

# THE GREY SQUIRREL

SCIURUS CAROLINENSIS

A quick ID for the Grey Squirrel.

If in doubt, contact a trained and professional Pest Technician.



## DESCRIPTION

### Adults

- The winter coat: grey on top with a white underside
- The summer coat: shorter, sleeker and brownish/grey.
- Large bushy tail.

## LIFE CYCLE

<b>Breeding Period</b>	Feb/Mar & Aug/Sept
<b>Litter Size</b>	1-7; average 3
<b>Ears Open</b>	25 - 28 days
<b>Eyes Open</b>	28 - 35 days
<b>Young Weaned</b>	8 - 10 weeks
<b>Sexually Mature</b>	10 - 12 months

## LEGISLATION

- Destructive Imported Animals Act 1932
- Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981
- Spring Traps Approval Order 1995
- Grey Squirrels Warfarin Order 1973
- Control of Pesticides Regulations 1986
- Wild Mammals Protection Act 1996
- Animal Welfare Act 2006

## POTENTIAL ISSUES

- **Property Damage:** Grey squirrels chew through wood, insulation, and wires, posing fire hazards.
- **Nesting in Homes:** They can nest in attics and chimneys, causing structural damage and noise.
- **Garden and Crop Damage:** Squirrels may dig up plants, eat fruits, and damage bird feeders.
- **Disease Transmission:** They can carry diseases like leptospirosis and ticks that spread Lyme disease.

## SIGNS OF INFESTATION

- Dreys: gnawing of tree bark and twigs, nuts and seeds with teeth marks or holes discarded underneath trees.
- Droppings: vary in shape and colour depending on the diet, but may be spherical like those of a rabbit, or elongated similar to rats.
- Tracks: sometimes visible in mud and snow. The forefoot has four long, slender toes around a rectangular pad; the hind foot is elongated with five toes.
- Attics: will often move into attics and recreate their dreys from insulation materials.

## CONTROL

- Drey poking and shooting: this is a traditional method and requires two people. One poking the dreys and one with a shotgun. This is best carried out during winter when the population is at its lowest level and the least likely time for a litter of young to be present.
- Spring Traps: The law requires only approved traps can be used. Reference should be made to the current Spring Trap Approval Order for a complete list of approved traps.
- Live Capture Traps: Traps must be checked at least once or twice a day. Under the Wildlife and Countryside Act, Grey squirrels, if caught live, cannot be released back into the wild.

