Mourning Dove

Yellow-billed Cuckoo

Great Horned Owl

Common Nighthawk

Chimney Swift

Yellow-shafted Flicker

Hairy Woodpecker

Downy Woodpecker

Eastern Kingbird

Horned Lark

Bank Swallow

Rough-winged Swallow

Purple Martin

Blue Jay

Common Crow

Black-capped Chickadee

Robin

Golden-crowned Kinglet

Ruby-crowned Kinglet

Loggerhead Shrike

Starling

Myrtle Warbler

Yellowthroat

House Sparrow

Bobolink

Western Meadowlark

Common Grackle

Brown-headed Cowbird

Cardinal

Dickcissel

American Goldfinch

Savannah Sparrow

Grasshopper Sparrow

LeConte's Sparrow

Vesper Sparrow

Slate-colored Junco

Tree Sparrow

Field Sparrow

Song Sparrow

Hypothetical List of

MAMMALS OF THE HIGH SCHOOL PRAIRIE, AMES, IOWA

Opossum (*Didelphis marsupialis*)

Masked Shrew (*Sorex cinereus*)

Short-tailed Shrew (*Blarina brevicauda*)

Eastern Mole (*Scalopus aquaticus*)

Little Brown Myotis (*Myotis lucifugus*)

Big Brown Bat (*Eptesicus fuscus*)

Red Bat (*Lasiurus borealis*)

Hoary Bat (*Lasiurus cinereus*)

Eastern Cottontail (*Sylvilagus floridanus*)

Woodchuck (*Marmota monax*)

Thirteen-lined Ground Squirrel (*Citellus tridecemlineatus*)

Fox Squirrel (*Sciurus niger*)

Plains Pocket Gopher (*Geomys bursarius*)

Western Harvest Mouse (*Reithrodontomys megalotis*)

Deer Mouse (*Peromyscus maniculatus*)

White-footed Mouse (*Peromyscus leucopus*)

Meadow Vole (*Microtus pennsylvanicus*)

Prairie Vole (*Microtus ochrogaster*)

House Mouse (*Mus musculus*)

Meadow Jumping Mouse (*Zapus hudsonius*)

Red Fox (*Vulpes fulva*)

Raccoon (*Procyon lotor*)

Mink (*Mustela vison*)

Spotted Skunk (*Spilogale putorius*)

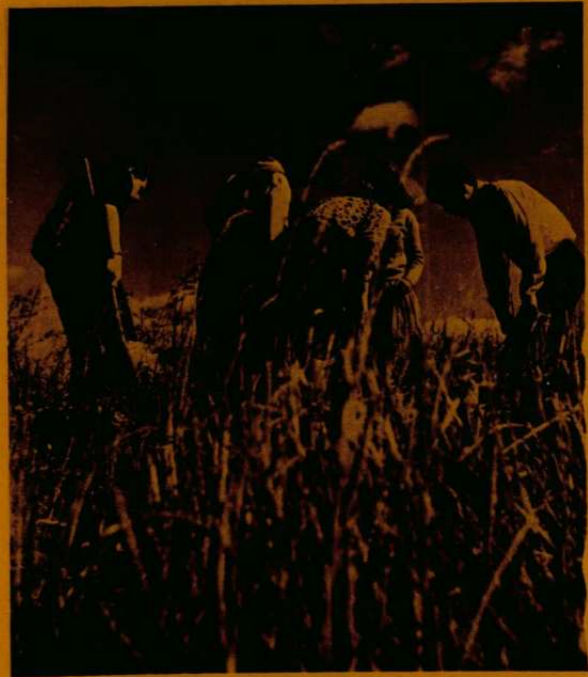
Striped Skunk (*Mephitis mephitis*)

Badger (*Taxidea taxus*)

White-tailed Deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*)

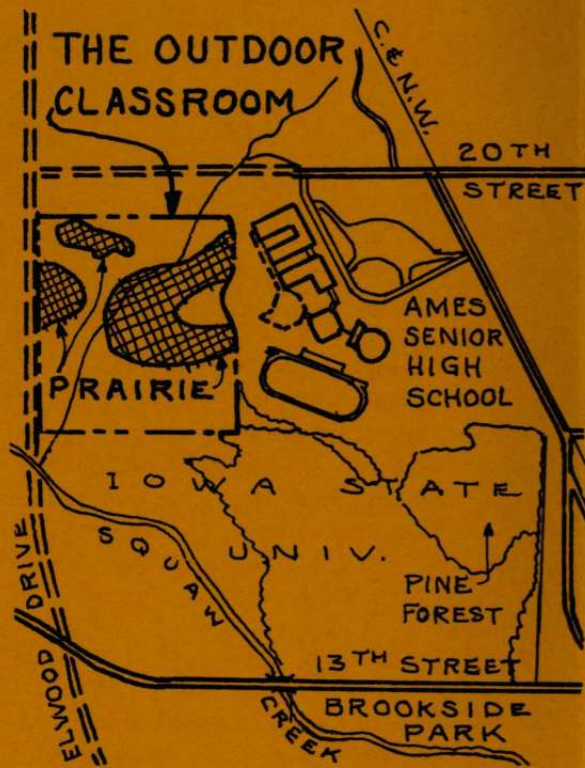
THE AMES PRAIRIE

ENDANGERED HERITAGE



Prepared by

Ames Conservation Council



A prairie is a living community of interdependent native plants and animals that have evolved over thousands of years. A tremendous variety of wildflowers and tall grass species made up the prairie plant community in what is now Iowa. Most of this prairie disappeared with the development of a great agricultural state.

Originally, trees grew only along the rivers and streams in this area and 80% of the state was blanketed with thousands of acres of flowing tall grasses and wildflowers. Vast herds of bison grazed the prairies and were hunted by the Indians that lived along the streams.



With the 1800's came the white settlers who drove the buffalo and Indians from the land and subjected the prairies to the consequences of their agricultural ventures. They turned the vibrant soil with their oxen and plows and sowed their seed. The prairie plants had nurtured the soil well and the settlers' seed produced great yields and, for Iowa, great wealth. The settlers observed the results of their efforts and eventually cultivated nearly all of the original prairie land.

They believed the prairie soil's fertility would last forever, but today we find this disturbingly untrue. Today's rapid despoilation of the Earth's natural resources demands that we reconsider our relationship with the land and all that lives upon it. We must develop a new understanding and respect for our environment.

Few prairie remnants throughout the state contain the quantity and quality of plant life that exists in the Ames High School prairie, a 7 1/2 acre portion of a 22 acre natural area adjacent to Ames Senior High School. Four of the larger areas in Iowa have been set aside as state preserves.



The Ames High School prairie should be preserved for a number of reasons.

The prairie, with its surrounding natural area, is an unexcelled addition to the Ames school system as an outdoor classroom. Students of all ages, from Ames and surrounding communities, may benefit from the unique education they receive in such a facility. Under such circumstances students will have an added opportunity to evaluate and appreciate the natural environment, as well as to observe in the field many biological processes that frequently are only discussed indoors.

Students would not be the only ones to benefit from maintaining the prairie. Many townspeople would enjoy walking through the prairie during their leisure hours. The prairie would also serve as an excellent research area for scientists in their attempt to gain a better understanding of the delicate balance of nature and man's position in the environment.

Whatever the level of interest—education, research or recreation—the Ames High School prairie is an important tool in the development of greater environmental awareness and appreciation. Such awareness and appreciation are imperative if we are to resolve successfully the future's most pressing problem—*environmental contamination*.

Since its purchase in 1956 by the Ames School Board, the prairie has been subjected to various disturbances, but remains essentially intact. Its continued existence is only guaranteed on a short term basis because of the demand for additional classrooms and athletic facilities. Under present policies, a newly elected school board can reverse administrative decisions of previous school boards. Future preservation, therefore, is not assured.

Attempts by many concerned citizens to preserve the prairie permanently have met with little success. New approaches toward preservation are being made but the continued existence of the Ames High School prairie relies heavily on the active, participating concern of the *entire* community.

The Ames Conservation Council will be exploring every possible avenue in order to maintain the prairie for future generations. Your help is needed!

