

Shrub-Steppe

By Katie Gabriel

Let's go hike the shrub-steppe, the largest natural grassland in North America! It stretches from Washington State all the way to northwestern Utah. Take a look at the plants as we pass by. . .

There are many types of brush. Sagebrush has silver-green leaves. Its flowers are yellow or white. Rabbitbrush is similar to sagebrush, except rabbitbrush has larger flowers. Rabbitbrush's petals are always yellow.

Beautiful lupines everywhere! Lupines are pretty flowers that grow in the shrub-steppe. To find lupines, search for a patch of purple or a blue speck among the brush and balsamroot.

What's that sound? Could it be an animal here at shrub-steppe? I'd like to take a look at these natural species, would you?

There are many birds out on this grassland! With everything from owls to magpies, shrub-steppe has flying colors with birds of all sorts! There are ravens and red-tailed hawks, chukars to great basin pocket mice! Wait a minute. . . The great basin pocket mouse is no bird! It's a mammal! Yes, the shrub-steppe has mammals too. . .

We have over here the deer family. Pretty small at the grasslands, but still the deer family. The elk with broad antlers, and the mule deer as well. Other shrub steppe creatures are the badger, coyote, bear, rattlesnake, and spay-foot toad.

That was sure fun, wasn't it? I would like to explore the shrub-steppe further, and REALLY hike out there. Wouldn't you?