

# BLACK TAILED PRAIRIE DOG

(**CYNOMYS LUDOVICIANUS**)

**CONSERVATION STATUS: LEAST CONCERN\***



**WE ARE  
MAMMALS**

with a lifespan of 3-4 years  
in the wild, 8+ years  
in captivity

**Origin:** North America.

**Diet:** Grasses, roots, seeds and occasionally bugs, grasshoppers and beetles. They get enough water from their food so do not need to drink water to survive.

**Predators:** Badgers, foxes, coyotes, bobcats, ferrets, golden eagles and hawks. Humans are also a threat. During the 20th Century, 98% of Prairie Dogs were killed as pests.

**Habitat:** Prairies and open grasslands.

\*The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species 2016. Downloaded 25.08.20.



**Height**

**30-38cm** with a  
7-10cm tail.



**Weight**

**0.9-1.8kg**



**Top Speed**

**35mph**

## DID YOU KNOW?

Prairie Dogs are a type of squirrel but are known as dogs due to their bark.

A group of Prairie Dogs is known as a 'Town'.

The largest recorded Prairie Dog Town was found in Texas and covered 25,000 square miles and home to around 400 million

Prairie Dogs. Within Towns of Prairie Dogs are lots of different tight-knit family groups called 'Coteries' - usually one or two males, a few females and their young. Families share food, chase off other prairie dogs and groom one another. They greet members of their own family with a kiss. They communicate with loud cries. A warning cry will send the whole town back into their burrows, with an "all-clear" cry to follow once the danger has gone.

## ADAPTATIONS

They have sharp claws to dig their burrows, powerful teeth and excellent hearing. Their whiskers help them to balance.

## REPRODUCTION

Prairie dogs mate just once a year in early winter, with only a one-hour window to mate in. After a gestation of 30 days, litters of 3-8 pups are born. They are born blind and hairless and need a lot of looking after from the adults in their family. Over half will not survive their first year in the wild due to predators.

**PLEASE DO NOT FEED THE PRAIRIE DOGS**