



RED SQUIRRELS OF THE HIGHLANDS

Update

Scottish Squirrel Group
March 2012

Strongholds

Update to be provided at the meeting.

Grey squirrel news

A dead grey was found at Duror, south of Fort William in January 2012. Local agencies and land managers warned to monitor this area, and none have been seen since. A network of grey squirrel 'panic bags' around the Highlands are being developed. These will consist of guidance on how to deal with a grey squirrel record and equipment to monitor the site in question and how to use a trap if the record is verified.

Dundonnell translocation

This is a summary of the new project report, published in January 2012 by Roy Dennis – *"Following the last of a series of meeting, phone calls and emails between Roy Dennis and SNH over the success or not of the project, Roy and Ron Macdonald of SNH met in January and reached an agreement. Roy would carry out a capture/recapture project in Feb/March 2012 to provide data which could be analysed by both parties and which should provide the additional evidence base requested by SNH to declare the project successful. If this was agreed, then a short distance translocation of up to 25 squirrels from Dundonnell to Loch Broom side forest would be undertaken in March 2012 and a new translocaton to Strathcarron in Sutherland would start in September 2012"*. This report is available from Juliet – let me know if you would like a copy.

Funding and exit strategy

This project will end in June 2012. We are seeking a small amount of funding to pay for the website hosting and management and for food for the feeders at the hot spots. We are seeking about £2 to 3,000 a year. Any offers?????!!

Lead volunteers

We now have a full complement of 8 lead volunteers. They are located around the Highlands and their main task will be to be the main local red squirrel contact within their region. We had a training day for them last October so that we could define their roles and keep in touch with each other.

Lead volunteer names:

- | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. Heather Bantick | Badenoch & Strathspey - north |
| 2. Wayne Fitter | Badnoch & Strathspey - south |
| 3. Ron Bury | Inverness - rural |
| 4. Francis McWilliams | Inverness - urban |
| 5. Sue Tarr | Ross-shire |
| 6. Karen Reid | Caithness & Sutherland |
| 7. Chris Clifford | Lochaber |
| 8. Juliet Robinson | Co-ordination and website |

Website www.redsquirrelsofthehighlands.co.uk

This site serves as a vital link to all red squirrel interests in the Highlands and beyond. We are very anxious that the website continues beyond this summer, especially as there will be no project officer in post.

Hot spots

Leaflet launch end of January 2012 with STV and local press.



STV film crew with Juliet at Farr hotspot

The new leaflet showing locations of these hot spots. Please take one or more! The aim is to have the following facilities at each site where possible:

- Car parking
- All ability trail to feeders
- Several feeders which are topped up by local enthusiasts
- Viewing screen with spy holes at a range of heights.

Juliet Robinson
8 March 2012