

# INVASIVE SPECIES ALERT!

## EASTERN FOX SQUIRREL

(*Sciurus niger*)

### HAVE YOU SEEN THIS ANIMAL?

#### DESCRIPTION

Eastern Fox Squirrels...

- Are the largest squirrel species in North America.
- Grow to be 45-70 cm long, with a tail length of 20-33 cm.
- Appear the same for males and females.
- Are grey on the back, washed with light orange to tan.
- Are a pale orange wash on belly.
- Have patches of orange to tan hairs behind ears.
- Have deep, orange-coloured hairs on the underside of tail.



Photo Credit: David Cappaert, Bugwood.org

### REPORT INVASIVE SPECIES

Download the App!



[www.gov.bc.ca/invasive-species](http://www.gov.bc.ca/invasive-species)

### PRIMARY THREAT:

*Eastern Fox Squirrels consume agricultural crops, such as fruits and nuts, and strip bark off trees.*

### SPREAD

Eastern Fox Squirrels have spread by means of different transport pathways, both naturally and human assisted. Female Eastern Fox Squirrels can have 7-8 young per litter and are able to reproduce over several years, allowing for rapid population growth and expansion. They are active during the day and seen year-round, as they do not hibernate. They nest in trees or within man-made structures, such as building roofs and attics.

This species can be found in a variety of habitat types, tending towards forests with open understories. In B.C., Eastern Fox Squirrels inhabit orchards, urban areas, and open forests.

### DISTRIBUTION & STATUS

Eastern Fox Squirrels are native to eastern North America. They can be found in the southern Okanagan Valley, ranging from Osoyoos to Penticton, and are spreading northward.





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



# EASTERN FOX SQUIRREL (*Sciurus niger*)

## LOOK-ALIKES:

There are three squirrel species in B.C. that could be confused for the Eastern Fox Squirrel. Refer to 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 Eastern Fox Squirrel ( <i>Sciurus niger</i> )
Size				
Colour	<b>Year-Round</b> Type 1: grey with cinnamon tinge Type 2: brown black	<b>Summer:</b> grey-brown <b>Winter:</b> brown * Black side bar between front and back legs	<b>Year-Round</b> red-brown	<b>Year-Round</b> grey-brown
Underside Colour	<b>Year-Round</b> Type 1: white Type 2: reddish	<b>Summer:</b> orange/yellow <b>Winter:</b> grey	<b>Year-Round</b> white	<b>Year-Round</b> dark red
Eye Ring	none	orange/yellow	white	orange-red
Tail	bushy	narrow, less bushy	narrow, less bushy, long	white fringe

## WHAT CAN YOU DO?

- Do not possess, breed, release, sell or transport Eastern Fox Squirrels in B.C.
- Do not feed Eastern Fox 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 Fox 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 Fox Squirrels.

## DID YOU KNOW?

In the 1980s, Eastern Fox Squirrels were first sighted in Osoyoos, near the Canada- US border. It is likely that this population came from an introduced population in Washington State.

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Photo Credit: Ohio Department of Natural Resources

