



**CAMPAIGN TOOLKIT**

# ABOUT THE CAMPAIGN

The Great Scottish Squirrel Survey returns this autumn, following last year's amazing efforts when nearly 1,100 people reporting 1,549 squirrel sightings in just one week. Saving Scotland's Red Squirrels (SSRS) is calling on the nation once again to explore the great outdoors. Between 10-16 October 2022 (National Red Squirrel Week) we want to see more people than ever looking out for both red and grey squirrels.

Squirrel sightings should be recorded on the SSRS website, [scottishsquirrels.org.uk](https://scottishsquirrels.org.uk)

## Why do we need this data?

SSRS has been collecting public squirrel sightings since 2010, last year we received a massive 14,243 sightings with the help of the Great Scottish Squirrel Survey, giving us our second highest recording year to date. The data not only improves our understanding of how squirrel populations are changing over time, it also helps our team take direct conservation action.

In the continued suspension of our annual spring survey, public sightings are more important than ever and play a key role in informing red squirrel conservation efforts. Each squirrel sighting reported during the Great Scottish Squirrel Survey will provide a detailed snapshot of the current situation on the ground.

## Why should people take part?

Reporting a squirrel sighting is one of the simplest things that anyone in Scotland can do to help protect red squirrels. It can also act as a gateway to wider engagement with the project and red squirrel conservation as a whole – many of our most dedicated volunteers started out as keen squirrel spotters.

Autumn is the ideal season for a nationwide squirrel survey. At this time of year, squirrels are often more visible than usual as they busily gather food, preparing themselves for the colder months ahead.

The Great Scottish Squirrel Survey is an opportunity to raise awareness, boost engagement and collect real, valuable data. Participants in the Survey will be doing a small act to help protect one of Scotland's most iconic yet threatened species, while joining in a mass citizen science event.

## When will we find out the results?

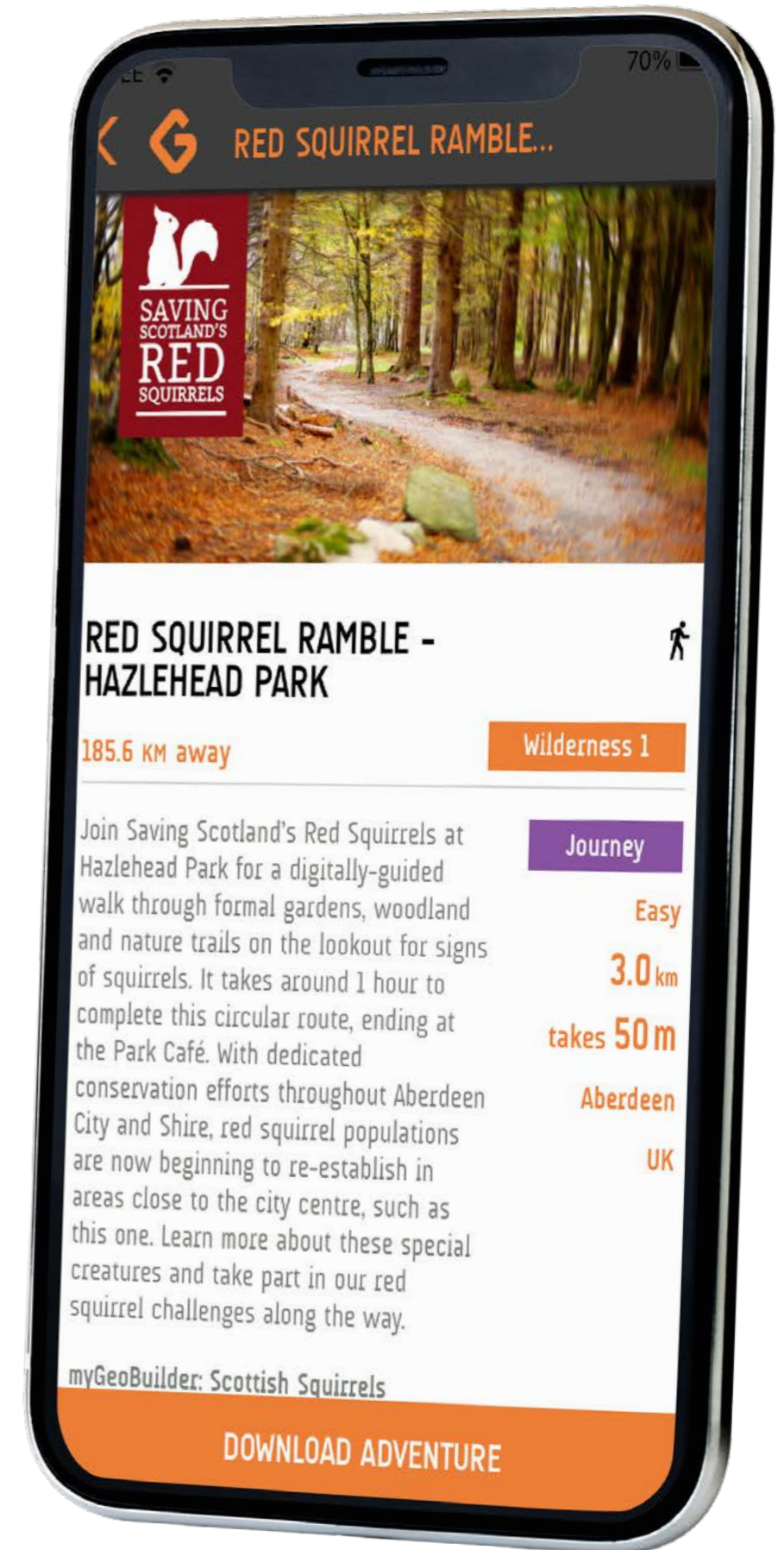
Each sighting we receive is verified by a member of our team before being included in the Scottish Squirrel Database and added to our online sightings map. We anticipate that the data collected during the Great Scottish Squirrel Survey will be verified, collated and published by December 2022.

# GET INVOLVED

There are a number of ways your organisation or community group could get involved in the Great Scottish Squirrel Survey. For example, by helping us promote the campaign or by hosting or co-hosting an in-person or virtual Great Scottish Squirrel Survey event with us.

Why not organise a group trip to a well-known squirrel stomping ground? Or, even better, an area of ideal squirrel habitat where few sightings have been recorded before.

**We have a number of activity ideas, tools and resources available to help you take part...**



# HOST A SURVEY EVENT

You can champion red squirrel conservation and inspire others to get outdoors this autumn by hosting your own squirrel spotting event during the Great Scottish Squirrel Survey. Encourage your local community to join this mass citizen science movement by creating a squirrel-themed wildlife walking route for local residents and families to follow, or go digital and raise awareness with a video live stream.

## Who can take part?

What makes the Great Scottish Squirrel Survey so great is that anyone can take part. Squirrel watching can be a solo activity that doesn't require elaborate equipment to look and listen to your surroundings. You can also explore alternative ways for people to take part, such as downloading a walking route or checking out our past squirrel talks online.

## Event activities

Ensure compliance with the latest Government guidelines when planning your event and always put public safety first. A health and safety risk assessment is always advisable when planning in-person events to ensure safety measures are in place. As we learn to navigate public events again in a post-covid world, please continue to be flexible and understanding of continued hesitancy and caution.

There is always the option to go digital. You could host an online talk about red squirrels in your area or film a live nature walk from your local patch to celebrate one of Scotland's most iconic mammals.

## When & where

Choose a date and time between 10 - 16 October that will best suit your local community. Activities such as walking routes could be made accessible for the whole week.

Consider that squirrels are often most active early morning for the best chance of seeing these charismatic creatures, but can also be seen at other times of the day. Your event could take place anywhere in Scotland - areas of known red squirrel territory and grey squirrel territory are equally important, as are areas where few squirrels have been seen.

If going digital, you could even inspire others from your own back garden by sharing video content of bushy-tailed visitors.

## How to promote sightings

Every sighting of both red and grey squirrels counts, so remember to inform participants that they can report what they have seen to **[scottishsquirrels.org.uk](https://scottishsquirrels.org.uk)**, during or after the event.

GET INVOLVED

# PROMOTE YOUR EVENT

The following templates are available to download and customise to your Great Scottish Squirrel Survey event. Email us event posters and details to promote through our events listings.

**Red Squirrel Guided Walk**

Take part in the Great Scottish Squirrel Survey!

Join our community woodland group for a walk in the woods as we look out for tufted ears and bushy tails. Explore the family-friendly trail and become an expert squirrel-spotter along the way.

**Saturday 25 September**  
**12pm – 2pm**

Meet at the woodland car park

Free event, booking essential. Limited to 15 people from 15 households.

Contact us at [woodlandgroup@email.com](mailto:woodlandgroup@email.com)

**Red squirrel livestream**

Get involved in the Great Scottish Squirrel Survey!

Grab some breakfast and join the local red squirrel volunteers online as we look out for tufted ears and bushy tails. We will be streaming live from our special red squirrel hide and chatting about the vital conservation work that is happening in the local area.

**Tuesday 21 September**  
**7am – 8am**

Streaming live on [Facebook.com/squirrelgroup](https://www.facebook.com/squirrelgroup)

For more information contact us at [squirrelgroup@email.com](mailto:squirrelgroup@email.com)

**scottishsquirrels.org.uk**

Saving Scotland's Red Squirrels is led by the Scottish Wildlife Trust, a Scottish registered charity (charity number SC005792). It is also a company limited by guarantee and registered in Scotland (registered number SC040247). Image © Raymond Leinster.

Great Scottish Squirrel Survey  
event poster template

**Red Squirrel Online Talk**

With your local nature reserve

**Thursday 23 September 2021**

To book a slot and access Zoom link please email [reserve@email.com](mailto:reserve@email.com)

**Report your sightings at**  
**[scottishsquirrels.org.uk](https://scottishsquirrels.org.uk)**

**scottishsquirrels.org.uk**

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Great Scottish Squirrel Survey  
event template for social media

# PRINTED MATERIALS

The following materials are available for downloading and self-printing, for display in visitor centres and other community meeting places. Some limited financial support may be available to cover printing costs - please get in touch if your group is interested.



Great Scottish Squirrel Survey  
A3 and A4 poster



Great Scottish Squirrel Survey  
worksheet

# TEMPLATE ARTICLE

We have put together a short article that could be included in a newsletter, blog or web page.

The Great Scottish Squirrel Survey returns back in-person for its fourth year this autumn. Saving Scotland's Red Squirrels is calling on people all over Scotland to explore outdoors and look out for tufted ears and bushy tails between 10-16 October (National Red Squirrel Week).

SSRS monitors squirrel populations all year round; but autumn remains a particularly rewarding time of year for squirrel-spotting. Squirrels are often more visible as they busily forage the autumn harvest in preparation for the winter ahead.

Anyone can take part in the Great Scottish Squirrel Survey by reporting sightings of both red and grey squirrels throughout the week. Each sighting creates a snapshot of the situation, helping the project understand how populations are changing over time and to decide where to focus its conservation efforts.

To find out more and record your squirrel sightings, visit **[scottishsquirrels.org.uk](https://scottishsquirrels.org.uk)**

GET INVOLVED

# SOCIAL MEDIA

The project Facebook page is [facebook.com/SavingScotlandsRedSquirrels](https://facebook.com/SavingScotlandsRedSquirrels)

The project Twitter handle is [@ScotSquirrels](https://twitter.com/ScotSquirrels)

The campaign hashtag is [#GreatScottishSquirrelSurvey](https://twitter.com/hashtag/GreatScottishSquirrelSurvey)

The web address to include is [scottishsquirrels.org.uk](https://scottishsquirrels.org.uk)



## Suggested tweets



Seen a squirrel? Help [@ScotSquirrels](https://twitter.com/ScotSquirrels) by taking part in the [#GreatScottishSquirrelSurvey](https://twitter.com/hashtag/GreatScottishSquirrelSurvey). Report your sightings at [scottishsquirrels.org.uk](https://scottishsquirrels.org.uk)



We're joining the [#GreatScottishSquirrelSurvey](https://twitter.com/hashtag/GreatScottishSquirrelSurvey)! Look out for squirrels this week (red and grey) and report them to [@ScotSquirrels](https://twitter.com/ScotSquirrels) at [scottishsquirrels.org.uk](https://scottishsquirrels.org.uk)



Explore outdoors with [@ScotSquirrels](https://twitter.com/ScotSquirrels) this [#GreatScottishSquirrelSurvey](https://twitter.com/hashtag/GreatScottishSquirrelSurvey) and report all sightings of both red and grey squirrels to [scottishsquirrels.org.uk](https://scottishsquirrels.org.uk)

# ABOUT SAVING SCOTLAND'S RED SQUIRRELS

Saving Scotland's Red Squirrels is working to ensure red squirrels continue to be a part of Scotland's special native wildlife. With the help of partners, landowners and volunteers, the project is monitoring squirrel populations across Scotland, managing the impact of squirrelpox and helping to combat the spread of grey squirrels in key areas.

Our efforts are making a difference — in many of our project areas, red squirrels are already making a comeback.

In 2017, Saving Scotland's Red Squirrels began its 'Developing Community Action' phase. Alongside vital conservation work, the project focused on engaging with local communities and individuals, inspiring them to take action to protect red squirrels where they live. This phase ended in March 2022 and Saving Scotland's Red Squirrels has secured funding for a further two-year Transitional Phase to enable continued support for some local volunteer groups and ongoing conservation efforts.

Community action is the key to long-term, sustainable red squirrel conservation in Scotland, with the added benefit of connecting more people with the nature on their doorstep. From participating in operational surveys to helping out at events, volunteers of all backgrounds can help ensure red squirrels continue to have a home in Scotland.

## Contact us

[squirrels@scottishwildlifetrust.org.uk](mailto:squirrels@scottishwildlifetrust.org.uk)

Scottish Wildlife Trust reception: **0131 3127765**

## Project areas





Harbourside House, 110 Commercial Street, Edinburgh, EH6 6NF  
t 0131 3127765 [scottishsquirrels.org.uk](http://scottishsquirrels.org.uk)