

**Saving our native
red squirrel and
the woodland on
which it depends**



Red Squirrels Matter

- Fewer than 300,000 red squirrels (*Sciurus vulgaris*) remain in the UK with approximately 39,000 in England and Wales
- They are a vital part of Britain's healthy woodland ecosystem
- The red squirrel has lived here for more than 10,000 years.

They are under threat

The introduction of the North American grey squirrel (*Sciurus carolinensis*) from 1876 has driven red numbers down from 3 million to today's endangered population level.





Some greys carry squirrel pox, harmless to them but fatal to reds. Outbreaks have wiped out entire colonies of reds across the UK.



A grey squirrel bark stripping

Image by Miles Dodd

The Grey Squirrel Threat



- Grey squirrels now number 2.5 – 2.7 million
- Greys are larger than reds – 500g vs 300g
- Greys outcompete reds for food and territory
- Greys breed faster than reds having up to 8 kittens twice a year
- Many greys carry squirrel pox that kills reds
- Grey squirrel bark stripping kills or stunts trees causing more than £37 million damage in England and Wales every year and threatening the UK treescape and government targets for carbon capture
- Grey squirrel damage to domestic homes now costs insurers an average of £3,000 per claim

What's Being Done

A primary activity of the Red Squirrel Survival Trust (RSST) and its sister organisation the UK Squirrel Accord (UKSA) is funding on-going, ground-breaking research at the government's Animal & Plant Health Agency (APHA) into a benign contraceptive for grey squirrels. This will lead to an ecologically vital, landscape-scale drop in their numbers.

Part of this pioneering work involves the development of a safe delivery system that only greys can access, ensuring the contraceptive is not consumed by non-target species. This innovative fertility-control will allow reds and the woodland they depend on to recover naturally.





The RSST and UKSA work in support of the hundreds of independent, self-funded volunteers who work tirelessly with local conservation groups to protect red squirrels and the British woodland on which their survival depends.

Many volunteers are involved in humanely reducing grey squirrel numbers. They constantly monitor the health of the UK's populations of reds and work to ensure they are not infiltrated by greys, risking outbreaks of squirrel pox.

Without the volunteers' work, red squirrel numbers would reduce significantly, inevitably increasing the risk of eventual extinction. The damage to the UK treescape would be irrevocable.



How You Can Help

Your support funds:

- Groundbreaking fertility-control research to reduce grey squirrel numbers
- Volunteer training and resources
- Woodland protection and restoration
- Red squirrel population monitoring

Every donation makes a real difference.

DONATE:

Scan the QR Code

Visit rsst.org.uk



Registered Charity
No. 1116947



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SQUIRREL
ACCORD

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Some Places to See Red Squirrels

England

- Brownsea Island
- Borthwood Copse
- Formby
- Snaizeholme
- Shap Fells
- Aira Force
- Cragside

North Wales

- Pentraeth & Newborough Forest (Anglesey)

Northern Ireland

- Glenarm (County Antrim)

Scotland

- Loch of the Lowes
- Gight Wood

Tip: Visit early, stay quiet, bring binoculars.
Assistance dogs only.





TOGETHER WE CAN SECURE A FUTURE FOR OUR RED SQUIRRELS

Help protect a species
that has shaped the UK's
woodland for 10,000 years.



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