

The Grasslands: Plant and Animal Adaptations

Plants and animals living in the Grasslands must be able to adapt to the lack of trees and heavy brush for shelter as well as the seasonal drought and limited rainfall. Animals and plants must be able to adapt to the two seasons (summer and winter) of the Grasslands. Grasslands include prairies, steppes, plains and savannah. The Grasslands are on every continent with the exception of Antarctica.

Plant Adaptations in the Grasslands Biome

Plants have many adaptations to survive the Grasslands Biome. The plants have deep, spreading root systems that allow them strength and moisture during times of drought. Most of the plants have long narrow leaves that don't need as much water. The grasses grow from the bottom and grow close to the ground. They have strong roots which means they won't be destroyed when animals walk on them or eat them. Grasslands are susceptible to fires but the plants hearty root system enables them to survive fires and soon after a fire, they will begin sprouting. The softer stems allow the plants to bend rather than break in the Grassland winds. Many of the plants are pollinated by the windy conditions of the Grassland. Some of the grasses and bushes have attractive blossoms which attract insects to pollinate them.

Examples of Plants found in the Grasslands:

There are two main types of plants in the Grasslands, grasses and shrubs. There are thousands of types of grasses in the grasslands. Prairie Rose, Gumweed, Gumbo Primrose, Spiderwort, Golden Rod, Clover, Wild Indigo, and Coneflower.

Animal Adaptations in the Grasslands Biome

Many Grassland animals are very fast which helps them escape predators and others are camouflaged in their outer layer which protects them from their prey. It's felt that many of the animals are only active during the rain season. Many of the Grassland animals are herbivores and will graze on the grasses found in the Grasslands. Many grazing animals have developed digestive systems that enable them to survive on grasses. Smaller animals in the Grasslands hide easily in the grasses. Some prairie animals have front paws and leg that help them to burrow into the ground. Many Grassland animals are nocturnal which means they are only active at night and are concealed from predators during the day.

Examples of Animals found in the Grasslands:

Mice, Prairie Dogs, Insects, Bison, Zebras, Elephants, Giraffes, Lion, Brown Hyena, Warthog, Ostrich, Bumble Bees, Coyotes, Elk, Kangaroos.