



pale purple
coneflower | 1



This sign is dedicated to the memory of Wally Miller, a friend and neighbor of Rose Lake.

PRAIRIES in JEFFERSON COUNTY



meadowlark | 2



differential
grasshopper | 3



blazing star | 4



bumblebee on butterfly milkweed | 5

DIVERSITY OF PLANTS AND ANIMALS

A healthy prairie is a powerful driver of species diversity. Even in a restored prairie, **native plant species may number more than 100**. Vast numbers of insects—butterflies, bees, ants, and beetles—thrive in prairie. Look for **monarchs, black swallowtails, and silver-spotted skippers**. Underground, **mycorrhizae fungi** help prairie plants absorb nutrients and water. These fungi are one reason native prairie is able to withstand drought.

HELP FOR GRASSLAND BIRDS

Grassland birds—meadowlarks, bobolinks, dickcissels, sparrows—are declining faster than any other group of birds. Prairies offer **dense nesting habitat** and the **insect and seed foods** birds need. Grassland bird nests are not only well-concealed, but birds such as bobolinks do not fly directly to or from their nests. That behavior makes it hard for predators to notice. In most Jefferson County parks, **nestboxes around the prairie** are substitutes for cavities in dead oak snags. The boxes are home for **eastern bluebirds and tree swallows**.

RESTORED PRAIRIE RESTORES SOIL

Prairie restorations in Jefferson County parks do more than increase plant and animal diversity. A **restored prairie enriches soil fertility** through yearly decay of plant roots as they continually regenerate. That leads to **less topsoil erosion**, better infiltration of water into the ground, and **better water quality** in adjacent rivers and lakes.



1870 Jefferson County landscape | 6

PRAIRIE PLANT SPECIES

VISIT AND VOLUNTEER

Use the species lists below to help you decide what native plants you might include around your home. Besides visiting restored prairie areas in Jefferson County, you can volunteer at Dorothy Carnes, Korth, and Carlin Weld county parks to help collect prairie seed in the fall. Contact the parks department for information on many kinds of volunteer opportunities.

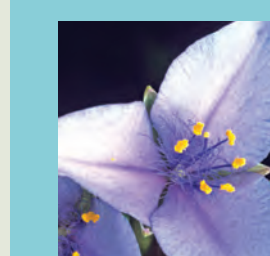
GRASSES



big bluestem
prairie sedge
Canada wild rye
June grass
switch grass

little bluestem
Indian grass
prairie dropseed
side-oats grama

FORBS



woolly yarrow
nodding wild onion
lead plant
thimbleweed
common milkweed
butterfly milkweed
whorled milkweed
Canadian milk vetch
sky-blue aster
New England aster
white wild indigo
white prairie clover
purple prairie clover
eastern shooting-star
pale purple coneflower
rattlesnake master
cream gentian
stiff gentian
western sunflower
false boneset
golden Alexander

round-headed bush clover
rough blazing star
prairie blazing star
wild bergamot
wild quinine
smooth penstemon
prairie cinquefoil
mountain mint
yellow coneflower
black-eyed Susan
brown-eyed Susan
rosinweed
compass plant
cup-plant
prairie dock
stiff goldenrod
showy goldenrod
common spiderwort
hoary vervain
Culver's root



prairie smoke | 7

IMAGE CREDITS 1–5, 7 Richard Armstrong. 6 Library of Congress, Geography and Map Division.