



## Red Squirrel Post Mortems

If you find a dead red squirrel it may be possible for it to be sent for post mortem, in order to further our knowledge on the conservation, welfare and diseases of red squirrels.

Please ensure that you wear disposable gloves when handling dead squirrels.

- ❖ All dead red squirrels found in **Scotland** should be sent to:

Veterinary Pathology Unit  
Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies  
University of Edinburgh  
Easter Bush Veterinary Centre  
Roslin  
Midlothian EH25 9RG

Contact: Anna.Meredith@ed.ac.uk  
Tel: 0131 650 7650

Reception: 0131 650 6247 or 0131 651 7300

- ❖ Squirrels found in **England** may be sent to one of the addresses below.

If squirrelpox is suspected, send to:

Paul Duff  
VLA Penrith  
Calthwaite  
Penrith  
CA11 9RR

If a dead red squirrel is found and the cause of death is unknown please send the squirrel to:

Dr Tony Sainsbury  
Institute of Zoology  
Zoological Society of London  
Regents Park  
London  
NW1 4RY

### **Postage and Packaging**

The Royal Mail is able to accept diagnostic samples via the normal post for postage within the UK. To protect public health ***it is imperative that red squirrels sent for post mortem are appropriately packaged.*** Royal Mail or courier services may refuse to handle a leaking package.

If it is not possible to post the red squirrel the same day that it is found, carcasses should be stored refrigerated but only if you have the appropriate facilities, (e.g. at a wildlife centre, veterinary surgery). DO NOT use domestic fridges – carcasses *may* carry dangerous infectious agents. Carcasses may be frozen only as a last resort, as freezing can destroy some of the post mortem evidence.

Any direct contact with the dead squirrel should be avoided, i.e. place your hand within a plastic bag, pick up the carcass with covered hand and invert the bag over the carcass and tie the bag securely. Use a separate bag for each carcass.

The secured bag must then be wrapped in plenty of absorbent material e.g. kitchen roll, which then must be placed in another two securely sealed plastic bags (which should not have the ventilation holes common to many carrier bags.)

The package should then be placed within a crush proof container, such as a rigid margarine tub (this does not have to be done separately for each squirrel, as long as each specimen is properly bagged and labelled), then with an accompanying note (name, address and telephone number of sender; date, time & **location** found; storage conditions; suspected cause of death), packaged within a jiffy post-bag, or a substantial brown paper parcel.

The senders name and address should be written clearly on the back of the package and the package **MUST** be labeled:

**BIOLOGICAL SUBSTANCE - CATEGORY B - HANDLE WITH CARE**

and a hazard diamond shape containing the number UN3373

Packages must be sent either by guaranteed next day delivery or first class post. Please do not send packages on a Thursday or Friday, as the laboratory may be closed at the weekend.

Although you will have used an inverted plastic bag or disposable gloves, please remember to **wash your hands** after dealing with the dead red squirrel and disinfect any surfaces used.



Please either alert the lab that you are sending a red squirrel for post-mortem or inform your local Red Squirrel Conservation Officer so that they can notify the lab.

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**Saving Scotland's Red Squirrels Project Officers:**

**Scottish Borders**

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Email: [aseagrave@scottishwildlifetrust.org.uk](mailto:aseagrave@scottishwildlifetrust.org.uk)

**Dumfries & Galloway**

Kate Thomson  
Crown Estate Office, Dryfeholm  
Lockerbie, Dumfriesshire  
DG11 1SU

01576 202 607  
[kthomson@scottishwildlifetrust.org.uk](mailto:kthomson@scottishwildlifetrust.org.uk)

**Tayside**

Ken Neil  
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Camperdown House  
Dundee  
DD2 4TF

Tel : 01382 611028  
Mobile: 07787 322457  
Email : [kneil@scottishwildlifetrust.org.uk](mailto:kneil@scottishwildlifetrust.org.uk)

**Grampian**

Steve Willis  
SSRS  
Inverdee House  
Torry  
Aberdeen  
AB11 9QA

01224 266526  
07818 533323  
[swillis@scottishwildlifetrust.org.uk](mailto:swillis@scottishwildlifetrust.org.uk)

**Argyll, Stirling, Trossachs**

Clare McInroy  
Loch Lomond and the Trossachs  
National Park, Carrochan  
Carrochan Road  
Balloch  
G83 8EG

01389722037  
07825 972434  
[cminroy@scottishwildlifetrust.org.uk](mailto:cminroy@scottishwildlifetrust.org.uk)

## ***Red Squirrel Post-Mortems***

**Date squirrel found:** .....

**Location found & grid ref:** .....

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**Treatment (if any, e.g. frozen or refrigerated):** .....

**Any indications of cause of death:** .....

**Comments:** .....

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**Finder's name and postal address:** .....

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**\*email:** ..... **\*Tel/mobile:** .....

**Sender's name and postal address:** .....

(if different to above)

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**\*email:** ..... **\*Tel/mobile:** .....

Please complete this form and send together with the appropriately packaged dead red squirrel.

A separate copy of this form should be completed for each squirrel sent.

\*email or telephone contact is useful if any follow-up information is required.  
Postal address for returning the report to the finder; sender address required by Royal Mail.