

NISF 27 Sept 2012 – Belvoir Park Forest

Jon Lees (JL) NIEA
Declan Looney (DL) NIEA
John Griffin (JG) DARD Forest Service
Neil Warnock (NW) QUB
Allan Galway (AG) Belfast Zoo
John Fisher (JF) Belfast Zoo
Conor McKinney (CMK) UWT
Janette Adams (JA) TRSG
Anne McComb (AMC) TRSG
Mark Hamilton (MH) LVRSG
Joe Dowdall (JD) GRSG
Daniel McAfee (DMA) GRSG
Andrew Upton (AU) NT / ARSG
Aoife Smith (AS) Fermanagh DC

Ken Moore (KM) Fermanagh RSG / NIEA
Christine Butler (CB) DARD
Brian Malcomson (BM) Scottish Woodlands
Dave Farnan (DF) MHT
John Francis Smyth (JFS) MHT (volunteer)
Amanda McCallion (AMC) BASC
Ross Buchannan (RB) NIEA
Christine Doherty (CD) NWRSG (Derry / Strabane DC)

DL welcomed everyone

Round room introductions as there are a few new faces.

Group News

Glens Red Squirrel Group Joe Dowdall Chair GRSG.

The GRSG continues to operate Feeders in Ballycastle Forest, Ballypatrick Forest, Craigagh Wood, Cushendun, Cottage Wood Cushendall, Glenariff and Garron Point. Recently we have established a number of Feeders in Glenarm Forest. Grey Squirrel Control is being carried out in Ballycastle, Glenarm, Ballygalley, Glendun and the Group responds to requests from people in other areas to remove Greys.

Activities.

May 2012

Met with local Landowner Katie English regarding the development of the Craigagh Wood site.

Held a Fund raising Quiz at the Laragh Lodge Glenariff

Held a Red Squirrel Walk event in Ballycastle Forest

Provided an information stall at Portglenone May Day event

Held a Red Squirrel Walk in Glenarm Forest

Attended the NIRSf Sub Group meeting

June 2012

Group Meeting

Attended NIEA Challenge Fund Presentation

Meet with Broughshane Wildlife Group

Provided an information stall at the Cushendun Fun Day

July 2012

Group meeting
Feeder Workshop
Belfast Zoo Native Species Event
Presentation and Walk to Ballymena Alzheimer's Group in Glenariff
Public meeting Cushendall Library

August

Group Meeting
Information Stall at Marconi event Ballycastle
Information Stall at the "Lark in the Park" Heart of the Glens Festival Cushendall
Presentation and Walk to Ballymena Alzheimer's Group in Glenariff
Walk in Ballycastle Forest with Ballycastle Rotary Club
Fund raising Treasure Hunt Glenariff
Feeder Workshop Glenarm

September 2012

Feeder workshop Glenariff
Erecting Feeders in Glenarm for Public viewing
Walk and Talk event in Glenariff Forest

Planned Activities 2012.

Event	Location	Date / Time	Lead Member
GRSG Quiz	Laragh Lodge Glenariff	28 Sept. 8.30pm	Joe & Maria
Erecting Observation Feeders in Glenarm	Glenarm Forest	03 Oct. 7.00pm	Joe & Floresca
National Trails Day	Walks in Glenarm Glenariff & Ballycastle	7th Oct. 12.00pm	Joe, Daniel Liz, Raymie
Red Squirrel Week Walks and Activities throughout the week	Mid Glens area Glenariff, Glenarm, Ballycastle	7 -14 October	Joe, Daniel, Liz & Raymie
Red Squirrel Walk Ballycastle Primary Sch	Ballycastle Forest	10 Oct. 10.30am	Daniel
Group Meeting	Ballyeamon Camping Barn	24 Oct. 7.30pm	Maria
Talk and Presentation to RSPB Belfast	Cooke Memorial Hall	03 Nov. 7.00pm	Joe
Visit to Cumbria	Penrith	23-25 Nov.	Joe
Pre Christmas Red Squirrel Day	Glenariff Forest	16 Dec. 2.00pm	Liz and Joe

The above is not an exhaustive list. It will be added to and some dates and times may change.

Additionally Joe has secured funding from the Red Squirrel Survival Trust to fund a visit to the North of England Red Squirrel Project to meet staff and volunteers. Joe has asked that anyone interested in going to England to contact him directly – priority will be given to those actively undertaking grey control.

Lagan Valley and Belvoir Red Squirrel Group - Mark Hamilton.

No reds have been spotted on site since before Christmas. There are still volunteers regularly monitoring the park and walking transect routes. They noted a major dip in grey squirrel sightings May-September 2012, it is not clear if this is a direct result of Dave Tosh's cull at the start of the year. They are awaiting the final RPS report into the squirrel in the Lagan Valley since the results of Dave's work.

Tollymore RSG – Janette Adams

Regular monitoring of feeding sites by the volunteers and the continued use of camera traps. These surveys are suggesting that there are a small number of reds remaining in the forest. The current estimate is 10-12 animals with a further 5 or so in the satellite woods outside. There has not been a great number of kittens spotted which is suggestive of a poor breeding season, probably a reflection of the wet spring / summer weather.

The group have starting to routinely feed again as the beech and larch seed crops appear poor.

The regularly monitoring has noted 'large' numbers of pine martens or at least high levels of pine marten activity even during daylight hours.

Forest service staff continue to remove any greys that enter the park, although numbers have been low.

The group were visited by Helen Butler from the Isle of Wight Squirrel Project who is touring the UK meeting various red squirrel groups and learning about what everyone gets up to.

<http://www.wightsquirrels.co.uk/>

article in Thursday 04 Oct Belfast Telegraph.

<http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/environment/return-of-the-red-squirrel-after-devastating-virus-16219788.html>

West Tyrone Red Squirrel Group

Julie is on maternity leave until November. JL had an email from Robert Scott from Baronscourt

"Janette Pollock is doing wonderful work 'on the ground' here and seems to be keeping Baronscourt more-or-less free of greys, and you can rest assured that this has a high priority

and will continue to do so beyond my period of stewardship". Robert hopes to devote some more time to the project in the new year.

North West RSG – Christine Doherty

A new website has been launched for the NW group.

<http://nwredsquirrel.org/>

There has been a BSc student working with in the area looking at ***Phytophthora ramorum***. The undergraduate student is studying BSc Geography at QUB, examining the risk of sudden oak disease in the Faughan Valley area and developing a risk matrix.

The group has secured some funds from HLF and BIFFA to buy feed, feeders and traps. Research into getting quotes for this has started.

Events: The very successful Clipper festival held in L`Derry during the summer provided the group with an excellent opportunity to talk to the public and generate support. The groups enjoyed significant interest from the visitors at the event.

Christine has begun to develop a work plan with Rachel Bain (biodiversity officer for Coleraine, Moyle, Limavady and Ballymoney councils) with particular interest for areas in Limavady which border the Derry City council areas. Rachel is already activity working with the Glens group in Moyle.

Fermanagh RSG – Ken Moore

Rose is currently on maternity leave but is still working away for red squirrels!

Fermanagh Red Squirrel Group – activity update to NISF Meeting (27/9/12)



- We received 4 **camera traps** from The Glens Group at the beginning of the summer, purchased through a grant they applied for on behalf of local
- **FRSG now constituted.** The loan of the camera traps highlighted the need for the group to become constituted and apply for charity status as we need insurance to operate the traps on some properties. The FRSG met on 9th August at which time the group became formally constituted. We have also

Fermanagh properties and NIEA at Castle Archdale. We are now getting records of red squirrels as well as other mammals from these traps. These records will be passed on the Joe Dowdall and Jon Lees.

applied for Charity status which we hope to achieve in the next couple of weeks.

- FRSG will be sending out a press release to local papers highlighting events taking place during **Red Squirrel Week**. We have also made contact with BBC and will be emailing this to them also in the hope that they pick it up. We are partnering with Fermanagh District Council during RS week and will help deliver their family walks during the Fermanagh Walking Festival. Events happening include:
National Trails Day
* Sunday 7th October 2 to 3.30, Castle Archdale, Rossmore Quay Car-park-Trail and Red Squirrel Information Stand. (No charge)
Fermanagh Walking Festival
* Saturday 13th October Marble Arch Caves Registration 1.30- 2pm, the walk will commence at 2pm.
* Sunday 14th Sliabh Beagh; Crocknagrally Forest Registration at Cooneen Community Centre 1.30-2pm, the walk will commence at 2pm.
- **FRSG website.** www.fermanaghredsquirrelgroup.com
The website is up and running and we have received a number of records through it, largely emailed to us. The sightings page is difficult to use and we will be looking to revise this. Another option could be to link to CEDaR's new squirrel recording page.
- **Funding and Grants.** We need to raise money or receive grant aid to achieve some things including updating our webpage and to get insurance. We will be looking into this over the autumn months and may partner with another organisation to access NIEA's Challenge Fund (we cannot apply directly as we are not yet 2 years in existence, as stipulated in their guidelines).
- *Since the meeting Rose has informed me that they are talking to FSC Derrygonnelly for a joint funding application to the NIEA challenge fund.*
- **RS road kill and Quercus Pox Virus project.** Some FRSG members as well as a member of the public have come across, retained and arranged to be forwarded to Quercus a number of carcasses' in recent months.
- **Ken has been regularly setting traps around Castlearchdale but he has caught very little.**
 - **There is a freezer at NIEA Castlearchdale which can be used to store squirrel carcasses.**

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Ards RSG – Andrew Upton



The following has been achieved since late April 2012:

- Red squirrel day planned at Mount Stewart on 6 October to raise awareness of red squirrels on Ards Peninsula
- Volunteers are now monitoring red squirrels at Mount Stewart on a weekly basis (3 x 1km transects)
- Looking at a number of funding sources for squirrel bridge over main road outside Mount Stewart
- There have been several red squirrels hit by cars on main road outside Mount Stewart in recent months
- Freezer at Mount Stewart for public to bring in any squirrel carcasses, so they can be passed onto QUB for testing for pox virus
- NT awarded £2K from Bombardier for red squirrel conservation work at Mount Stewart
- Action for biodiversity project kindly funded 3 remote wildlife surveillance cameras for use by Ards red Squirrel Group
- Meeting of Ards Red Squirrel Group held in late July, public meeting to be held over the winter
- Recent reports of a red squirrel near Millisle and still present in Clandeboye Estate, but also worrying reports of a grey squirrel north of Carrowdore and Ballywalter Park. Greys appear to be firmly established now in Donaghadee and Bangor
- Michael Griffith at Jubilee Vets kindly circulated info on Ards Red Squirrel Group to farmers on Ards Peninsula

Andrew Upton - Coast and Countryside Manager (Strangford Lough and the Ards Peninsula) National Trust, Mount Stewart, Portaferry Road, Newtownards, BT22 2AD. Tel: (028) 4278 7803 OR Mob: 07824 334429
Email: andrew.upton@nationaltrust.org.uk

AP 1: AU and NIEA to develop the rope bridge issue with DRD Roads Service ASAP.

Ring of Gullion RSG – our newest group lead by Darren Rice (Ring of Gullion ANOB Officer - Newry and Mourne DC).

<http://www.ringofgullion.org/Red-Squirrel-Group.aspx>

Based in the area surrounding Slieve Gullion, there would appear to be a healthy population of red squirrels in the Forest Service estate on the mountain, with reports from satellite woodlands of reds being present.

The group have met with Forest Service who have agreed to support and work with the group.

Belfast Zoo – Allan Galway



Allan did a short presentation with a slide show of pictures taken at the launch and the squirrel themed weekend.

The zoo officially opened the red squirrel enclosure on the 24 August 2012 with good support from Belfast City Council. The three Antrim squirrels were collected from Ballycastle and Glenariff by Joe Dowdall and Daniel McAfee from the Glens Red Squirrel Group and Zoo Vet Michael Griffith. The two females and a male have been getting used to their new home in two interconnected cages at the zoo. The zoo has erected some exciting new signage which includes graphic squirrel pox images which the public are showing a lot of interest in. The Squirrel weekend was a success and included crafts, education and a climbing wall, as well as the Tollymore Group and the NIEA.

Mourne Heritage Trust – Dave Farnan

The MHT trust have been working away with the help of volunteer John Francis Smyth clearing the areas of Silent Valley, Dunnywater / Annalong Wood of greys, both these areas historically had reds and appeared as red only areas in the 2007 survey. Recently this has extended to the private Mourne Park Estate near Kilkeel. John has been using two Camera traps to assist him but would find another couple useful as he is now working three distinct sites.

Dave and John visited the Scottish Wildlife Trust grey squirrel control project in Ayrshire with the assistance of the Scottish Association for Conservation and Shooting (SACS), Dave produced this report:

GREY SQUIRREL CONTROL STUDY TRIP

The study trip goal was to gain more knowledge and insight into grey squirrel control by visiting an area currently worked by the Scottish Wildlife Trust (SWT), Ochiltree, Ayrshire. The focus was on grey squirrel trapping and dispatch. The area visited had no red squirrels therefore red squirrel management (feeding / introduction etc) was not part of the agenda.

In Aug 31st – Sept1st 2012 MHT sent a study trip to Ochiltree, Ayrshire, S.W. Scotland to meet with Jim McColm of the Scottish Wildlife Trust who works for the Saving Scotland's Red Squirrels project.

The itinerary comprised of a three hour evening brainstorming session soon after arrival. The next morning was taken up by site visits to various locations and habitats to see the practicalities of trapping and shooting on the ground. The trip concluded with a further two hour brainstorming session, and Jim providing examples of recording sheets, and useful contacts. It was agreed by the trip participants that the trip had been very useful and that Jim had provided excellent insight into grey control. It was also recognised that a lot of the good practice followed in Scotland was already being implemented in the Mourne, this reflected a high level of competence and gave Jim confidence in the Mourne Teams strategy, method and long term goals.

The following list consists only of new points learnt during the study trip, these have added to our knowledge and experience of grey control and will be incorporated into existing practice. The list is not meant as a comprehensive list of all the methodology and equipment needed for grey control.

Useful points from trip to add to existing methods - for grey control only:

- As with Mourne grey control practice, in Scotland the recommended method is a combination of shooting and trapping
- In Scotland the recommended calibre for squirrel shooting is a .22 rifle.
- As with Mourne grey control - for trapped greys the most humane dispatch is by air pistol
- No need to use peanuts in mix for feeders or trap baiting. A maize and sunflower seed mix is effective
- Trap type is very important – that is position of pedal and its height when set, length of trap matters for ease of dispatch, plus greys known to damage and escape from some shorter traps
- Position of cover on trap to middle instead of one end – this makes it easier to place comb
- Use canvas for trap cover as bin liner can be shredded leaving bits of plastic everywhere
- Attach wooden ply base ($\frac{1}{4}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$ inch marine ply) directly onto trap instead of attaching to tree
- Wedge traps between branches on multi-stemmed trees
- Heavily feed ground below feeders and draw as many greys as possible to the site, gradually reduce ground feed in preparation for trapping, then load the area with ground traps – number depending on the amount of greys coming to the area.
- Maintain the feeder as usual throughout trapping and shooting

- Once trapping has started - continue trapping and shooting without a break until all greys are removed. The occasional grey will not go into the traps, but these will be dispatched by shooting.
- SWT have had up to 14 traps at highly populated feeders
- SWT sterilise traps with a solution of virkon powder, sprayed onto trap which is then wiped. At present, around Ochiltree, pox is not an issue for SWT. MHT will maintain its practice of submerging traps in Trigene solution because of the presence of pox in nearby grey populations.
- Jim stated that in his experience Pine Martins definitely have an impact on grey populations
- Recording sheets used by SWT grey controllers had more detail than our current forms. Details to add included grid ref for trap, give each trap location a number, habitat type given by a ref number, Age of forest, nearest tree species, if supplementary feeding supplied, weight of animal
- Jim stated 350g would be a big red / 550g would be a big grey

John Griffin gave an account from Emma Sheehy on the progress of her PhD project. A brief summary is given here:

“The research project itself has been funded by a scholarship from the Irish Research Council from 2009 to 2012 so it is now in its final stages. Data collection was completed in May 2012 and laboratory analysis was completed in August 2012, and at present all of the data collected is being analysed with the hopes of submitting 4 papers for publication in scientific journals over the coming months”.

“Main findings: Red squirrel is common and widespread throughout Laois and Offaly, and is also re-appearing in some of the surrounding areas (eg North Kilkenny, North Tipperary, West Kildare, South Westmeath). The pine marten is also common in these areas and there is a positive correlation between pine marten presence and red squirrel presence in areas that the grey squirrel had previously been the dominant squirrel species.

Grey squirrels are rare in the above mentioned areas, despite having confirmed historic populations.

The control area of Co. Wicklow still hosts many healthy grey squirrel populations and replacement of the red squirrel continues, particularly in broadleaved woodlands.

There is a negative correlation between pine marten abundance and grey squirrel presence”.

Emma hopes to publish several papers in the next few months and will be presenting some of her work at the AIMS conference in Dublin 26-27 Oct 2012. <http://invasivespeciesireland.com/forum/aims-2012/>

There followed an open discussion on Pine Martens in Northern Ireland.

DL suggested that if it was proven that pine martens negatively impact grey squirrels and allowed reds to thrive and subject to meeting IUCN guidelines it could be considered to translocate pine martens from some areas of NI with large populations to other areas where there are fewer but problematic grey squirrel populations existed.

DL stated that it was the NIEA's intention to commission a NI wide Pine Marten survey in the near future which would fill in the gaps in our knowledge, particularly in the Antrim/L'derry areas.

There was mention of Declan O'Mahony's recent work in the Mourne on Pine marten density and there was a general feeling from those in the Tollymore area that the numbers were somewhat underestimated, given the numbers seen on the camera traps. TRSG suggested that from the camera traps individuals were identifiable - however further research would be necessary. But do the camera traps give an over estimation for pine martens? The use of camera traps would be considered in any NI survey.

Neil Warnock QUB – Squirrel Pox project update.

A report is due with the NIEA at start of next week – (it since been received) Once the report is finalised copies will be made available for forum members who are interested.

1. We collated records of red and grey squirrels throughout Northern Ireland (NI) ($n=293$) to assess the current (2009-2012) distribution. We also collected grey squirrel tissue samples ($n=208$) from specimens obtained throughout their range in NI to assess the distribution of SQPV. Red squirrel tissue samples ($n=40$) were collected opportunistically.
2. Enzyme-linked immunosorbent assay (ELISA) and quantitative real-time polymerase chain reaction (qPCR) analyses were used to establish the presence of seropositivity (i.e. antibodies) and viral DNA in each specimen sampled. We also examined virus degradation rates in the laboratory under various conditions and tested ectoparasites and faeces for the presence of SQPV to determine their putative roles as vectors of the disease.
3. The distribution of red and grey squirrels as described in the current study was similar to other recent studies suggesting that grey squirrels are now widespread throughout Northern Ireland and red squirrels remain local and isolated.
4. SQPV was present in all grey squirrel populations tested with 8% of individuals actively infected and 25% of individuals possessing antibodies.
5. One red squirrel tested positive for the disease at Tollymore Forest Park, Co. Down, possessing both antibodies and virus at substantially higher viral loads than present in infected grey squirrels.
6. There was a trend for SQPV infection to be sex-biased and seasonal; being more prevalent in spring and summer than winter and its presence was associated with high maximum and minimum temperatures during the month previous to sampling. Laboratory work suggested the virus survived for longer in the environment during warm dry conditions. All ectoparasites, including fleas and ticks, from pox positive reds, and a third of ectoparasites from pox positive greys tested +ve for SQPV DNA suggesting they may have a role as disease vectors.

A new paper on squirrel pox was published during the summer by Colin McInnes at the Moredun Institute:

<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1469-1795.2012.00570.x/abstract>

Grey Control – Joe Dowdall

Concern was raised about a lack of coordination of grey control in NI. JD proposed a new group that reports back to the NISF with the sole intend of controlling greys.

CMK agrees that a strategy or overview would be beneficial and make use of Colin Lawton's research which identified the importance of 'pinch points'.

JD proposed a NISF subgroup which deals exclusively with culling and control.

AP2 All members to wishing to take part in this sub-group to contact JL as soon as possible.

JD the need for a Red Squirrel Development Plan – a strategic plan.

Including Group management

The need for more groups or expansion of groups into new territory.

Perhaps a Northern Red Squirrels type model, which is a group that acts as an umbrella body for many local groups.

Constituted groups are better as they can apply for external funding.

Public relations – JD – we need the ability as a forum to get the message across.

The education book needs re-worked (this was a previous action point for JL which is ongoing) There is a need for an education kit for school children. And regular media coverage from press releases. eg the loss of reds from Belvoir.

There was mention re-introducing reds to Belvoir from the zoo population at some point in the future.

Clearly there would be a need for a massive grey control programme.

DF: 60-70% of landowners required for a successful control scheme

Other sites in NI are more defensible and in the short/medium term would make better areas to undertake translocations.

There has been an increase in support for grey control across the UK and Ireland as seen in various public surveys. However care must be taken as the surveys themselves can ask very leading questions.

Various local surveys have been carried out in recent years including -
An Investigation into the Public Perception on Control of Invasive Alien Species: Case study on the Grey Squirrel – by Larissa E. M. Wilson-McKee

And the Belvoir Park Forest visitor survey. There was an earlier survey of Belfast zoo visitors.

AP3 CMK questionnaire for UWT members.

AP4 NIEA: Using all available public surveys build a picture on the website.

AP5 all: forward any public opinion surveys to JL for inclusion especially those from outside NI.

Working with local councils to control grey squirrels and conserve reds.
GRSG have established an excellent relationship with both Larne and Moyle councils. The Group and Rachel Bain are currently working on presenting similar plans to at least two other councils.

JD- Joe is looking into ways to engage with service industries such as Royal Mail, to ask their staff in the Glens to report sightings of squirrels on their delivery routes.

Agriculture

Scotland RDP funding <http://www.scottishsquirrels.org.uk/our-work/funding/>

The Scottish Government has made provision through the Scottish Rural Development Programme to finance work which assists in the achievement of biodiversity objectives. By working to protect red squirrels, either through grey squirrel control or habitat improvements, you could be eligible to access this funding to help with your work.

The Scottish Rural Development Programme offers support to landowners who wish to carry out grey squirrel control for red squirrel conservation. Eligible applicants can claim £185 per trap per annum for carrying out 5 trapping sessions of 10 days throughout the year. This trapping programme must be supported with full and comprehensive records

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/farmingrural/SRDP/RuralPriorities/Options/Controlofinvasivenon-nati>

CB: there is nothing this comprehensive currently in NI we did have provision for hopper feeders but this up take was low and it is currently suspended on advice from NIEA. (JL feeding without grey control particularly in an unregulated situation by non-experts was deemed negative to red squirrels, we would only encourage feeding under our or a squirrel group's supervision).

CB: There is a new round of funding coming and there will be opportunities to feed into this process.

AP6 ALL: take a look at the Scottish model and feed back to the forum if this is an area that the NISF should be lobbying for in NI

All Ireland Squirrel Action Plan – Joe Dowdall

JD called for a comprehensive review of the 2008 plan. He stated that there were targets that had been met and many of those that had been missed.

DL explained that there were approx 75 individual HAPs and SAPs with many hundreds of individual actions. In relation to the All Ireland Red squirrel plan there has been comparatively more work undertaken on this than many of the other plans, with the vast majority of this north of the border. To make more practical use of the squirrel action plan he asked that members take the time to read through it and forward ideas about where we, collectively as the squirrel forum, should focus our efforts. These should be forwarded prior to the next forum meeting.

AP7 All: go through the 2008 action plan (linked below) and forward ideas about where the forum should focus effort before the NISF spring meeting.

http://www.doeni.gov.uk/niea/all-ireland_red_squirrel_sap_web_version_may_08~changed~final_2_-2.pdf

KM: Border staff to reach out to their opposite numbers in ROI to establish their thoughts on red squirrel conservation and the formation of squirrel groups and offer invite to NISF meeting.

CMK: will contact the Irish Wildlife Trust and encourage group formation.

NI Squirrel Conference spring 2013.

JD proposed that a NI conference is planned for April or May 2013.

JL highlighted that this clashes with the UK red squirrel conference in Exeter on 19 April 2013 (see attached flyer) and our timing should be such to maximise the impact and attract the best attendance from across UK and Ireland (and EU particularly Italy) – Would an autumn date not be better?

Options on a seminar as part of an UWT plan event or a full day conference?

AP8: All feedback to JL whether you think a full conference event or a smaller seminar event would be more beneficial.

P. Ramorum update JG

2012 a further 60Ha of Larch has been removed with Glenariff and Glenarm being the hardest hit. FS/DARD continuing to survey and ground truth aerial surveys.

AOB

The website has been updated with the inclusion the new online recording platform (a joint NIEA and Ulster Museum's Centre for Environmental Data and Recording - CEDaR which is still a project in development and we are ironing out any issues but it should allow any squirrel records to be entered. It also means that our records are automatically added to the CEDaR database.

http://www.doeni.gov.uk/niea/biodiversity/northern_ireland_squirrel_forum/red_squirrel_sightings.htm

There is a new red squirrel book published during the summer: The Eurasian Red Squirrel by Stefan Bosch and Peter Lurz

ISBN 978-3894322588

http://www.amazon.co.uk/Eurasian-Red-Squirrel-Sciurus-vulgaris/dp/3894322586/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1349944236&sr=1-1

JD ask that this epetition is drawn to your attention calling for wider controls of grey squirrels.

Please distribute through all your contacts.

<https://submissions.epetitions.direct.gov.uk/petitions/21058/signature/new>

Next Meeting: Thursday 21 February 2013