

# Squirrels



The grey squirrel is a common species. It was introduced to the UK from North America, and has contributed to the fall in the number of red squirrels.

Their body is adapted for climbing and jumping, with sharp claws which allow them to grip, and a long bushy tail for balance.

Squirrels spend most of their time searching for food such as acorns, nuts, fruit and bulbs. Grey squirrels usually have three to four young, twice a year, from February to March and June to July.

## The law

Squirrels are protected from ill treatment by the Wild Mammals (Protection) Act 1996.

Under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 it is illegal to use any arrow or explosive (other than ammunition for a firearm) to kill squirrels.

It is also illegal to release captured grey squirrels, or allow them to escape back into the wild, they must be humanely killed.

## Squirrels and buildings

Squirrels are normally only considered to be a nuisance if they are in buildings, particularly in loft spaces.

They can cause damage to electrical wiring, insulation, and other materials, as well as causing a noise nuisance.

## Solving squirrel problems in buildings

If you suspect you have squirrels you should get advice immediately. Please see the contact details on the back page of this leaflet.

One of the main methods of dealing with squirrels would be 'proofing' the building to prevent squirrels from getting in. This may involve the following:

- Blocking entry points with crushed wire netting, metal sheets or other materials
- Reducing the amount of food available
- Removing branches close to walls and roofs
- Installing grilles over the down pipes of gutters.

## Traps

We do not recommend that you use traps. The most successful solution is to prevent squirrels from getting into your home.

There are two types of trap available, a cage trap and a spring trap. Our pest control contractor does not use cage traps, and will only use spring traps as a last option, once they have confirmed that squirrels are actually nesting within your home.

## Poison baiting

Poison baiting can only be carried out by a local authority or a professional pest-control company.

This method is used mainly to protect woodland. We do not use this method.

For more advice, phone our pest control contractor A1 Wasps & Bees on **01702 555434**

## Further information

You can get more information from Natural England Wildlife Management and Licensing Service.

Phone: 0845 6014523 (local rate)

Website: [www.naturalengland.org.uk](http://www.naturalengland.org.uk)

Email: [wildlife@naturalengland.org.uk](mailto:wildlife@naturalengland.org.uk)

You can also get advice on controlling grey squirrels that are causing damage to woodlands and forestry from a local Forestry Commission office (see your local phone directory or website [www.forestry.gov.uk](http://www.forestry.gov.uk)).

## Other useful websites

Website: [www.squirrels.info](http://www.squirrels.info)



**Rochford District Council**  
Council Offices, South Street, Rochford,  
Essex SS4 1BW  
Phone: **01702 318111**  
Email: [customerservices@rochford.gov.uk](mailto:customerservices@rochford.gov.uk)  
Website: [www.rochford.gov.uk/pest control](http://www.rochford.gov.uk/pest_control)

If you would like this information in large print, Braille or another language phone us on **01702 318111**