

# Steppes' Ecosystems



- Steppes are droughty ecosystems of a moderate belt in which the vegetative cover is formed mainly by different types of herbs among which the main place is occupied by cereals.



Feather-grass (Stipa)







Prairie ("meadow", "lawn") is the North American form of steppe, a vegetative zone on the Midwest of the USA and Canada. It makes east edge of Great Plains. The limited vegetation expressed in a rarity of trees and bushes, is caused by a midland arrangement and Rocky mountains covering prairie from the West from deposits. Droughty environmental conditions are connected with these circumstances.

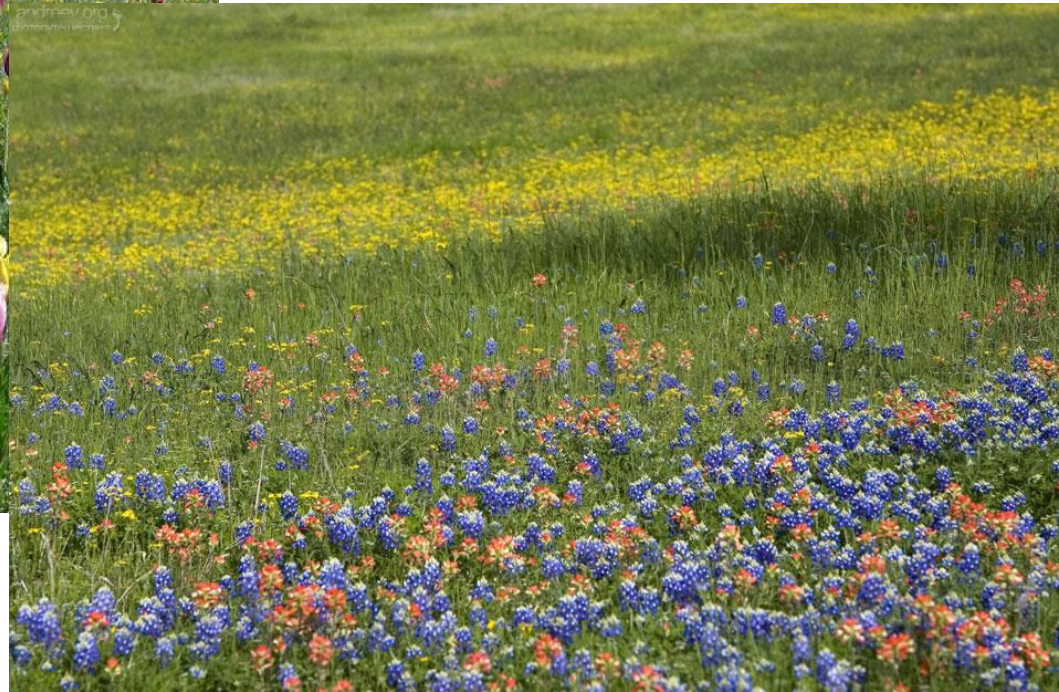




# The Plant and Animal Life of Steppes of the Saratov Region and Prairies of Texas Is Very Similar



- Prairie of Texas



Steppe of the Saratov  
region







- Natural symbol of Saratov is a tulip of Shrenka



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- Natural symbol of Texas is a flower – Bluebonnet

# Fauna of Steppes and Prairies

- Birds in steppes and prairies can have the diversified menu. They can eat seeds of plants, insects, reptiles, small rodents.



The bustard (*Otis tarda*) is a large bird (to 16 kg) with typical patronizing coloring.



Little bustard (*Otis tetrax*) is similar on a way of life to the bustard, but smaller in sizes.



Crane-deadly  
(*Anthropoides maiden*)







The big steppe black grouse  
(*Tympanuchus cupido*)



Greater Prairie Chicken



- The small sizes of rodents make them vulnerable and dependent on climatic conditions. 80 % of mammals of a steppe zone live in holes. To worry severe winter these settled animals eat a lot in summer, accumulate thick grease layers, reserve food in holes.



Marmot ordinary  
(Mormota bobac)



Meadow doggies (Cynomys)





- Saiga (*Saiga tatarica*) is the unique remained kind of wild hoofed animals in steppes. The animal is perfectly well adapted for life in open spaces. The compact, dense body and harmonious extremities allow to accelerate speed to 60-80 km/h. These nomads spend a lot of time in constant movement. The specific form of the nasal cavities formed soft, mobile trunk which allows to filter effectively from a dust, to warm or cool inhaled air.



- Pronghorn (*Antilocapra americana*) is a ruminant, most ancient of hoofed animals of the North America. They are well adapted for fast movement thanks to a thick trachea, voluminous lungs and the big heart which quickly drives the blood enriched with oxygen on all body.





# Similarity of Environmental Problems

- Before steppes were occupied by herds of hoofed animals, wild horses have been exterminated by the person. Flocking in a combination with a nomadic way of life provided safety of steppe herbage, and plants could restore quickly.



- Huge herds of bison were found in prairies. Now bison have remained in national parks.





- Steppes all over the world are among the most broken and least protected ecosystems; last decade this situation is more and more realized and draws the increasing attention first of all at level of the international institutes and the organizations.



# • Ecological Dictionary

steppe	степь
cereals	злаки
prairie	прерия
bustard	дрофа
crane	журавль
grouse	куропатка
marmot	сурок
saiga	сайгак
nomad	кочевник
herd	стадо
bison	бизон
pronghorn	вилорог







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# Thanks