



Squirrel Road Warning Signs

Last updated: June 2022

Red squirrels will come to ground when foraging for food, dispersing, or looking for a mate. Unfortunately they do not have road sense and many are killed each year on the roads. It is important that squirrel feeders are not located in a position that will entice squirrels from woodland, across a road.

Road signs may be a useful tool in informing people that red squirrels are in the area, and may raise awareness of the problem. However it is important to avoid an over proliferation of these signs, as this will dilute their effectiveness.

Saving Scotland's Red Squirrels is unable to fund road warning signs or rope bridges or arrange for their erection. However the following guidance notes taken from 'Save Our Squirrels- a Red Alert North East England Project- c/o Northumberland Wildlife Trust' may be of help to those wishing to pursue these themselves.

Signs within the Road Verge

If you wish to erect a sign within the road verge permission is required from the Local Authority or Transport Scotland depending on the class of route under consideration. The Local Authority is responsible for approval of road signs on the local roads and Transport Scotland is responsible for signing on the trunk road network.

In general the guidelines are to put up as few signs as possible to ensure that people do take notice of them. As I am sure we are all aware, if there are too many of a particular sign, people tend not to react to them.

The Council will consider any case put forward for signage to make drivers aware of red squirrels on its individual merit. A letter should be sent into the Council providing details of the exact location with details of the issues together with ecological information as to why a sign should be considered at this location.

Letters should be sent to the Council Transport Department.

The red squirrel warning is not a standard road sign, therefore gaining permission to erect one may be a long and expensive process.

Private Land

Due to the difficulties of this, you may wish to consider erecting a sign on private land, which is visible from the road. A sign company called William Smith can make signs similar to that below. They can be contacted on 01833 690305 (see www.williamsmith.co.uk)



These signs are triangular, 600mm, 0.2m², constructed from aluminium, and display a squirrel motif. The price of one sign is approximately £35. A 3.3m galvanised post with cap, base-plate, and clips will cost approximately £40. Carriage costs are not included in these prices.



Alternatively Potts Print can print a sign as below. This is printed on correx (corrugated plastic) so is far cheaper but also less robust. These signs come with holes pre-punched top and bottom for easy hanging.

Signs such as these may require advertisement consent from the local planning authority. It will therefore be necessary to make an initial enquiry to confirm this with your authority. However, advertisement consent is not normally required for signs that are less than 0.3m in size, not illuminated, less than 4.6m above ground level, and displaying a character no more than 0.75m in height.

Before deciding to purchase a sign, please use the following points to ensure that the purchase is justified. These conditions will help ensure the use of warning signs is legal and as effective as possible:

- Have there been red squirrel road deaths at this location? For the reasons stated above, signs should only be erected in known black spots. If a stretch of road is suspected to be a squirrel death black spot, our records may be used confirm this.
- To your knowledge, is there a red squirrel warning sign in the vicinity of the proposed site? Over proliferation of signs can significantly decrease their effectiveness.
- Is advertisement consent required from the local planning authority? If so, have they granted it?
- Are you the landowner, and if not do you have the permission of the landowner to erect the sign?

- Have you informed the local council that you wish to erect a red squirrel sign, and have they agreed to it?
- Are you able to erect and maintain the sign in a manner that is secure and safe?

About Saving Scotland's Red Squirrels

Saving Scotland's Red Squirrels is supporting local communities to take action to ensure red squirrels continue to be a part of Scotland's special native wildlife. Together we are working to protect Scotland's core red squirrel populations threatened by the spread of the non-native grey squirrel. The project is led by the Scottish Wildlife Trust in partnership with Scottish Natural Heritage, Forestry Commission Scotland, RSPB Scotland, Scottish Land & Estates and Forestry and Land Scotland.

The project is funded by National Lottery players through the Heritage Lottery Fund, and project partners.

For more information visit scottishsquirrels.org.uk.

