

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. Pest-control contractors should 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.

Where to get help

We no longer provide a pest-control service, but you can find a list of local accredited pest control contractors by using the directory on the British Pest Control Associations (BPCA) website at www.bpca.org.uk or phone **01332 294288**.

Or you can find a list of contractors in directories like the Yellow Pages, or by searching online.



Further information

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

Phone: 0300 060 3900

Website: www.naturalengland.org.uk

Email: enquiries@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).

Other useful websites

Website: www.squirrels.info

Rochford District Council

Council Offices, South Street, Rochford,
Essex SS4 1BW

Phone: **01702 318111**

Email: customerservices@rochford.gov.uk

Website: [www.rochford.gov.uk/pest control](http://www.rochford.gov.uk/pest%20control)

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

01702 318111