

# Red Squirrel

*sciurus vulgaris*



The Red Squirrel is the native squirrel in Ireland and has been in the country since the last ice age! They are arboreal creatures, meaning they live in the trees and spend most of their time foraging in the tree canopy.



## Red and Grey Squirrels

- The Red Squirrel is distinctly smaller than the Grey.
- The Red has ear tufts which the grey squirrel never does.
- Whilst the Red is a native animal the Grey was introduced in to the country in 1911 in County Longford. It is originally from North America.
- The tail of the Grey Squirrel is banded with different colours whereas the tail of the Red is all one colour.



## How do they find their buried food?

Squirrels don't hibernate, but during autumn they begin to store food as there won't be enough around in winter. They'll scrape a hole in the ground, bury their food, and cover it up again. They will choose a particular place and remember its location. When they return to retrieve the food they will look for disturbed ground and also use their sense of smell to sniff it out.



## What do Squirrels eat?

Although everyone assumes squirrels eat acorns, the Red Squirrel can't digest them until they're ripe by which time they've usually already been eaten! However, they can also eat pine cones and seeds, fungi, fruit and buds.



## Did you know?

Unlike other rodents teeth, the Red Squirrels incisors never wear out!

Squirrels nests are called dreys and are built of sticks and foliage.

↑  
up to 25cm in length  
(the tail is equal to the  
length of the head  
and body combined)



↓  
up to 400g  
in weight

## The Red Squirrel wordsearch

Can you find all the words? The answers go in all directions!



arboreal   incisors   rodent   squirrel  
native   trees   drey   acorn   fungi  
pine   red   tufts   grey



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