

## To get involved in organised surveys

Contact your Local Squirrel Group or the Scottish Squirrel Survey Co-ordinator. They can provide all you need, including training, to survey where we most need records.

- **Ayrshire Red Squirrel Group**  
01292 261392  
enquiries@ayrshirered squirrels.org.uk
- **Angus**  
0131 312 4733 mtonkin@swt.org.uk
- **Argyll**  
0131 312 4733 mtonkin@swt.org.uk
- **Borders (Red Squirrels in South Scotland)**  
01750 23446 ellyhamilton@redsquirrels.org.uk
- **Central Scotland Red squirrel Group**  
01786 442768 waddellc@stirling.gov.uk
- **Dumfries and Galloway (Red Squirrels in South Scotland)**  
01750 725157 sue@red-squirrels.org.uk
- **Dundee Red Squirrel Project**  
countryside.rangers@dundeecity.gov.uk
- **Grampian Squirrel Group**  
www.grampiansquirrelgroup.co.uk
- **Highland Red Squirrel Group**  
01349 862144 ian.collier@forestry.gsi.gov.uk
- **Loch Lomond & Trossachs National Park**  
01567 830430  
gavin.skipper@lochlomond-trossachs.org
- **Perth & Kinross Red Squirrel Group**  
07880-90642 jay@parkhall.demon.co.uk
- **Scottish Squirrel Survey Co-ordinator**  
0131 312 4733 mtonkin@swt.org.uk

## Red squirrels in danger?

The red squirrel is the only squirrel native to the British Isles. However, most people in the UK are more familiar with its close relative, the grey squirrel, which was introduced here from North America in the late 19th century, and now outnumbers red squirrels by about twenty to one. Grey squirrels have become the most common species of squirrel across the UK, and have displaced reds by dominating most of the foods shared by both species. One estimate put the UK's red squirrel population at about 160,000. Three quarters of these are to be found in Scotland.

Even in Scotland the red squirrel is not safe. Grey squirrels have completely displaced it throughout much of lowland Scotland, and they continue to spread out from the Clyde Valley, Angus, south Perthshire and Aberdeen. They currently threaten our native squirrel in what we believe to be its heartlands in the Highlands, north Perthshire, Grampian, Argyll and Dumfries and Galloway.


## Contact Details

### Scottish Squirrel Survey Co-ordinator

Mel Tonkin

Scottish Squirrel Survey, c/o Scottish Wildlife Trust,  
Cramond House, Cramond Glebe Road, Edinburgh  
EH4 6NS

email: mtonkin@swt.org.uk

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Photography: Front, inside left bottom & middle top Neil  
McIntyre, inside bottom Alan Ross

# SCOTTISH SQUIRREL SURVEY



**Do YOU want to HELP  
the red squirrel's  
conservation?**

## Is the red squirrel safe in Scotland?

## Where are red squirrels found in Scotland?

## Which Scottish forests have the best and most secure populations of red squirrels?

## Are grey squirrels expanding in number or range across Scotland?

## Are there places where grey squirrels are taking over from Scotland's red squirrels?

## You can help the Scottish Squirrel Survey to answer these questions by **GETTING INVOLVED** in organised surveys of red and grey squirrels.

Information from the surveys will help to prevent further loss of the red squirrel range across the country. With better information, we can manage the best red squirrel forests to favour red squirrels over greys, and put in place other measures to keep grey squirrels out of these red strongholds.



## What do the survey involve?

Squirrel records will be collected by two methods:

### Transect counts

This involves walking silently through woodland in the early mornings in good weather, recording any squirrels seen (and enjoying the other wildlife).

### Squirrel hair-collection techniques

Where animals cannot be seen easily in dense forest, open-ended tubes baited with food are set up with sticky tape to catch some hair as the animals feed. This can be examined later to distinguish between red and grey squirrels.



## How will the whole of Scotland be surveyed?

The surveys will focus initially on 157 forests throughout Scotland that we think have the greatest chance of sustaining red squirrels in the long-term. We currently have very few records of squirrels for most of them and the surveys will give us a measurement of the number and density of red squirrels in residence. The ones with the best red squirrel populations will be managed to protect and conserve the species. By repeating the surveys we will be able to tell if our management is successful in enhancing the red squirrel population.

We will also focus on areas with abundant grey squirrels close to areas that we think contain only red squirrels. If we can identify the places where grey squirrel populations are expanding, we can predict the future threat to red squirrels and try to prevent it.

## You can also help by sending in records of any other sightings of red and grey squirrels

If you happen to see any squirrels while you're out and about, please send details of which species, location, date and your name to your Local Squirrel Group or the Scottish Squirrel Survey Co-ordinator.

Most of our current squirrel records come from the edges of forests near roads and houses. You can collect more valuable information if you can send in sightings from the parts of forests that previous surveyors have not reached. To find out where these are, contact your local squirrel group or the Scottish Squirrel Survey Co-ordinator