

Grey Squirrel

1/24/07

- Scientific Name:** Sciurus carolinensis
- Size:** Head and body about 25cm (10in); tail about 70cm (8in). Weight: 350-800g.
- Habitat:** Prefers mature deciduous woodland but also common in parks and gardens in towns and cities.
- Identification:** Winter fur is dense and silvery grey with a brown tinge along the middle of the back. Summer fur is yellowish-brown. A Gray Squirrel has white under parts, a bushy grey tail and ears without tufts.



Fascinating facts:

- The squirrel at the CES Barn is an Albino Grey Squirrel.
- An albino is a person or animal lacking normal pigmentation. An albino's skin and hair are abnormally white or milky. Albino's eyes have a pink or blue iris and a deep-red pupil.
- Albino squirrels are thought by some to be a source of good luck.
- Grey Squirrels can live up to 10 years in the wild although most only manage 3-4 years.
- Gray Squirrels may eat hazelnuts, acorns, beech mast, tree bark, fungi, buds, leaves, shoots, flowers; will also raid birds' nests for eggs and young.
- The grey squirrel is **diurnal** and most active at dawn and dusk, searching for available food.
- Squirrels have good eyesight and often sit upright on a vantage point to look around them. They have a keen sense of smell too!
- The grey squirrel builds itself a nest, or **drey**, about the size of a football, made of twigs, often with the leaves still attached. It is built fairly high in a tree and lined with dry grass, shredded bark, moss and feathers.
- Although grey squirrels have a wide range of calls, they communicate mainly through their tails, using them as a signaling device; they twitch their tails if they are uneasy or suspicious.

