

Charity No: 1162179

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## NORTHEAST RED SQUIRRELS NEWSLETTER

Winter 2019/2020

### SQUIRRELS, SQUIRRELS AND MORE SQUIRRELS... ALL RED OF COURSE!

We are really pleased to report that we have had a marked increase in numbers of red squirrels being sighted! Sightings across Northumberland are definitely on the up. **Ponteland and District Red Squirrels** have seen the most reds in their area for several years. Reports have included 4 reds seen together in one garden!

**Belsay** has also had its fair share of sightings, with Tony, one of our volunteers, regularly reporting sightings. **Albemarle Barracks**, which up until the beginning of last year were only seeing greys, have reported that '*several reds are being seen on a regular basis*'. Two reds have been seen together on **Wylam Wagonway**, reported by several people over a number of days, along with a red also being sighted at **Close House GC**, where they haven't been sighted for over ten years!

Reds have also been seen in other parts of Northumberland, including the red squirrel stronghold at **Wallington**, also at **Cramlington**, **Morpeth** and along the **North Tyne** and in the **Redesdale** area, as well as many other areas!

So, why are so many reds being reported? It is because there is an army of volunteers working tirelessly to make sure our reds are safe, by removing greys from the area. Unfortunately, grey squirrels carry squirrel pox virus (SSPV) which, whilst harmless to greys, is deadly to our reds, killing them within two weeks.



### HAVANNAH REDS

Havannah Nature Reserve was on red alert during the autumn as several red squirrels were found dead. Subsequent testing, by ALHA, Penrith, confirmed that some of the squirrels died squirrel pox virus (Sap). It was feared that the whole population would be lost. However, there is some promising news as several reds have been sighted recently in the reserve. So, all fingers are crossed!

# ALBEMARLE CHILDREN'S DAY

North East Red Squirrels volunteers, along with 'Rusty the Giant Red', joined the children and parents at Albemarle Barracks for their annual Children's Day.

The Barracks have really taken red squirrel conservation to heart. With support from Alan, NeRS Ranger, Albemarle Barracks can now boast that its '*reds all the way*' on their site.

*Photo: Steve Barrett, NeRS Trustee dons a red squirrel suit during the Albemarle Children's Day.*



## PONTELAND RED SQUIRREL FEATURED ON BBC WEBSITE!



Keen red squirrel supporter, **Alastair Ruffman**, has a way with the camera and has produced some lovely photos of red squirrels in his Ponteland garden, which he shares on social media.

This lovely photo, taken during the awful weather caused by **Storm Caira**, recently, was included on the **BBC Website!**

Our red squirrels really need our support with extra food all year round, but especially from now, February, as their natural food begins to be depleted, until the end of September, when nature takes over to provide an abundance of natural food. The spring and summer months are the most important periods to provide supplementary food as natural food is scarce.

### ARE YOU A WOOLANDOWNER IN SOUTH-EAST NORTHUMBERLAND?

WE NEED YOUR HELP! DO YOU WANT TO GET RED SQUIRRELS BACK? PLEASE CONTACT US TO FIND OUT HOW OUR TRAINED RANGERS CAN HELP MAKE YOUR WOODS A SAFE PLACE FOR RED SQUIRRELS.

Ring Steve: 07779 577485

THANK YOU TO ALL THE NORTHEAST'S RED SQUIRREL CONSERVATION VOLUNTEERS. WITHOUT YOUR HELP OUR REDS WOULD HAVE DISSAPREARED!

WITH YOUR HELP WE CAN HELP OUR NATIVE REDS! If you are interested in getting involved please ring: Sally 07878 061880 or Steve 07779 577485



**LOTTERY FUNDED**