

# ALIEN SPECIES ALERT!

Have you seen this squirrel in your area?



THE INTRODUCED EASTERN GREY SQUIRREL CAN BE GREY OR BLACK



Eastern Grey Squirrels were introduced to Vancouver Island in 1966 from eastern North America. They are quickly spreading up the island from their point of introduction in Metchosin.

They cause damage to homes, gardens and farms by:

- Digging up lawns and eating garden bulbs
- Chewing on wire, removing shingles and shakes, and chewing through eaves to nest in attics, roofs and chimneys
- Damaging nut trees and depleting nut production (hazelnuts and walnuts)
- Removing bark from trees



Grey squirrels are a threat to our native species because they can:

- Damage Garry Oak trees by stripping bark and eating acorns
- Eat the bulbs of Camas flowers
- Compete with and displace native red squirrels
- Transfer diseases to red squirrels
- Compete with native birds for tree cavities and bird feeders
- Eat bird eggs and nestlings



Protect our native Vancouver Island species by:

- Trapping grey squirrels
- Not relocating grey squirrels (it's illegal)
- Not feeding grey squirrels
- Controlling access to garbage, compost and bird feeders

Note: Tips for squirrel-proofing your home and property are available on the internet

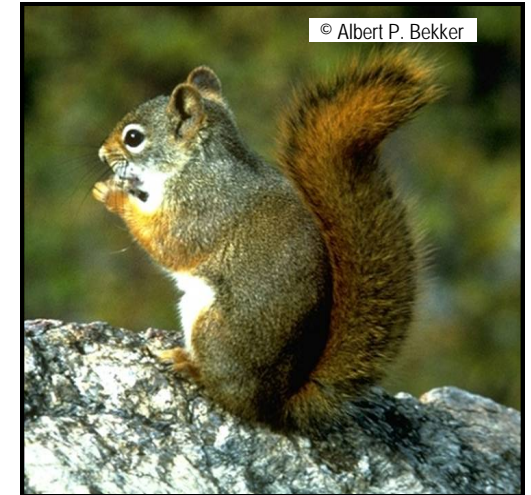
Know the differences between the Eastern Grey Squirrel and our native Red Squirrel!

Our native Red Squirrel is being displaced by the introduced Grey Squirrel

### INTRODUCED GREY SQUIRREL

### NATIVE RED SQUIRREL

The Ministry of Environment would like your assistance in determining the northern extent and range of the Eastern Grey Squirrel on Vancouver Island. If you have seen a grey squirrel north of Duncan or west of Sooke, or want more information about how to help with the management of this species, please call 1-250-751-3100



#### Physical differences:

- Body larger and chunkier, usually grey with brown tinges or black
- Large, fat, bushy tail that folds over the head in rest position
- Long, slightly hairy ears
- Twice as big as the native red squirrel: 17-20" or 40-50 cm long

#### Physical differences:

- Body, head and tail are olive brown or rusty red
- Less bushy tail, sometimes tipped with black
- Black flank stripe
- White eye-ring
- About half the size of the grey squirrel: 11-13" or 28-32 cm

**Vocalization:** simple, deep *qua-qua-qua-qua*

**Breeding:** may have 2 litters

**Habitat:** Deciduous or mixed forests

**Behaviour:** stores food away from nest, therefore more active in winter.

**Vocalization:** variable-pitch chatter *tsik, tsik, tsik, chrrrr-siew, siew siew*

**Breeding:** 1 litter in spring

**Habitat:** Coniferous forests

**Behaviour:** stores food in nest, less active in winter.

