



## Red Squirrel

Scientific name *Sciurus vulgaris*

|                                |   |
|--------------------------------|---|
| <b>TYPE</b>                    | Mammal  |
| <b>WHERE TO FIND THEM</b>      | Forest with a mixture of broadleaf and evergreen trees, especially Scots pine. They used to be found all over the UK but now are only found in Scotland and a handful of places in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. 75% of red squirrels in the UK are found in Scotland!<br><br>Their numbers have decreased because of deforestation and the spread of the invasive grey squirrel, which was introduced in the 1800s from North America and carries a deadly disease. |
| <b>DIET</b>                    | Opportunistic omnivore – meaning they'll eat almost anything! Pine nuts and hazelnuts are a favourite, also fungi, beech mast, flowers, berries, insects, and occasionally bird eggs and young birds.   |
| <b>SIZE</b>                    | Head and body length: 19-23cm<br>Tail length: 15-20cm<br>Weight: 250-340g   |
| <b>LIFESPAN IN THE WILD</b>    | 2-7 years   |
| <b>FAMILY</b>                  | Baby squirrels are called kits or kittens. Female squirrels have two litters of 3 kits each year on average.  |
| <b>SURVIVAL SKILLS</b>         | A super sense of smell helps red squirrels find their food caches (stores) which help them survive through winter.<br><br>Red squirrels are small, light and fast, which helps them escape predators like pine martens who can chase them through the trees.  |
| <b>NOT TO BE CONFUSED WITH</b> | Grey squirrels, who are a lot bigger, have grey fur with white underside, and have smaller ears with no tufts.  |

Trees for Life

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## Grey Squirrel

Scientific name *Sciurus carolinensis*

|                                |  |
|--------------------------------|--|
| <b>TYPE</b>                    | Mammal   |
| <b>WHERE TO FIND THEM</b>      | Since being introduced to the UK from North America in the 1800s, they have become widespread in England, Wales and southern-central Scotland, displacing native red squirrels as they spread. As well as living in woodlands, they can also often be found in parks and gardens – especially on bird feeders! |
| <b>DIET</b>                    | Opportunistic omnivore – meaning they'll eat almost anything! They eat many types of nuts and seeds like acorns, walnuts and hazelnuts. They also eat tree bark, buds, berries, fungi and small animals like insects frogs and birds. They sometimes gnaw on bones and antlers, probably to get minerals.      |
| <b>SIZE</b>                    | Head and body length: 23-30cm<br>Tail length: 19-25cm<br>Weight: 400-650g  |
| <b>LIFESPAN IN THE WILD</b>    | 2-10 years   |
| <b>FAMILY</b>                  | Baby squirrels are called kits or kittens. Female squirrels can have two litters of between 1 and 8 kits each year.  |
| <b>SURVIVAL SKILLS</b>         | Immunity to squirrel pox.<br><br>They are able to digest food like acorns and hazelnuts before they are ripe, meaning they can eat them before any other animals get to them.  |
| <b>NOT TO BE CONFUSED WITH</b> | Red squirrels, who are a lot smaller, and have reddish fur (though sometimes greyish, blonde or dark brown too) with distinctive tufts on their ears.  |