

Red & Grey Squirrel Facts!

Red squirrels (*Sciurus vulgaris*) live in coniferous forests and deciduous woods in Europe and northern Asia. Their range extends from the UK, Ireland and western Europe to Russia, Mongolia, and northwest China.

Numbers in the UK have fallen dramatically since grey squirrels (*Sciurus carolinensis*) were introduced. The grey squirrels brought disease and will usually get to the certain food sources before the red squirrel has a chance to eat due to the fact grey squirrels can eat things like green acorns.

Red squirrels have a mainly vegetarian diet that includes seeds, hazelnuts and green acorns, fungus, bark, and sapwood. Reds do not hibernate and store fungi in trees to eat over the winter months. When food is plentiful, they put on weight in the autumn to help them through the winter.

Red squirrels usually produce 2-3 young, called kittens, in February to April and they often produce a second litter from May to June.



Grey squirrel or eastern gray squirrel can usually be found in woodland and urban areas.

Nuts, acorns and tree seeds are the main foods of choice for grey squirrels. These will be collected in autumn and buried underground, ready to be eaten in winter when food is scarce.

Other food taken includes flowers, buds, shoots, pine cones. To prevent their food stashes from being stolen, grey squirrels have been observed pretending to bury nuts in a bid to fool other squirrels that may be watching.

The young are normally born in a nest made from twigs and branches that is known as a drey. Holes within trees may also be used as nesting sites. Young squirrels will leave the nest and begin foraging for solid foods after around two months.

