



IORA RUA

RED SQUIRREL

Sciurus vulgaris

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The little stars on this map represent the distribution of Red Squirrels throughout Ireland. Each square on the map is equivalent to 100 kilometres by 100 kilometres.

Everyone loves the Red Squirrel because of the colour of its coat and beautiful big tail. These pretty little creatures like to live in coniferous (or cone-bearing) woodlands. Squirrels are wonderful acrobats, scampering up and down the tree and jumping from branch to branch. The male squirrel builds a big nest or drey in the tree and it is a cosy home for his family. The drey is made of twigs, leaves, mosses and bark. Squirrels do not hibernate in the winter but they avoid the cold and wet weather. They like a good sleep but they wake up if the weather improves. A squirrel eats nuts,

acorns, pine seeds, fungi and berries. During the autumn, this food is stored away for winter use, carefully hidden in holes or hollows. But the forgetful creatures often can't remember where they put the hidden food!

There are also a large number of Grey Squirrels in this country. They were originally brought over here from North America. Grey squirrels are bigger than our native red squirrels and can eat more types of food and so are replacing reds in many areas.

PROTECT OUR WILDLIFE – PLEASE DO NOT LITTER