

South Dakota Trip Report

6/29/10 - 7/2/10

We saw a handful of mammal species before entering SD.

In Kentucky and Indiana we saw Eastern Gray Squirrels & White-tailed Deer

In Iowa we saw Eastern Chipmunks

In Minnesota we saw Thirteen-lined Ground Squirrels and Franklin's Ground Squirrel.

South Dakota

6/29/10: Our first stop in South Dakota was Ft Pierre National Grasslands. Saw some nice birds out here but only 4 mammals. The 4 we saw were **Pronghorn, Black-tailed Prairie Dogs, Mule Deer** and a quick look at the back end of a **Badger**. We stopped in Pierre to check out the Capitol and saw two **Eastern Fox Squirrels** close the Capitol building.

Next stop Badlands National Park: Our first night of road cruising and spotlighting was great. We left our cabin in the park at about 8pm. We found a **Bighorn Sheep** on the loop road and many Black-tailed Prairie Dogs. We drove out of the park to get a bite to eat and fill up the car in the town of "Wall". On the way into Wall we saw a **Desert Cottontail**. We waited until it got dark and set off for Roberts Prairie Dog Town in the park. We spotlighted for only about 3 minutes before we saw the green reflection from the eyes of a **Black-footed Ferret!** We watched it slink around in the Prairie Dog town for 2 minutes before it disappeared into the grass. Spectacular! We continued to drive on the Sage Creek Rim Road where we found a herd of **Bison, several Pronghorn, Mule Deer**, and an **Ord's Kangaroo Rat**. There were many Great Plains Toads on this road also. On the way back to our cabin we saw another **Bighorn Sheep** and 2 beautiful Prairie Rattlesnakes.

6/30/10: The next day I got some info from the people at the Grasslands Visitor center in Wall about where to find Swift Foxes. They sent us out onto Conata Road. That evening about 3 miles from the southern end of the road we found two **Swift Foxes!** We also saw **Pronghorns and Mule Deer** on that road. I took my wife Kirsten back to the hotel and at about 11pm I went out again. Starting in Wall and driving towards the park I found the largest **Badger** I have ever seen. Apparently some of the male Badgers get huge up here. After driving the park road for a few minutes I found a **Porcupine** at one of the viewpoints. In another few minutes a **White-tailed Jackrabbit** appeared on the road. I tried for Swift Foxes again but no luck this time.

7/1/10: Before we left Wall we saw an **Eastern Cottontail Rabbit**. We then started towards Mt. Rushmore. At Mount Rushmore we saw a **Yellow-bellied Marmot**. There are Mountain Goats at Rushmore but we did not see any. Then driving towards Jewel Cave we saw several **Mule Deer** and at Jewel Cave we saw **Red Squirrels and Least Chipmunks**.

7/2/10: Custer State Park: Hundreds of **Bison**, Dozens of **Pronghorn, 4 Mule Deer, 20+ White-tailed Deer, 35 feral Burros, 3 Elk** too many to count **BT Prairie Dogs**.

Wind Cave NP: More of the above critters. I dipped on Bushy-tailed Woodrats that have

been found at the cave entrance.

In Wyoming on our way to Utah we saw many **White-tailed Prairie Dogs**.