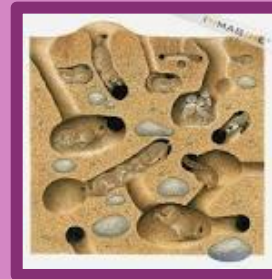


# GROUND SQUIRRELS

## Thirteen-lined Ground Squirrel



The thirteen-lined squirrel is from 4 1/2 to 6 1/2 inches long, with a tail that is 2 1/2 to 5 inches long. The body is light to dark brown, with 13 stripes down its back. The stripes alternate between solid white and ark with white dots. They live in short grasslands and weedy areas. The squirrels dig burrows without a mound of soil at the entrance. They spread the soil around and pat it down with their feet and the top of their head. Because they spend most of their lives below ground, they build extensive burrows. Thirteen-lined ground squirrels make three types of burrow; Hiding burrows are short and there are lots of them, Nesting burrows are larger, Hibernating burrows below the frost line (20-40 inches deep) contain a large nest and a plugged entrance. Breeding takes place once a year about mid-April and the babies are born about 28 days later. The babies come out of the burrows about a month after birth. They eat grasses, weeds, seeds, crops, eat earthworms and insects such as grasshoppers, beetles, and ants. Their only predators are hawks, weasels, badgers, dogs, and cats. Road traffic and flooding are also hazards.



## Richardson's Ground Squirrel

This squirrel was named after the Scottish naturalist Sir John Richardson. Native to the short grass prairies; but, are not simply restricted to prairie, sometimes adapting to suburban environments, causing them to be seen as pests because of the burrows they dig. Typical adults are about 12 inches long. Weights vary greatly with time of year and with location: at emergence from hibernation the squirrels weigh between 0.44 and 0.88 lb, but by the time they hibernate again this may have risen to nearly 1.7 lb. They are dark brown on the upper side and tan underneath. The tail is shorter and less bushy than in other ground squirrels, and the external ears are so short as to look more like holes in the animal's head. Behavior is more like that of a prairie dog than a typical ground squirrel. The tail is constantly trembling, so the animal is sometimes called the "flickertail". Richardson's ground squirrels appear to live communally, but they organize their social structure around female kinship. Predators include hawks, weasels, badgers and coyotes. These animals are omnivores, eating seeds, nuts, grains, grasses and insects. Adult ground squirrels may hibernate as early as July, though in their first year, the young ground squirrels do not hibernate until September. The males emerge from hibernation in March, and establish territories before the females emerge a couple of weeks later. Females produce one litter per year in April or May, up to 8 in a litter. The young remain underground in the burrow until they are approximately 30 days old.



## Wyoming Ground Squirrel



*The Wyoming Ground Squirrel is brown above, with gray on the shoulders, neck and head. There are no stripes or spotting on the back. The sides and underside are yellowish. The ears are larger than average for ground squirrel species. The eyes are surrounded by a white ring. They have large claws. Total Length 25cm - 38cm. Tail length 6cm - 8cm. Weight 250g - 400g.*

*Found in mountain meadows, rocky slopes, sagebrush, shrubby grasslands in valley bottoms. They eat mainly grasses, leaves. Also eat shrubs, flowers, seeds, stems, and roots. When green plants are scarce they may eat insects, including grasshoppers, caterpillars, and also birds eggs. They have one to eleven young (average 6) are born after a gestation period of about 22 days.*

*Young are weaned after 28 to 42 days.*