



Prairie Dog Empire: A Saga of the Shortgrass Prairie

Paul A. Johnsgard

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This book by the renowned naturalist and writer Paul A. Johnsgard tells the complex biological and environmental story of the western Great Plains under the black-tailed prairie dog's reign—and then under a brief but devastating century of human dominion.

An introduction to the ecosystem of the shortgrass prairie, *Prairie Dog Empire* describes in clear and detailed terms the habitat and habits of black-tailed prairie dogs; their subsistence, seasonal behavior, and the makeup of their vast colonies; and the ways in which their “towns” transform the surrounding terrain—for better or for worse. Johnsgard recounts how this terrain has in turn been transformed over the past century by the destruction of prairie dogs and their grassland habitats. This book also offers a rare and invaluable close-up view of the rich history and threatened future of the creature once considered the “keystone” species of the western plains.

Included are maps, drawings, and listings of more than two hundred natural grassland preserves where many of the region's native plants and animals may still be seen and studied.

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