



Member of
Northern Red Squirrels
www.northernredsquirrels.org.uk

Safeguarding Ponteland District's Red Squirrels For Future Generations
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Summer 2011

Red Squirrel Watch!

RED SQUIRRELS BACK IN DARRAS HALL

Red squirrels are beginning to repopulate Darras Hall after the October 2010 outbreak of the deadly squirrel pox virus (SQPV), coupled with the harsh winter, which devastated our Darras Hall population causing an estimated drop in numbers of more than 80%.

We have had reports of several young squirrels visiting feeders in the area and are hopeful that if we keep the grey squirrels out of the district then our population will begin to build back up to its previous numbers.



WHAT CAN YOU DO TO HELP?

- **PLEASE BE VERY VIGILANT.** If you have reds visiting your garden please keep a close eye on them and report any suspected changes to their behaviour or suspected symptoms to us immediately.
- **We need to know about the health of our populations of reds in the Ponteland District.** Please report ALL sightings of red squirrels to us (via our website, email or telephone). Let us know numbers, health, behaviour. Please also report absence (if you are no longer seeing reds).
- **Please also report any sightings of GREY SQUIRRELS.** We need to remove any influxing greys from the area as soon as possible.
- **DISINFECT YOUR SQUIRREL AND BIRD FEEDERS** (Use cittedox or arklens). Mouldy feeders can cause enteritis-type diseases in reds as well as being a possible contact point for red-to-red squirrel pox virus transmission.
- **PLEASE DO NOT TAKE YOUR FEEDERS DOWN IF YOU SEE A GREY SQUIRREL** – feeders can be an excellent early warning signal to let us know when a grey has come into the area. It can also help us to catch the grey.

GREY SQUIRRELS CONTINUE TO INVADE

This spring and summer has seen a continued influx of grey squirrels into the immediate Ponteland area. We have removed 12 greys to date and further 11 from the outer Ponteland area.

We have also been able to remove an additional 18 grey squirrels from the Woolsington area. However, we are still getting sightings of greys in the Milbourn/Stamfordham/Kirkley areas.

We would like to **THANK** all residents who have reported grey sightings and monitored traps helping us to keep our Ponteland Area RED.

VOLUNTEER SQUIRREL 'RANGER' REQUIRED

We require a Volunteer Squirrel Ranger to cover the Ponteland and outer district. The position would be on a voluntary basis, but some expenses would be paid. The position would probably suit a retired and active person with their own transport who would be confident and able to work on their own initiative. Training would be given. If you are interested please contact Sally on: 07878 061880

Squirrel Cards available from £2.75 Squirrel Note Books £1.50 Hazelnuts from £2.50
Free local delivery or collection.

Call Sally on 07878 061880 or Penny on 01661 825052.

ROAD KILL AGAIN!

FIVE red squirrels have been run over in the past two months. Four young squirrels were killed in the Ponteland village area and one has been run over on Edge Hill.

It seems such a shame that as our reds begin to breed and expand their numbers they then get run over.

WE APPEAL TO YOU TO PLEASE drive at the speed limit in the Ponteland and Darras Hall area and keep your eyes open for reds on the verges or pavements. Unfortunately, red squirrels don't have any road sense, so it is up to us to watch out for them! If you see a red on the pavement or verge, please slow down as they may hop into the road without looking.

PLEASE KEEP EYES PEELED FOR REDS CROSSING THE ROAD!



PARTY IN THE PARK

The Party in the Park was the busiest to date and we would like to thank everyone who visited our marquee. We were able to chat to lots of people about squirrels, many people were able to give us information, good and bad, about the squirrel situation in their area and we raised OVER £140. FUN WAS HAD BY ALL!



GRANTS AWARDED FOR GREY CONTROL

Several grants were awarded by the new partnership, Red Squirrels Northern England, to Voluntary Red Squirrel Groups in Northumberland, including one to Ponteland Red Squirrels. Our grant is to cover the South Tyne from Horsley to Riding Mill. This area is inundated with grey squirrels and the grant has enabled us to pay expenses to volunteers to tackle the greys and remove as many as possible to stop them moving north. Since May over 250 grey squirrels have been removed from the area. The Tyne valley continues to be the front line for grey control with several volunteer groups including Hexham RS, Slaley RS, Tyne Valley RS, North Tyne RS, Haydon Bridge RS, Allen Valleys RS and Squirrel Action Greenhead and Gilsland, doing their utmost to try and stem the tide. Other groups in Northumberland who are working hard to remove greys include Morpeth Red Squirrels (who have removed over 250 squirrels in 2011), Upper Wansbeck and Coquetdale RS and Berwick RS. All of these groups, like Ponteland Red Squirrels, are completely voluntary and rely on locals to report sightings and buy goods to raise funds to help us KEEP OUR RED SQUIRRELS in Northumberland.

PONTELAND UPDATE

This report is for the immediate Ponteland and District area unless otherwise stated.

14 red road kills 2010

5 red road kills 2011

40 grey squirrels trapped and removed 2010

17 grey squirrels trapped and removed 2011 to date

18 grey squirrels trapped and removed in Woolsington 2011 to date

Estimated 30 reds killed by squirrel pox virus 2010

2 Reds killed by predators 2011

REDS BEING SIGHTED IN PONTELAND AND DARRAS HALL.

PLEASE REPORT **ALL RED AND GREY** SQUIRREL SIGHTINGS TO
PONTELAND RED SQUIRRELS

YOU CAN USE THE FORM ON OUR WEBSITE, EMAIL US OR TELEPHONE.
CONTACT DETAILS OVERLEAF.

WE RELY ON RESIDENTS TO HELP US KEEP OUR REDS!

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT