

INVASIVE SPECIES ALERT!

EASTERN GREY SQUIRREL (*Sciurus carolinensis*)



Photo Credit: Rebekah D. Wallace, University of Georgia, Bugwood.org

HAVE YOU SEEN THIS ANIMAL?

DESCRIPTION

Eastern Grey Squirrels...

- Are large squirrels, twice the size of native squirrels.
- Have a large, fat, bushy tail.
- Body size is typically a 23-30 cm long, and tail is 19-25 cm long.
- Can be grey, brownish or black in colour, with a white or red underside.
- May be tinged with a cinnamon colour on hips, feet and head.

REPORT INVASIVE SPECIES

Download the App!



www.gov.bc.ca/invasive-species

PRIMARY THREAT:

Eastern Grey Squirrels threaten to displace native species and cause damage to homes, properties, and orchards.

SPREAD

Eastern Grey Squirrels have naturally dispersed across land as they are able to survive in different habitat types. People have also aided in their dispersal by releasing them into new habitats. It is believed that there have even been cases of Eastern Grey Squirrels hitchhiking on vehicles, allowing them to cover greater distances. The reproductive potential of this species is high, with older females having two litters per year, each with 2-3 young.

The diet of Eastern Grey Squirrels varies throughout the year and includes nuts and other tree seeds, tree buds, fruits, insects, and bird eggs. This species can be found within deciduous and mixed forests in B.C., along with urban areas.

DISTRIBUTION & STATUS

Eastern Grey Squirrels are native to eastern North America. Within B.C., this species is established in the Vancouver area, Fraser Valley, Okanagan, and southern Vancouver Island. There are also reports from central Vancouver Island, Squamish, the Sunshine Coast, 100 Mile House, Quesnel, and Kamloops,





For more information: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/environment/plants-animals-ecosystems/invasive-species>



EASTERN GREY SQUIRREL (*Sciurus carolinensis*)

LOOK-ALIKES:

There are three squirrel species in B.C. that could be confused for the Eastern Grey Squirrel. Refer to the chart below for distinguishing features of each species.

Distinguishing Features	INVASIVE Eastern Grey Squirrel (<i>Sciurus carolinensis</i>)	NATIVE Douglas Squirrel (<i>Tamiasciurus douglasii</i>)	NATIVE Red Squirrel (<i>Tamiasciurus hudsonicus</i>)	INVASIVE Fox Squirrel (<i>Sciurus niger</i>)
Size				
Colour	Year-Round Type 1: grey with cinnamon tinge Type 2: brown black	Summer: grey-brown Winter: brown * Black side bar between front and back legs	Year-Round red-brown	Year-Round grey-brown
Underside Colour	Year-Round Type 1: white Type 2: reddish	Summer: orange/yellow Winter: grey	Year-Round white	Year-Round dark red
Eye Ring	none	orange/yellow	white	orange-red
Tail	bushy	narrow, less bushy	narrow, less bushy, long	white fringe

REPORT INVASIVE SPECIES

www.gov.bc.ca/invasive-species

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

- Do not possess, breed, release, sell or transport Eastern Grey Squirrels in B.C.
- Do not feed Eastern Grey Squirrels.
- Control access to attractants such as garbage, compost, and bird feeders.
- Use squirrel-proof bird feeders to deter squirrels while still attracting birds.

Removal

- Eastern Grey Squirrels are listed under Schedule C of the Wildlife Act, which states that they can be captured or killed anywhere, at any time, in B.C. You do not need a permit or Provincial hunting license to kill Eastern Grey Squirrels.

For more information: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/environment/plants-animals-ecosystems/invasive-species>



DID YOU KNOW?

In 1909, Eastern Grey Squirrels were given to Stanley Park in Vancouver as a gift, thus initiating their spread in B.C.

Photo Credit:
Steven Katovich,
Bugwood.org

